Toft Newton Parish Council

E-mail: clerk@toftnewtonparishcouncil.gov.uk
Website: https://toft-newton.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk

Item Number: 2026-27/019
YEAR END PROCESS 2024-25

PKF Littlejohn LLP have requested proof of Toft Newton Parish Council approving the Management of Risks for 2024-25.

The minutes from the 4th of July 2024 have been forwarded, hopefully satisfying this request.

As soon as any further information becomes available on the 2024-25 AGAR this shall be shared with Councillors.

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Item Number: 2026-27/020
YEAR END PROCESS 2025-26

Financial Report

At the end of the Financial Year I produced a document based on the actions and recommendations in the 2024-25 Internal Audit Report, this document is attached and will be provided to the LALC Appointed Internal Auditor.

LALC have confirmed that the Internal Auditor for the 2025-26, and 2026-27 financial years will be: Lydia Hopton. We have not yet received any communication from the Internal Auditor. However, this is expected soon.

Information to be entered on to Form 2 of the Annual Governance Audit Return includes:

We also need to prove that each assertion is met, this includes ensuring the Council has in place the appropriate standards and practices, while these are improved on previous years, it is important to note that not every aspect of all assertions have been met in full at the end of the 2025-26 Financial Year, but with the approval of the policies below, and the appointment of a new Clerk, who is a Chartered Accountant, Toft Newton Parish Council will have no problem proving all assertion are met in full for the current and future Financial Years.

It is my view that Toft Newton Parish Council have met in part or fully the following assertions:

Assertion		Agreed			Assertion Met	
		Yes	No	N/A	In Full	Partially
1	We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓				✓
2	We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓				✓
3	We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓			✓	
4	We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓			✓	
5	We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate	✓			✓	

	steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and / or external insurance cover where required.					
6	We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓				✓
7	We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓			✓	
8	We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓			✓	
9	(For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s) / assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.			✓		
10	We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.	✓			✓	

Following the Financial Regulations that were approved on the 3rd of March 2026, will ensure full compliance with the 10 assertions for this year.

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31st March 2026

Actions from 2024-25 Internal Audit

The 2024-25 Internal Audit was carried out by J T Marsh of Doncaster. The actions and recommendations outlined in his Internal Audit are detailed below, along with Information about progress towards achieving these actions and recommendations.

Toft Newton Parish Council have appointed a new Parish Council Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer / Proper Officer. Paul Holt, is a Chartered Accountant. He takes up post on the 1st of April 2026.

Action	Completed	Date	Comments
Implement up to date Standing Orders.	Yes	03/03/2026	Approved by Full Council. https://toft-newton.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/47/2026-standing-orders
Implement up to date Financial Regulations.	Yes	03/03/2026	Approved by Full Council. https://toft-newton.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/49/2026-financial-regulations
Implement better financial monitoring by Councillors, either through establishing a Finance Committee or through Full Council meetings.	In progress		The newly adopted Financial Regulations cover this. We will be holding a Finance Meeting on the 21/04/2026.

Introduce time sheets and expenses claims using Microsoft Forms or similar, so that once completed, the information is automatically e-mailed to the RFO.	In progress		A new MS Word Expenses claim form has been produced for approval at the 21/04/2026 Finance Meeting.
Ensure the bank mandate is kept up to date and that at least two Councillors and the RFO have full access to the bank account. The mandate must be updated immediately when a change happens.	In progress		A new bank mandate form is ready to be signed by one additional Councillor and the newly appointed RFO at the Finance Meeting on the 21/04/2026.
Implement an Excel spreadsheet to capture accounts information and plot income and expenditure against the planned budget on a monthly basis. If grant income takes the Council's income and expenditure to a level where additional internal and external oversight would be required, then the Council should look at specialist accounting programmes, such as Scribe, Rialtas or Paris Council Accounts.	Yes	01/04/2025	Details Excel spreadsheet implemented for 2025-26 Financial Year. The Full Council will monitor the effectiveness of an Excel spreadsheet.
Report full transactions to Councillors at least quarterly, but ideally at every meeting.	In progress		
Comply with Assertion 10 prior to the end of the 2025-26 year, by setting up a gov.uk e-mail address for at least the Clerk.	Yes	09/09/2025	Free gov.uk account opened for the Clerk with ParishOnline.
To ensure that the website is regularly updated and ensure compliance with the latest accessibility standards.	In progress		Regular updates have been taking place since late 2025.
Set up accounts with suppliers where possible, so that payments are made upon receipt of an invoice rather than on personal debit or credit cards.	In progress		This is a requirement of the Financial Regulations adopted on the 03/03/2026.
Provide a business debit card to the next RFO to reduce the number of expenses claims being made.	In progress		The new RFO will complete the debit card request at the same time as the bank mandate on the 21/04/2026.
Recommendations	**Completed**	**Date**	**Comments**

