

Meldon Parish Council – Risk Assessment of Financial and Non-Financial Internal Audit Controls

No.	Internal Controls	Risks identified/potential for improvements/current procedure	Action Required
1.	Governance		
1.1 1.1.1	<u>Standing Orders</u> Standing Orders have been adopted setting out the Council's constitution and procedures. They are reviewed at least every four years	Reviewed every four years or when changes or made.	
1.2 1.2.1 1.2.2	<u>Financial Regulations</u> The Clerk is the Responsible Financial Officer with the duties detailed in the Financial Regulations. Financial Regulations have been adopted which set out procedures. They are review at least every four years.	Clerk is RFO, detailed in contract. Reviewed every four years or when changes or made.	
1.3 1.3.1 1.3.2	<u>Assertion 10</u> The Clerk and Councillors have an email address on a council owned domain name for general correspondence from the public. The Council ensures its website complies with the Web Content	Gov.uk email addresses set up for the Clerk and Councillors - March 2026 with Parishes Online New website March 2026 with Parishes Online	

	Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA.		
1.3.3	The Council publishes and maintains a clear accessibility statement, that outlines any accessibility limitations, how to request alternative formats, and a named contact for accessibility issues.		
1.3.4	The Council ensures the website complies with the Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, where applicable.		
1.3.5	The Council adopts and publishes the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) Model Publication Scheme.		
1.3.6	The Council publishes information as required by the Transparency Code for Small Authorities (for those with turnover under £25,000).		
1.3.7	The Council keeps all financial and governance information up to date and makes it accessible via its website.		
1.3.8	The Council has considered its data protection compliance and		

	is sure that it is fully complying with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018.		
1.3.9	The Council is processing personal data with care and in line with the principles of data protection.		
1.3.10	The Council has implemented an IT Policy covering:	IT & Cybersecurity and Data Protection & Retention Policies approved March 2026, reviewed annually	
1.3.11	Use of email and personal devices for official business.		
1.3.12	Email, document handling, data storage and security protocols.		
1.3.13	Responsibilities of councillors, staff and contractors. The policy provides guidance on cyber security threats such as phishing, and outlines mitigation measures.		
1.3.14	The Council reviews the policy annually and shares it with all relevant parties.		

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1.4 1.4.1 1.4.2 1.4.3 1.4.4	<u>Measures to Prevent Fraud and Corruption</u> The Council has adopted the NALC Model Code of Conduct. All Councillors sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office on election or co-option. All Councillors complete a Register of Interests and provide updated information as appropriate. Copies are held with the Council and Northumberland County Council. There is an agenda item for Councillor Declarations of Interests on every council agenda.	NALC Model Code of Conduct adopted 2020. Reviewed when changes are made. Signed after 2025 elections Provided after 2025 elections Agenda item	
1.5 1.5.1	<u>Insurable Risks</u> Employers Liability Insurance (this is the only insurance the Parish Council is required to hold through legislation.	Insured through Zurich.	

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1.6 1.6.1 1.6.2 1.6.3	<p data-bbox="293 268 618 371"><u>External Audit Annual Governance Statement Requirements</u></p> <p data-bbox="293 371 719 443">Statement of accounts formally approved by Council.</p> <p data-bbox="293 480 719 759">Council only does things it has legal power to do and works within appropriate standards and codes of practice which could have a significant effect on the ability of the Council to conduct its business or on its finances.</p> <p data-bbox="293 799 730 975">Notice of audit displayed on the 3 Council notice boards to allow electors to inspect accounts as required by The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.</p> <p data-bbox="293 1015 730 1217">Appropriate steps are taken to deal with matters raised in reports from Internal and External Auditors through agenda items on Parish Council meeting agenda.</p>	<p data-bbox="763 371 1458 411">Presented to Council at the Annual Meeting in May</p> <p data-bbox="763 480 1144 520">Council does not have GPC</p> <p data-bbox="763 799 1133 839">Displayed on noticeboards</p> <p data-bbox="763 1015 1223 1054">Completed as and when required.</p>	

