



East Midlands Audit Services Ltd

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT/CHECKLIST FOR BRIMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026

Further to the Internal Audit of Accounts I carried out on 17, 22 and 23 June 2026, I confirm that the annual audit was carried out in accordance with the suggested approach contained in the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) - Practitioners' Guide 2025 to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and governance statements 2025/26.

Page 3 of the 2025/26 AGAR form has been signed off accordingly.

Signed

23 June 2026

East Midlands Audit Services Ltd

1. Book Keeping			Comments
1.1	Ledgers maintained and up to date?	Yes	Software used - Rialtas
1.2	Arithmetic correct?	Yes	

2. Financial Regulations and Standing Orders			Comments
2.1	Standing Orders adopted, up to date and reviewed annually?	Yes	FC 13/05/2025 – 10/25-26(a)
2.2	Financial Regulations adopted, up to date and reviewed annually?	Yes	FC 13/05/2025 – 10/25-26(b)
2.3	FRs properly tailored to council?	Yes	
2.4	RFO appointed – In accordance with proper practices and with reference to section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.	Yes	Parish Clerk is RFO FC 10/06/2025 – 39/25-26
2.5	Review of procedures in place for acquisition of formal tenders and quotes ensuring they are in line with the SO & FR which should be based on the latest version	Yes	

2.6	Ensure that consistent values are in place for acquisition of formal tenders between SO & FR (different values may be in two documents)	Yes	
2.7	Review the procedures for receipts of invoices, agreement of invoice detail and confirmation of goods/services delivery and approval for payment	Yes	
2.8	Check that there is effective segregation between the writing of cheques and or setting up of online payments and physical release of payments	Yes	
2.9	List of member interests held?	Yes	Website
2.10	Agendas signed, informative and displayed with 3 clear days' notice? Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12 Part 2, paragraph 10, sub paragraph 2. APM 7 clear days LGA 1972, Sch 12, para 15.	Yes	Agendas are missing from the website. Issue dates are missing from the agendas issued cannot check if 3 clear days is provided throughout year.

3. Payment Controls		Comments	
3.1	Is there supporting paperwork for payments with appropriate authorisation (two signatories)(Full Council Approval) ?	Yes	Payments are approved at each Full Council meeting.
3.2	Check that VAT reclaims are prepared and submitted in a timely manner in line with the underlying records and in accordance with current HMRC requirements	No	VAT has not be reclaimed for full year.
3.3	Has the Council adopted the General Power of Competence (GPC) and is there evidence this is being applied correctly? (At least 2/3 elected members and a qualified Clerk (CilCA or higher) resolved at the Annual Council meeting after an election)	Yes	FC 13/05/2025 – 11/25-26

3.4	S137 separately recorded and within limits?	Yes	
3.5	S137 expenditure of direct benefit to electorate?	Yes	
3.5	S137 expenditure minuted?	Yes	
3.6	Where applicable, are payments of interest and principal sums in respect of loans paid in accordance with agreements?	N/A	No loans
3.7	Where debit/credit cards are in use, establish the total monthly and individual transaction limits and ensure appropriate controls over physical security and usage of the cards are in place.	N/A	

4. Risk Management			Comments
4.1	Does scan of minutes reveal any unusual activity?	No	
4.2	Annual risk assessment carried out at least annually?	No	Has not been reviewed recently.
4.3	Insurance cover appropriate and adequate – employment, public liability and fidelity guarantee and has been reviewed on an annual basis?	Yes	Recommend Full Council approve the insurance renewal annually along with asset register.
4.5	Internal financial controls documented and evidenced?	Yes	
4.6	Evidence that a review of the effectiveness of internal audit was conducted during the year, including consideration of the independence and competence of the internal auditor prior to their appointment	Yes	FC 14/10/2025 – 100/25-26(iii)
4.7	Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for monitoring play areas, open spaces and sports pitches; such reviews should be undertaken by appropriately qualified external inspectors or, if by officers or members	N/A	

	that they have received the appropriate training and accreditation		
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5. Budget			Comments
5.1	Annual budget has been properly prepared before the budget is set and agreed at Full Council.	Yes	FC 03/02/2026 – 158/2026(i)
5.2	Ensure that the precept received in the accounts matches the prior year submission form to the relevant authority and the public record of precepted amounts .	Yes	£61,579
5.3	Precept amount has been agreed at Full Council and clearly minuted	Yes	FC 10/02/2026 – 170/1016(ii) £62,195
5.4	Reserves held – general and earmarked Reserve Policy held?	Yes	EMR - £101,342.04 General - £58,400 No reserves policy held.
5.5	Regular reporting of expenditure and variances from budget?	No	

