

EASTLEACH PARISH COUNCIL
Internal auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2026
Name of Auditor: Liz Dowie

GALC internal audits comply with the proper practices outlined in the Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities – A Practitioners' Guide and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The GALC internal audit reviews and reports on whether the systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective. The audit tests a variety of documents, including agendas and minutes, policies, insurance and risk management processes, to ensure Council meets the requirements set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance & Accountability Return. The internal audit does not involve the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of an authority in order to detect error or fraud.

Our auditors are independent of the Council and are competent to be able to carry out the requirements of the internal audit service.

NOTE The auditor will complete the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) page on the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). The AIAR informs the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) assertions on the AGAR, so when council reviews the AGS, the responses must reflect the AIAR report.

1. Governance and Policies

| Ref | Test | Yes, No or N/A | Evidence | Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations | Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No |
|------------|---|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 | Have Financial Regulations been a) tailored to council? | Yes Yes | https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/EPC-Financial-Regulations-13-May-2025.pdf | | Assertion 1 Yes |

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| | b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted? (Objective B) | Yes | Minutes 13/5/25 item 020 | | |
| 2 | Have Standing Orders been a) tailored to council? b) reviewed using the most recent version? c) minuted? | Yes Yes Yes | https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/EPC-Standing-Orders-13-May-2025.pdf Minutes 13/5/25 item 019 | | Assertion 1 Yes |
| 3 | Code of conduct reviewed in the last 2/3 years? | Yes | Minutes 14/1/25 item 183 | | Assertion 3 Yes |

2. Finance and Accounting

| Ref | Test | Yes, No or N/A | Evidence | Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations | Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No |
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| 4 | Bank reconciliations are considered by Council? (Objective I) | Yes | Minutes 15/7/25 item 046 11/11/25 item 104 13/1/26 item 133 Bank reconciliations dated 8/7/25, 6/11/25, 6/1/26 | Routine agenda item | Assertion 2 Yes |
| 5 | VAT claims have been submitted and are up to date (objective E) | Yes | VAT Claim covering 1/7/25 – 31/12/25 for £919.78 Receipt on bank statement on 9/1/26 | | Assertion 1 Yes |

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| 6 | S137 a) is there a separate account for payments? b) are totals within statutory limits? (objective A) | Yes Yes | Cashbook to 6/1/26 | Cashbook to 6/1/26 has separate column to record either statutory power or use of S137. No S137 payments made in this financial year. | Assertions 1&3 Yes |
| 7 | Is there an annual council authorisation of Direct Debit list and Standing Orders? (Objective B) | Yes | Minutes 11/3/25 item 211 | Only one direct debit in place for email provision. Reviewed as part of overall discussion re email provision. | Assertion 2 Yes |
| 8 | Cashbook provided and random sample checked. Give details at Annex A. | Yes | | Recommend that evidence of which signatory authorised online payments is retained with the paid invoices | Assertion 2 Yes |
| 9 | Internal controls a) policy in place? b) evidence checks took place as per Council's Fin Regs/Standing Orders (Objective B) | Yes See comments | | Clause 2.6 of Financial Regulations states that anyone other than the Chair or a bank signatory should review bank reconciliations and bank statements quarterly and sign the bank reconciliations and bank statements in evidence of the check. This check is being carried out but the bank statements are not signed by the checker. Recommend that this is carried out in future and that that this process is added to the Council's Statement of Internal Control. | Assertion 2 Yes |
| 10 | Was budget for 25-26 a) prepared? | Yes | Budget document | | Assertion 1 Yes |

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| | b) adopted by Full Council? c) Were the earmarked reserves identified? d) Were the general reserves reasonable? f) Was precept calculated and approved? (Objective D) | Yes Yes Yes Yes | Minutes 14/1/25 item 171 Minutes 14/1/25 item 172 | Council maintains general reserves of between 6 and 12 months' budgeted expenditure. | |
| 11 | Were end of year accounting statements a) prepared? b) match cashbook? c) supported by report? | Yes Yes Yes | Year end accounts 2024/25 Cashbook for 2024/25 AGAR Section 2 Accounting Statements 2024/25 Minutes 15/5/25 item 010 | | Assertion 6 Yes |
| 12 | Did the council periodically compare budget vs spend (as detailed in the FRs)? (Objective D) | Yes | Minutes 15/7/25 item 047 9/9/25 item 080 11/11/25 item 105 13/1/26 item 134 | Routine agenda item. Reviewed at every meeting | Assertion 1 Yes |
| 13 | Was Petty Cash expenditure a) Approved? b) supported by receipts? c) VAT accounted for? (Objective F) | N/A | | No petty cash held | Assertion 1 Yes |

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| 14 | Was Insurance policy reviewed to ensure still fit for purpose? (Objective C) | Yes | Insurance schedule Minutes 15/5/25 item 022 | Recommend that, at annual renewal, it is recorded in the minutes that cover is still considered fit for purpose. | Assertion 5 Yes |
| | <i>Note Councils have not been asked to submit any information on burials. Auditor to check sample if appropriate.</i> | N/A | | | |

3. Payroll and Employment

| Ref | Test | Yes, No or N/A | Evidence | Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations | Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No |
|-----------|---|----------------|---|---|---|
| 15 | Do all staff have a NALC contract of employment? Copy seen by auditor? | Yes | Contract dated 7/3/24 updated 1/3/26 | | Assertion 3 Yes |
| 16 | Has Council's PAYE / NIC been properly dealt with (including year-end procedures)? P32 seen (if relevant)? | Yes | P32 records for months 1-9 | | Assertion 3 Yes |

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| | (Objective G) | | | | |
| 16a | Has Council met its pension obligations? | Yes | Confirmation of 3 yearly re-declaration of compliance dated 1/4/25 | | Assertion 2 Yes |

4. Transparency and Public Rights

| Ref | Test | Yes, No or N/A | Evidence | Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations | Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No |
|-----------|---|----------------|---|---|---|
| 17 | Are all sections of the 24/25 AGAR published on the website? (Objective L/N) | Yes | AGAR sections 1, 2, 3 https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/finance/ | | Assertion 3 Yes |
| 18 | Did council correctly provide for the exercise of public rights? (Objective M) | Yes | Notice of Exercise of Public Rights https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/15-Making-provision-for-the-exercise-of-public-rights-2024-25-exempt-authorities.pdf 3 rd June – 14 th July 2025 Minutes 13/5/25 item 015 | | Assertion 4 Yes |

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| 19 | 24/25 internal (and if relevant external) audit report/s reviewed by council and action taken where recommended? If relevant is exemption from external audit form on web site and correctly minuted? | Yes | Minutes 13/5/25 item 011 | All recommendations in internal audit report have been implemented. Council is not subject to external audit. | Assertion 7 Yes |
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5. Digital and Data Compliance, IT Controls and Data Management

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| 20 | Does the Council use a Gov.uk Domain and email addresses? The Council uses at least one generic email address hosted on a council-owned domain e.g clerk@abc.parishcouncil.gov.uk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p>Note: There is no legal requirement for this to be a .gov.uk address yet, though that is recommended as best</p> | See comments | Org.uk website and clerk email address | Councillors use dedicated council email addresses | Assertion 10 Yes |
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| | practice, a .org.uk address is also acceptable. It's the .co.uk, and .com addresses that are not acceptable | | | | |
| | <p>The Council's website meets the Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 Rights and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes ● Partially ● No <p>Provision of a link to Council published Accessibility Statement and Publication Scheme</p> | Partially | <p>Minutes 3/3/26 item 160</p> <p>https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/accessibility-statement/</p> <p>https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/EPC-Publication-Scheme-13-May-2025.pdf</p> | Clerk is working on enhancing the accessibility of the website and full details are recorded in the Accessibility Statement. | Assertion 10 Yes |
| 20a | The council has adopted a formal IT Policy covering secure and lawful use of IT systems and Data Protection Policy | Yes | <p>https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/EPC-IT-Policy-15-July-2025.pdf</p> <p>Minutes 15/7/25 item 052</p> <p>https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/EPC-IT-Policy-15-July-2025.pdf</p> | | Assertion 10 Yes |

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| | | | 025/07/EPC-Privacy-Policy-Adopted-21-May-2024.pdf | | |
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5. Additional information – if relevant

| Ref | Test | Yes, No or N/A | Evidence | Internal Auditor's comments/recommendations | Has Council complied with relevant AGS assertion? Yes/No |
|-----|---|----------------|---|--|--|
| 21 | Has the General Power of Competence been adopted? | N/A | | Council does not have the requisite number of elected members to use the General Power of Competence | Assertion 3 N/A |
| 22 | Have assets a) been inspected for risk? b) any actions undertaken and recorded? (Objective C) | Yes Yes | Tree inspection schedule Tree survey – Arbor Landscapes 11/1/26 Minutes 13/1/26 item 144 Interim play equipment inspections ROSPA report 24/4/25 Minutes 13/5/26 | | Assertion 5 Yes |
| 23 | Is asset register a) reviewed regularly? (Objective H) b) published on website? (Objective L) | Yes Yes | https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/EPC-Fixed-Asset-Register-11-November-2025.pdf | Asset register July 2025 on website shows asset value of £20,964 but amount on AGAR for last 2 years has been £35,993. This includes the bus shelter value of £15,000. The Clerk had previously established that the Council does not own this asset and has correctly removed it from the Asset Register. When completing the AGAR for 2025/26 it is recommended | Assertion 5 Yes |

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| | | | | that the fixed asset total for the previous year is restated on the Accounting Statements to exclude the bus shelter. | |
| 24 | Risk Management policy a) adopted? b) reviewed annually by Council? (Objective C) | Yes Yes | https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/policies/ Minutes 13/5/26 item 023 9/9/26 item 089 | Financial Risk Assessment is in place together with separate risk assessments for the playing ground and playing field | Assertion 5 Yes |
| 25 | Have items/ services been competitively purchased in accordance with Financial and/or Procurement Regulations? | Yes | Minutes 9/9/25 item 091 13/1/26 item 144 | Tree work – competitive quotes sought | Assertion 2 Yes |
| 26 | Is the Council a Managing Trustee? a)charity name b)charity number c) Copy of 24/25 AGM minutes seen (Objective O) | No N/A N/A N/A | | | Assertion 9 N/A |