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1.7 1.7.1	<p><u>Proper Booking</u> The cash book is balanced against the bank statements to ensure arithmetically correct when bank statements received.</p> <p>Cash book stored in locked cupboard.</p> <p>Budget/Precept reports are held on the Clerks computer and backed up onto USB flash drive.</p>	<p>Completed monthly</p> <p>All accounts documentation stored in safe location.</p> <p>Backs up made monthly, held securely.</p>	
1.8 1.8.1 1.8.2	<p><u>Payment Controls</u> A list of payments is prepared for the Parish Council meeting with the invoices also available for inspections. Councillor approve these payments and this is recorded in the minutes. Payments are made via BACS or cheques which are signed by 2 approved councillors or clerk/councillor.</p> <p>VAT is recorded in a separate column in the cashbook. Annual reclaims are made.</p>	<p>Presented at every meeting.</p> <p>VAT reclaims completed in April/May annually</p>	

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1.8.3	S137 payments are shown in a separate column in the cashbook.	Council does not have GPC. Separate column in cashbook.	
1.9 1.9.1 1.9.2	<u>Budgetary Controls</u> The Council sets a budget which is approved and recorded in the minutes no later than the January meeting. The Clerk presents a quarterly income and expenditure report to the Council.	Completed annually Presented at every meeting	
2.0 2.0.1 2.0.2	<u>Income Controls</u> All income is recorded in the cashbook. Northumberland County Council issues a remittance advice which confirms the precept that is paid directly into the Council's bank account.	Completed monthly Received twice a year: April and September	
2.1 2.1.1 2.1.2	<u>Payroll Controls</u> The Clerk manages the payroll. The Clerk is eligible to be paid travel expenses for any official mileage.	The council uses HMRC PAYE Basic Tools. Completed monthly by the Clerk. Claimed annually at the March meeting	

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2.4 2.4.1 2.4.2 2.4.3	<u>Year End Procedures</u> Accounts are prepared on a payment and receipts basis. Full cross casting of the cashbook is agreed to the final accounts. The Chairman signs the cashbook. An audit trail is provided by recording the minute number and meeting date the payment was agreed.	Year end accounts completed in April annually Carried out at the Annual Meeting. Completed monthly	
2.5 2.5.1	<u>Qualifications of the Clerk</u> The Clerk holds CiCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) and is a member of the Institute of Local Council Management.	Completed in 2016. Clerk also has FiLCA and PiALC qualifications.	
2.6 2.6.1	<u>Meetings</u> The meeting policy is set out in Standing Orders, notices are provided three clear days before the meeting on noticeboards. Draft minutes are published prior to the next meeting, time is set aside for public participation.	Four meetings per year. Notices on website and notice boards 3 days clear Draft minutes published within one month	

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2.7 2.7.1	<u>Communications</u> The Parish Council has a website through the Northumberland Association of Local Councils. Before 1 st April 2026, a new website will be published using Parishes online	New website in place from 1 st April 2026, hosted by Parishes Online.	
2.7.2	The Parish Council has an email address that is widely published on noticeboards, emails and websites.	Gov.uk email address for clerk and councillors from 1 st April 2026.	
2.7.3	Parish Council information is placed on the three noticeboards and updated as and when required.	Info placed on noticeboards by councillors as and when required.	
2.8 2.8.1	<u>Annual Report</u> Annual Report is completed and published by 30 th June of the following year. It is available to any elector and includes a summary of accounts and the Chairman's overview and is presented at the Parish Council meeting.	Annual Report presented by the Chairman at the Annual Assembly.	

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2.9 2.9.1	<u>Accounts</u> Accounts are prepared in accordance with statutory requirements, approved within three months of the accounting date and published within six months.	Accounts updated monthly, presented at each quarterly meeting and published on the website with the agenda for the meeting.	
3.0 3.1	<u>Clerk's Contract</u> The Parish Council has adopted the national Association of Local Council's terms and conditions and contract of employment.	Clerk has NALC model contract.	
3.1 3.1.1	<u>Training</u> The Council has evaluated and identified training needs for staff and members.	Training as and when required	
3.2 3.2.1 3.2.2	<u>General Power of Competence</u> Two thirds of vacancies filled at last election. Clerk is CiLCA qualified and has passed unit 7 – General Power of Competence.	Clerk CiLCA qualified 2016 (includes unit 7 – GPC) The Council lost GPC at the 2025 election. Less than two thirds of vacancies filled.	