



Meeting	Full Council
Date	Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Report Title	Clerks Report
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### Welcome back!

Welcome back to the 10 councillors who were uncontested at the elections. It's nice to have you all on board!

### Staffing update

Clerk is currently signed off until 6<sup>th</sup> June. Temporary arrangements using existing staff to cover workload are working well. Staff are handling increased roles and responsibilities with enthusiasm.

### Internal Audit

Summary of discussion at internal audit. The Internal Audit report is a separate agenda item. The report is generally positive with one recommendation -

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is evident that council generally has robust systems and processes in place. However, following the sickness absence of the Clerk starting in February, it was clear from the Minutes that council had not fully considered the implications of any prolonged absence of the Clerk/RFO. CPC should ensure that it follows its own Risk Management policy and provides training for staff members to make sure that the work of council can continue, in particular the RFO role. A secure system should be established for password management, so that staff members covering the role of absent colleagues can access software, etc. to ensure continuity of the work of council. A section should be incorporated into the Risk Management policy to cover the absence of the Clerk and what information needs to be available for staff covering the role.

In addition, I have summarised some pertinent discussions below -

- Job evaluation and review of duties. Deputy and Clerk's role should be interchangeable. Clerk has staff management responsibilities and has overall responsibility but day-to-day tasks including passwords, access and knowledge of processes should be on a par. Allotments should be managed by support staff member – not the Deputy - especially for a council this size and where there are additional staff. Clerk should not be inputting invoices. This should be the Deputy or support staff. Recommend a staff review as part of the ongoing transition
- IT. Scribe is not being used to its full potential. Sales invoices, budget forecasting, and purchase orders can all be done by the software making it 1 complete accounting system. Recommend training for key staff on scribe. All files to be saved to one drive not on the desktop. This is a major risk factor. Should that laptop die, all information on the desktop will go with it. Clerks' laptop has now been backed up by our IT support.

- Payments for services good, received to be paid on receipt unless there is an issue. Small independent or local suppliers especially, should not be left out of pocket. Full council to ratify payments at next meeting. Payments for additional services to be agreed with minute reference and commitments to large projects or events should be planned in advance.
- Good idea to have a less rigorous meeting schedule. This will allow more time to fully discuss and progress priorities through working parties. With only 10 cllrs, this also takes the pressure off as expectations will be higher for those remaining to participate.

#### Year End

The Year end process has gone well and is nearing completion with just the external audit to go.

Staffing Committee agreed to work with an accountant who has guided me through the process and been extremely valuable. He noted that we have not been managing our accounts as full income and expenditure but have been applying a simple cash book system which will need to be migrated over time.

#### Correspondence

The Council has been served with a court notice. This is a separate agenda item which will be discussed fully.

#### Council open day

There will be an open day on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May from 10am to 7pm for anyone wanting to find out more about becoming a Councillor. Anne and I have put together some Welcome packs which are suitable for both new and prospective Councillors.

#### Website training and updates

All staff will undergo website training on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May. We will each then take a section of the website to simplify what information is on there and update it to be more user friendly.