6. Income Controls			Comments
6.1	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	Yes	
6.2	Is income reported to Full Council?	No	Income no longer minuted as taken to Council.
6.3	Does the precept record agree to the Council Tax Authority's notification?	Yes	
6.4	Review of 'aged debtors' listings to ensure appropriate follow up action is in place.	Yes	
6.5	Allotments; ensure that appropriate signed tenancy agreements exist, that an appropriate register of tenants is	N/A	

	maintained, identifying that debtors are monitored.		
6.6	Burials: ensure that a formal burial register is maintained, that it is up-to-date and that a sample of interments and memorials are appropriately evidenced, that fees have been charged at the correct approved rate and been recovered within a reasonable time: (Authorities should also acquire and retain copies of Burial / Cremation certificates)	N/A	
6.7	Hall hire: ensure that an effective diary system for bookings is in place identifying the hirer, hire times and ideally cross-referenced to invoices raised.	Yes	New booking system in place.
6.8	Other variable income streams: ensure that appropriate control procedures and documentation are in existence to provide a clear audit trail through to invoicing and recovery of all such income.	Yes	

7. Petty Cash		Comments	
7.1	Is petty cash in operation?	Yes	£200.00
7.2	If appropriate, is there an adequate control system in place?	Yes	
7.3	Review the systems in place for controlling any petty cash and also cash floats (used for bar, catering, etc).	Yes	
7.4	Check a sample of transactions during the financial year to ensure appropriate supporting documentation is held.	Yes	
7.5	Review the existence of evidenced periodic independent verification of the petty cash and any other cash floats held.	Yes	
7.6	Ensure that VAT is identified wherever incurred and appropriate	Yes	

7.7	Physically check the petty cash and other cash floats held.	No	
7.8	Where bar or catering facilities are in place, ensure that appropriate cashing-up procedures are in place reconciling the physical cash takings to the till "Z" total	N/A	

8 . Payroll – Staff			Comments
8.1	Ensure that, for all staff , a formal employment contract is in place together with a confirmatory letter setting out any changes to the contract.	Yes	
8.2	Ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for the payment of members allowances and deduction of any tax liability.	Yes	
8.3	Ensure that, for a sample of staff salaries, gross pay due is calculated in accordance with the approved spinal point on the NJC scale or hourly rate, if off-scale, and also with the contracted hours.	Yes	
8.4	Ensure that appropriate tax codes are being applied to each employee.	Yes	
8.5	Where free or paid for software is used, ensure that it is up to date.	N/A	External payroll service used.
8.6	For the test sample of employees, ensure that tax is calculated appropriately.	Yes	
8.7	Check the correct treatment of Pension contributions	Yes	Nest pension
8.8	Ensure that the correct employers' pension percentage contribution is being applied.	Yes	

8.9	For NI, ensure that the correct deduction and employer's contributions are applied: NB. the employers allowance is not available to councils but may be used by other authorities	Yes	
8.10	Ensure that for the test sample, the correct net pay is paid to the employee with tax, NI and pension contributions correctly paid to the respective agencies	Yes	
8.11	Has council approved salary paid?	Yes	
8.12	Have pension re-declaration duties been carried out?	Yes	Pension redeclaration due 04/08/2026 – The Pension Regulator
8.13	Other payments reasonable and approved by council?	Yes	
8.14	Minimum wage paid?	Yes	

9. Asset Control			Comments
9.1	Ensure that the Authority is maintaining a formal asset register and updating it routinely to record new assets at historic cost price, net of VAT and removing any disposed of/ no longer serviceable assets.	Yes	Purchased software outright and pay a maintenance and support fee also.
9.2	Ideally, the register should identify for each asset the purchase cost and, if practicable, the replacement/ insured cost, the latter being updated annually and used to assist in forward planning for asset replacement.	Yes	Insured value not included on register. Date of purchase not included on register.
9.3	Additions and disposals records should allow tracking from the prior year to the current.	Yes	
9.4	Ensure that the asset value to be reported in the AGAR at section 2, line 9 equates to the prior year reported value, adjusted for the nominal value of any changes.	Yes	Last year £594,877 This year £598,231
9.5	Compare the asset register with the insurance schedule to ensure that all assets	Yes	

	as recorded are appropriately insured or “self-insured” by the Authority.		
9.6	Leases: ensure that leases are reviewed in a timely manner in accordance with the terms of the lease and rents similarly reviewed appropriately at the due time.	N/A	
Fixed asset investments:			
9.7	Ensure that all long-term investments (i.e., those for more than 12 month terms) are covered by the “ Investment Strategy ” and reported as Assets in the AGAR at section 2, line 9.	N/A	

