

Tony Skeggs  
Parish Clerk  
Stoke Mandeville Parish Council  
The Community Centre  
Eskdale Road  
Stoke Mandeville  
Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire  
HP22 5UJ

18 May 2020

Dear Tony,

Further to my Internal Audit visit of the Council in respect of the 2020 Annual Return, I am submitting my report and observations to the Council. As you will notice from the attached Internal Audit Report it was unfortunately necessary to issue a negative response in respect of Control Objective C.

### **Control Objective C**

“This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.”

### **Reason for the negative response Control Objective C**

As you are aware, it was not possible during the internal audit to confirm that the Council undertook a formal review of the Risk Register during financial year 2019-20.

The Practitioners Guide sets out that a Council “..needs to identify, assess and record risks..” and that “Having identified, assessed and recorded the risks, the authority needs to address them by ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate and manage risk.”

The normal practice by which a Council will meet the requirements of the Practitioners Guide is for the Council to maintain a risk register and for this register to be subject to review by Council on an annual basis.

From the records available, there is no evidence that the Council has undertaken such a review.

### **Implications in respect of the Annual Return**

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As previously advised it will be necessary for a negative response to be entered on the Internal Audit Report. In addition, the Council will also have to return a negative response in respect of Assertion 5 of the Annual Governance Statement.

In addition to the Negative Responses on the Internal Audit Report we have also responded 'Not Covered' in respect of the Control Objectives F, K, L and M we are required to explain why we have done this.

We have responded 'Not Covered' in response to Objective F as we understand that the Council does not maintain a Petty Cash. The reason for the Not Covered response for Objective K is that it is not applicable to your Council as you did not certify yourself as exempt from External Audit.

For Objective L we have given a 'Not Covered' response to this as, although we have seen the completed Notice document, there is no formal documentary evidence that the required Notice was posted as required. You will be aware that there is, in fact, no requirement for this documentary evidence to be maintained by you and therefore it is impossible for an auditor to independently verify this. We are aware that this issue has been discussed with the External Auditors and we expect most, if not all, Councils to also have 'Not Covered' as a response to Objective L from their Internal Auditors.

We have responded 'Not Applicable' in respect of Objective M as it is our understanding that the Council does not act as Trustee.

In addition to this letter and the statutory Internal Audit Report I have also submitted our Internal Audit Observations and Summary to you by email. I would be grateful if you could bring all of these to the Councils attention in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Rose'.

Kevin Rose ACMA  
Director

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

## Stoke Mandeville Parish Council

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation **during** the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.		✓	
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			✓
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			✓
<b>M. (For local councils only)</b> Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

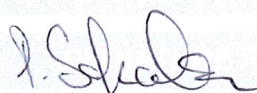
Date(s) internal audit undertaken

09/04/2019      25/04/2018

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Paula Sakalla AAT - IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

18/05/2020

\*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).