

Sydesrtone Parish Council

Internal Control Policy & Procedure Document Control Policy adopted June 2023

Next review date: June 2027

Internal Control

Internal Control means the systems in place to maintain good financial governance. The Responsible Financial Officer has legal responsibility to ensure that proper internal controls are set up and maintained. These controls ensure that all income due is received; all expenses are properly authorised; books are maintained including regular bank reconciliations; income and expenditure are in accordance with budgets. The full requirements are set out within the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and explained within Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – A Practitioner's Guide (current edition).

Syderstone Parish Council has a number of systems in place to support and manage internal control.

1. Internal control checks: a quarterly review of financial accounts by an appointed Councillor, which is documented and reported to full council.
2. Independent internal auditor: appointed sector professional who carries out an annual audit and presents a written report to council, ahead of Annual Return completion.
3. Monthly reporting of finances: income & expenditure, monthly current account balance, supplied as an extract from accounting records.

Internal Control Officer

The internal control officer should carry out internal control checks on a quarterly basis. The named officer should not be a main signatory to the accounts of the council. The named officer is appointed from the membership of council at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (in May).

1 Internal Control Checks

Checks cover all financial activities of the Council over the whole of the financial year, on a sample basis. Regular activities will be included at each quarterly check, with other activities being included at least once every year. Checks are reported to the next Council meeting.

Control Check Calendar

- Check 1 (first quarter of the financial year) i.e. April-June.
- Check 2 (second quarter of the financial year) i.e. July- September.
- Check 3 (third quarter of the financial year) i.e. October-December.
- Check 4 (fourth quarter of the financial year) i.e. January – March

Regular activity checks

All checks will inspect at least three payments and receipts during the quarter.

Payments should be checked as follows:

- Account total correct and accompanied by supporting order/letter.
- Voucher countersigned by cheque signatories.
- The payment has been advised to Council and authorised.

Receipts should be checked as follows:

- Is the amount correct?
- Has the amount has been banked promptly?
- Was the amount advised to Council and agreed?

2 Independent Internal Auditor

A commissioned service by the Parish Council, this is usually an experienced and qualified individual or a Clerk from another Council who has proven references and experience in the area of internal audit. Their written report is presented and considered by Council as part of their complete review of internal controls. This happens in May, once the year end accounts have been closed and before the Annual Return (statutory document) has been completed. This internal audit informs the Annual Return.

3 Monthly financial reporting

The RFO presents a monthly report of all income, expenditure to full council.

Associated Documents

Financial Regulations
Standing Orders