10. Borrowing and Lending			Comments
10.1	Ensure that the authority has sought and obtained appropriate UK Debt Management Office approval for all loans acquired.	N/A	No loans
10.2	Ensured that the authority has accounted for the loan appropriately (i.e., recorded the full value of the loan, any arrangement fee should be regarded as an admin expense) in the year of receipt.	N/A	No loans
10.3	Ensure that the combined principal loan repayment and interest for the year is correctly recorded in the AGAR at section 2 line 5.	N/A	No loans
10.4	Ensure that the outstanding loan liability as at 31st March each year is correctly recorded in the AGAR at section 2, line 10 (value should be verified from the lender and verification provided to the IA by the clerk/RFO).	N/A	No loans
10.5	Where the Authority has issued loans to local bodies, they should ideally seek signed indemnities from the recipient body, or their members, agreeing to underwrite the loan debt.	N/A	No loans issued

11. Bank Reconciliations			Comments
11.1	Is there a bank reconciliation for each account?	Yes	
11.2	Reconciliation carried out on receipt of statement?	Yes	
11.3	Do the individual bank balances agree with the bank statements as at 31 March?	Yes	£95,329.84 £49,504.19 £5,797.55 £200.00 – Petty cash held Total £150,831.58
11.4	Is there regular reporting of bank balances at Council meetings?	Yes	Requires minuting.

12. Year End Procedures			Comments
12.1	Has the appropriate end of year AGAR documents been completed?	Yes	
12.2	Whilst IAs are not required to verify the accuracy of detail to be disclosed in the AGAR, this assertion, together with the expectation of most Authorities, effectively requires IAs to ensure that the financial detail reported at section 2 of the AGAR reflects the detail in the accounting records maintained for the financial year. Consequently, IAs should: • Ensure that, where annual turnover exceeds £200,000, appropriate records are maintained throughout the year on an Income and Expenditure basis to facilitate budget reporting in that vein. • Ensure that appropriate accounting arrangements are in place to account for debtors and creditors during the year and at the financial year-end.	Yes	Income and Expenditure
12.3	IAs should ensure that, <u>all relevant criteria are met</u> (receipts and payments each totalled less than £25,000)	N/A	

	- the correct exemption certificate was prepared and minuted in accordance with the statutory submission deadline; - that it has been published, together with all required information on the Authority's website and noticeboard.		
12.4	IAs should review the Authority's website ensuring that all required documentation is published in accordance with the relevant legislation.	No	Agendas and meeting minutes not uploaded to website at time of audit.
12.5	IAs should acquire / examine a copy of the required "Public Notice" ensuring that it clearly identifies the statutory 30 working day period when the Authority's records are available for public inspection . IAs may also check whether authorities have minuted the relevant dates at the same time as approving the AGAR.	Yes No	
12.6	IAs should ensure that the statutory disclosure / publication requirements in relation to the prior year's AGAR have been met as detailed on the front page of the current year's AGAR.	No	Conclusion of audit not published on website.
12.7	Roll forward of the prior year cashbook balances to the new financial year	Yes	Rialtas moves across balances at year end.
12.8	Sample Financial Transactions in cashbooks to bank statements (Appendix 1)	Yes	As below

13. Internal Audit			Comments
13.1	Has the Council considered the previous internal audit report?	Yes	FC 13/05/2025 – 18/25-26(a)
13.2	Has appropriate action been taken regarding the recommendations raised?	N/A	No recommendations made.
13.3	Has the Council confirmed the appointment of an internal auditor?	Yes	FC 14/10/2025
13.4	Has the letter of engagement been approved by Full Council?	Yes	FC 14/10/2025

14. External Audit			Comments
14.1	Has the Council considered the previous external audit report?	Yes	FC 11/11/2025 – 116/2025(iii)
14.2	Has appropriate action been taken regarding the comments raised?		External audit report not provided during audit. This is not available on the website to view at time of audit.
15. Other Information			Comments
15.1	Was the annual meeting held in accordance with legislation? (First item of business – appoint Chair) (Annual Council meeting to be held in May)	Yes Yes Yes	FC 13/05/2025 – 1/25-26
15.2	Is there evidence that Minutes (Full Council and all Committees) are administered in accordance with legislation? (LGA 1972 schedule 12 Para 41(1) and 44 – Unapproved minutes of the meeting should be formally approved (with any necessary amendments) at the next meeting. The Chair is given formal approval to sign the minutes)	Yes	
15.3	Is there a list of members interests held?	Yes	Website
15.4	- