

Internal Committee 9th October 2017

Committee Structure

Agenda Item 8

It is almost 6 months since the introduction of the Internal/External committee structure. Whilst this has largely proved successful, there have been anomalies over delegated authorities.

The order and frequency of meetings should also be reviewed, taking into account agenda lengths.

The recent 11.30 finish time is also a matter of concern and steps should be taken to avoid a repeat of such occurrences.

Members of the original committee structure sub-committee were as follows:

Cllrs Carter, Mrs. Curteis, Mrs. Ferguson, Knowles, Mulholland, Nelson & Mrs Smith.

Proposal: That the committee structure sub-committee should be reformed to recommend changes.



Phil Burgess
Town Clerk

Impact on Crime and Disorder	:	None
Impact on Bio-diversity	:	None
Budgetary Impact	:	None

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Annual Return

Agenda Item 9

The auditor's report has recently been received on the annual accounting and governance return.

In previous years minor procedural issues had been highlighted and there were problems over figures carried forward.

This year, however, the auditors found no issues whatever with the accounting return or the governance practices of the council. In other words, 2016-17 had a clear audit.

The results have been publicised in accordance with the auditor's requirements.

The clear audit has been partly achieved through targeted assistance from our accounts software providers. My thanks also to our Accounts Clerk Julie McCollum for her efforts.

Proposal: Information Only



Phil Burgess
Town Clerk

Impact on Crime and Disorder	:	None
Impact on Bio-diversity	:	None
Budgetary Impact	:	None

Tenterden Town Council

Notice of conclusion of audit

Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2017

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

	Notes
1. The audit of accounts for Tenterden Town Council for the year ended 31 March 2017 has been completed and the accounts have been published.	This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the Annual Return must be published by 30 September. This must include publication on the smaller authority's website.
2. The Annual Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Tenterden Town Council on application to:	
(a) <u>Mr. P. Burgess, Town Clerk</u> <u>Tenterden Town Hall</u> <u>24 High Street</u> <u>Tenterden TN30 6AN</u>	(a) Insert the name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the Annual Return
(b) <u>Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm</u>	(b) Insert the hours during which inspection rights may be exercised
3. Copies will be provided to any person on payment of £ <u>5</u> (c) for each copy of the Annual Return.	(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs
Announcement made by: (d) <u>P. Burgess, Town Clerk</u>	(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice
Date of announcement: (e) <u>12th September 2017</u>	(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice

Section 1 – Annual governance statement 2016/17

We acknowledge as the members of:

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

Tenterden Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2017, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this smaller authority:
	Yes	No	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure 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 smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with proper practices in doing so.
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.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by 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 smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.
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.	Yes	No	NA
			✓
			has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

This annual governance statement is approved by this smaller authority on:

05/06/2017

and recorded as minute reference:

3068

Signed by Chair at meeting where approval is given:



Clerk:



*Note: Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how this smaller authority will address the weaknesses identified.

Section 2 – Accounting statements 2016/17 for


Enter name of
smaller authority here:

Tentenden Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2016 <i>Restated</i>	31 March 2017 £	
1. Balances brought forward	382351	348626	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	303177	368093	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs, rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	117385	3669186	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	149972	175571	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	NIL	NIL	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the smaller authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	304315	1086061	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	348626	3124273	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	325782	3119109	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	4390904	5160164	This cell shows the value of all the property the authority owns. It is made up of its fixed assets and long-term investments.
10. Total borrowings	NIL	NIL	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2017 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of this smaller authority and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer:



Date

22/5/17

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by this smaller authority on:

05/06/17

and recorded as minute reference:

3069

Signed by Chair at meeting where approval is given:



Section 3 – External auditor report and certificate

In respect of:

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

Tenterden Town Council

1. Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This smaller authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The smaller authority prepares an annual return in accordance with proper practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2017; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review the annual return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2. 2016/17 External auditor report (KE0281)

(~~Except for the matters reported below~~)* on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the smaller authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3. 2016/17 External auditor certificate

We ~~certify~~~~do not certify~~* that we have completed our review of the annual return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2017.

* We do not certify completion because:

External auditor signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

External auditor name

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

10 September 2017

Note: The NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on 2016/17 accounts in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

Annual internal audit report 2016/17 to

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

Tenterden Town Council

This smaller authority's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2017.

Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with this smaller 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 smaller authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose only one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year.	✓		
B. This smaller authority met its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This smaller 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 smaller 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. (For local councils only)

Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

Yes	No	Not applicable
		✓

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

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DAVID J. BUCKETT

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

D.J. Buckett

Date

19/5/2017

*If the response is 'no' please 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, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

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Recreation Ground Kiosk Path

Agenda Item 10

The tarmac path to the north of the recreation ground, which runs parallel with the pavement on Oaks Rd and emerges at the traffic lights on Recreation Ground Rd, is in need of repair.

The trees along the northern border of the recreation ground have thrown out roots which have raised the tarmac in places making the path hazardous. In the short-term arrangements will be made for signage to alert users to the dangers.

The ideal resolution to this issue would be to divert the path to the south side of the kiosk away from the trees but this would be expensive and is likely to clash with the requirements of the recreation ground re-ordering. The tree roots cannot be cut off as this would destabilise the trees.

A cheaper solution would be to have the areas around the roots dug out and replaced with a gradual slope up and down. Whilst this solution would only last a few years until the roots broke through again, it would tackle the immediate safety issue and allow the re-ordering of the recreation ground to create a permanent solution to the issue.

Proposal: That the path should be patched with tarmac to make safe & quotations would be referred to council for consideration.



Phil Burgess
Town Clerk

Impact on Crime and Disorder	:	None
Impact on Bio-diversity	:	None
Budgetary Impact	:	Minor

Internal Committee 9th October 2017

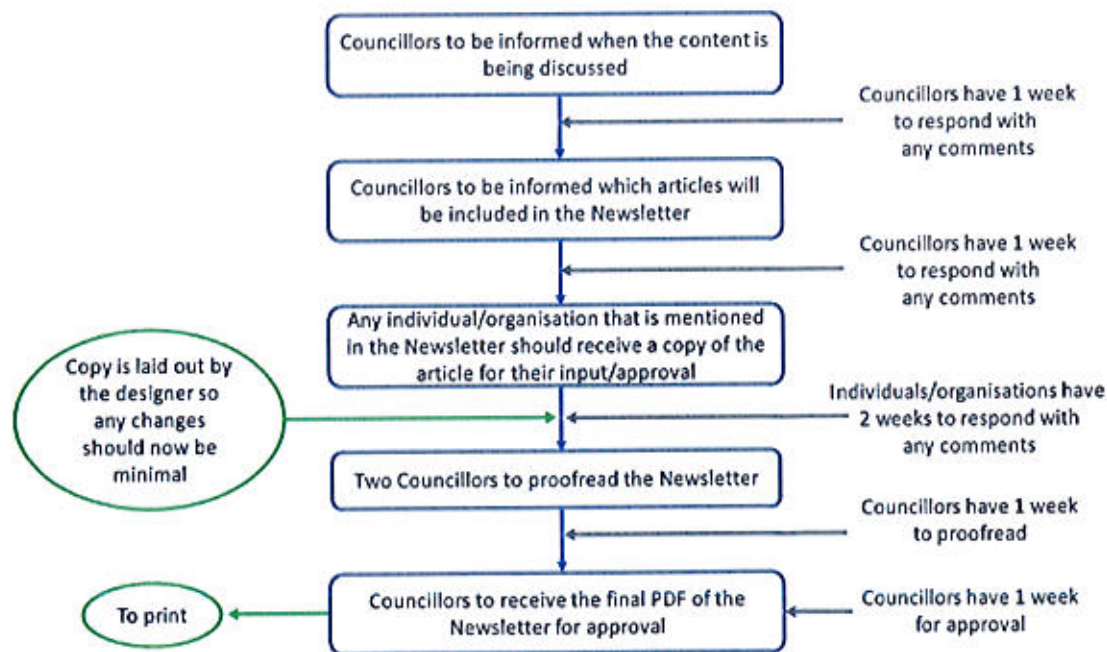
Internal Processes for the Town Council Newsletter

Agenda Item 11

Tenterden Town Council is committed to improving communications with the town's residents, and the Newsletter is part of an information programme to help keep people abreast of Council affairs.

As the Newsletter is produced by the Town Council, all Councillors should get to read and approve the final version before it is circulated to the Town. Generally, the Autumn Newsletter was very well received, but there were a few teething problems with the content. Implementation of a few simple internal processes could help to avoid any such issues in the future.

Deadlines for reviewing the Newsletter should be short so that its publication is not held up by Councillors. It is also important that if any Councillor wants to comment on the Newsletter, then this should be at the Word document stage as any changes to the laid-out copy become very time consuming and costly. The processes should not greatly increase the length of time it takes to produce the Newsletter as stages can overlap, e.g. writing of the Newsletter can begin before the deadline for Councillors' comments on which articles will be included.



Proposal: That the following processes be adopted by the Internal Committee for the Town Council Newsletter:

1. Town Clerk will inform councillors when the content of the Newsletter is being discussed so that they can suggest articles and also contact individuals/organisations for their input if needed

2. The Town Clerk will let councillors know which articles will be included in the next Newsletter so that he can be notified if there is likely to be any issues
 - a. Councillors can request copies of the articles, which will be at the Word document stage so any amendments will be easy to make
3. The Town Clerk will send articles to any individual or organisation that are discussed (at the Word document stage) for their input/approval
4. When the copy is laid out, two councillors will proof read the newsletter
5. The Town Clerk will circulate the final draft of the newsletter to all councillors for approval

Cllr. Dr. Lisa Lovelidge
Chair, Internal Committee

Impact on Crime and Disorder:	None
Impact on Bio-diversity:	None
Budgetary Impact:	None

REPORT: "Public sector communication"

– a conference on 26 September 2017

It should be borne in mind that the conference was arranged and hosted by Granicus, whose business is selling technological solutions to the public sector. Inevitably, therefore, the day was biased heavily towards technology and how Granicus can help implement solutions.

The day's presentations were -

1 - Challenges and opportunities

Paul Masterman, Strategic Communications Specialist and LGA Associate

Communications used to be about control of information - now it's about guidance

Edelman Trust Barometer - <https://www.edelman.com/trust2017/> - indicates low levels of trust (Brexit, Trump, Grenfell)

Communicators should avoid spin and tell the transparent truth instead

"Tweeting out into the hurricane [of news] is pointless", but we need to change things from people using social media to "have a go at us" to enabling them to take part

2, 3, 4 - Income generation and targets

Darren Caveney and Dan Slee, co-creators of comms2poyny0

Karen Yates, Traded Services Marketing and Brand Manager, and Andy Allsopp, Head of Communication and Marketing, both from Essex County Council

John-Paul Danon, Sales Director, Council Advertising Network, and Dave Worsell, Managing Director, Granicus Europe

More and more, councils - including their PR/Communications teams - are expected to generate income for their councils, not just be an expenditure. Granicus have produced a white paper on the subject, "*Income Targets: Comms Entrepreneurs, Income Warriors and Three Paths Forward*", available to download here: <https://uk.granicus.com/>

South Staffordshire council set up a business hub, charging businesses - especially micro businesses - for space, facilities and advice

Essex CC expects to be fully self-financing by 2021, basically by charging for services that had previously been given

Granicus ran a three month pilot scheme with seven councils, adding advertising at the foot of their emails; generated more than 13,000 "clicks" (no indication of the financial value); assured us that people were not upset or annoyed at this - though adverts were at the foot of the emails - no doubt, they will migrate to the body. Advertisers see advertising through councils as safe, unique and effective - though they need to be targeted, which means email communications need to be segmented, so a "one newsletter to cover all council activities" approach will not work. Ad blockers do not work on emails, only on web browsers

5 - Customer communications in a digital world

Peter Smith, Digital Engagement Manager, HM Revenue & Customs

A presentation (by someone who thought he was a bit of a comedian) explaining how HMRC has engaged with agents/accountants through weekly "talking points" webinars on specific subjects, but which included general Q&A sessions. He emphasised the importance of a

"rhythm of engagement" (weekly, with emailed invitations/reminders each Monday) and of well designed, clear emails with a clear "call to action" button to link to the webinar site.

6 - Digital in the DNA

Sarah Lay, Digital Content Strategist

This presentation started with some statistics: 89% of adults in the UK (78% of those aged 64-75 and 99% of those aged 16-34) use the internet, highlighting how important it is to use the internet for community engagement.

While public services are already "sort of" online, they tend not to be "omni-channel" - using all channels of digital communication - and tend to use digital media to send messages, rather than to have/enable conversations. People have raised expectations for engagement, due to improvements in - and the ubiquity of - technology, and the public sector needs to meet those expectations.

It was acknowledged that online is not always best - ways need to be found to allow people to speak on the phone or face-to-face, not just through the internet. [*Having a website or Facebook page is no substitute for holding face-to-face surgeries*]. However, councils should explore the full possibilities of digital communications, too.

Using digital communications effectively involves re-designing communications, not just digitising what has been done in other ways before.

"Communication is key to what an organisation thinks and does". EG: Disneyland, where staff are cast members and visitors are guests: that attitude inevitably informs how people treat and are treated there - it sets the framework for interaction.

As individuals, we may not want to use digital in our own lives, but we have a duty to provide digital engagement by the council.

Casserole Club - <https://www.digitalmarketplace.service.gov.uk/g-cloud/services/605405971717348> -

7 - Closing the cyber security gap

Bob Ainsbury, Chief Product Officer, Granicus

This presentation stressed the importance of ensuring cyber-security: "never underestimate how tempting your data is to hackers". Cyber-security needs to address both people (a strong recommendation for SATT: Security Awareness Training and Testing) and systems (firewalls,, monitoring activity, etc)

8 - Granicus awards

The after lunch slot was used for presenting the Granicus "Digital Strategy and Impact Awards". Details of the award winners are here - <https://uk.granicus.com/awards/> - Worthy of particular note were -

- Exeter City Council, for emergency communications necessitated by the Royal Clarence Hotel fire and the problems it caused
- South Staffs council, for encouraging residents to save money and shop locally, using *Good Life Deals* - <https://www.goodlifedeals.co.uk/> - software that connects residents to local businesses
- Central Bedfordshire council for its Local Plan consultation process

9 - Building a knowledge centre

Simon Swan, Digital Strategy and Transformation Leader, Met Office

A presentation from the Met Office on how they have promoted the Met Office's services digitally in the face of stiff competition, using Blue Ocean Strategy

- <https://www.blueoceanstrategy.com/what-is-blue-ocean-strategy/> - to identify its USP, setting key objectives, building authority, identifying its audience and providing education, help and support.

Twitter is used as an important component, through Twitter Moments - Twitter's curated news feed - and responding to enquiries made by Twitter; however, it does require "consistent resource allocation" to be worthwhile

The Met Office also provides an email severe weather alert service, and runs online courses to learn about weather.

Identification of its users' interests, and finding ways to satisfy them, was crucial, as was measuring, monitoring and managing as a result

10 - Emergency communications

Briget Aherne, Interim Head of Public Relations, Consultation and Engagement at Bristol City Council

Covering press and public relations in emergencies, this emphasised the need for -

- Constant planning and preparation
- Defining (and distinguishing between) emergencies and crises
- A willingness to "Bin the Plan" if it was not working
- Seizing opportunities to get involved
- Working with what you have
- Looking after the emergency team
- Debriefing and evaluation

11 - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Unfortunately, for me, this replaced an advertised slot entitled "Behavioural sciences and psychology: How to move people to action", which I had been looking forward to, in the hope of learning how to recruit volunteers. Sadly, it seems they could not book a speaker.

Holly Bremmer, Head of Dissemination and Imogen Heywood, Engagement Manager, both from the Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing, and David Tigg from the Information Commissioner's Office.

This started with a "spot the difference" approach between the existing Data Protection Act requirements and those to be imposed by the GDPR. This boiled down to an understanding that there were no really startling differences, that GDPR is slightly more stringent in some areas than the DPA, but that most data controllers - especially in the public sector - would find they had little extra to do once they had carried out their essential review of the data they hold and the safeguards they have in place.

Guides are available from the Information Commissioner's Office - www.ico.org.uk -

- An overview of the GDPR
- Preparing for the GDPR
- Draft consent guidelines

One can also sign up for an email newsletter at www.informationsharing.org.uk/GDPR

12 - Improving public engagement

Glen Ocsko, Engagement Specialist, Granicus

The organisers decided to lighten the mood for the last presentation of the day, which took the form of an extended "rap", referencing -

- Defining outcomes
- Expanding reach
- Choosing the right channels
- Choosing the right content
- Driving outcomes

All very well to exhort us to do that, but no suggestions as to how! Luckily, Granicus publish reports and guides intended to fill that gap.

The most useful information from this was that email subjects most likely to grab attention include the words Alert, Bulletin, Daily (or Weekly), News, while words such as Free, £££, Guaranteed and Earn are considered off-putting.

Cllr Justin Nelson: 30 September 2017