The Council works to fill the two casual vacancies for Councillors which have been vacant for a number of years.	In progress		Updated posters are to be displayed in the Village Hall; the parish notice board and was posted on the website in September 2025 https://toft-newton.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/news/article/6/toft-newton-parish-council-are-currently-looking-for-two-new-parish-councillors-.
Introduce a Councillor's Expenses policy based on the recommendations of the West Lindsey District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel, so that Councillors can legitimately claim expenses.	In progress		A new Members' Allowances policy will be discussed at the Finance Meeting on the 21/04/2026.
Consider increasing the precept by 3% per year to keep up with rising costs.	Partly		The precept has been increased by 2% for 2026-27 with further 2% increases planned.
That Toft Newton Parish Council use the Internal Audit service provided by Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) going forward to ensure compliance.	Yes	21/02/2026	Toft Newton Parish Council have signed up to use the LALC Internal Audit service for two years – covering the 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years.

As I prepare to hand over to the new Clerk, I am confident that the systems, procedures and guidelines in place now, and those that will be agreed on the 21st of April 2026 at the Finance Meeting and those to be agreed on the 5th of May 2026 at the Annual Parish Council Meeting will stand Toft Newton Parish Council in good stead for the coming years.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Lewis, Dip Psy (ICS), CertHE (Glouc).
(Retiring) Parish Council Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer

As the meeting on the 21st of April 2026 was not quorate, the actions above dated the 21st of April 2026 will now be approved on the 5th of May 2026 instead.

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Item Number: 2026-27/021
YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report

Bank balances:
31-03-2025 £5,885.22
31-03-2026 £9,299.88

30-04-2026 £21,151.63

Income received:

01-04-2026	West Lindsey District Council	£10,608.00	Precept for 2026-27
01-04-2026	HMRC	£428.86	HMRC Credit Built up over time
23-04-2026	HMRC	£1,133.80	2025-26 s.126 VAT Reclaim

Expenditure:
Councillors are asked to note the following payments have been made.

Date due for payment	Payee	Amount (inc. VAT)	Reason	Power to spend
21-04-2026	HMRC – PAYE for March 2026	£18.60	PAYE	LGA 1972 s.112(2)
29-04-2026	Combined wages and PAYE bill for April 2026 (PAYE element will be paid to HMRC on the 21-05-2026)	£284.69	Wages	LGA 1972 s.112(2)
29-04-2026	Michael Lewis – Travel – March 2026	£46.20	Expenses	LG (FP)A 1963 s.5
29-04-2026	Michael Lewis – Work From Home Allowance – March 2026	£26.00	Expenses	LG (FP)A 1963 s.5

Payments for approval:
Councillors are asked to note and confirm the following payments.

Date due for payment	Payee	Amount (inc. VAT)	Reason	Power to spend
05-05-2026	Green Grass Contracting – Playing Field and Pitch	£100.80	Grass cutting	HA 1980 s.96
05-05-2026	Green Grass Contracting – Public Highway Verges	£118.90	Grass cutting	HA 1980 s.96(5)

06-05-2026	West Lindsey District Council	£114.00	Defibrillator Service	PHA 1936 s.234
27-05-2027	Combined wages and PAYE bill for May 2026 (PAYE element will be paid to HMRC on the 21-06-2026)	£327.08	Wages	LGA 1972 s.112(2)
27-05-2026	Michael Lewis – Travel – April 2026	£27.72	Expenses	LG (FP)A 1963 s.5
27-05-2026	Michael Lewis – Work From Home Allowance – April 2026	£26.00	Expenses	LG (FP)A 1963 s.5
29-05-2026	Green Grass Contracting – Playing Field and Pitch	£100.80	Grass cutting	HA 1980 s.96
29-05-2026	Green Grass Contracting – Public Highway Verges	£118.90	Grass cutting	HA 1980 s.96(5)
29-05-2026	Green Grass Contracting – Playing Field and Pitch	£100.80	Grass cutting	HA 1980 s.96
29-05-2026	Green Grass Contracting – Public Highway Verges	£118.89	Grass cutting	HA 1980 s.96(5)

We are still waiting for an invoice for the service and tightening of the Zip Wire. This is due to be £400.00 – the service was completed on the 13th of March 2026.

HMRC allows employers to pay their PAYE bills quarterly for businesses that pay less than £1,500 per month in PAYE debits.

Councillors may want to start paying HMRC quarterly instead of monthly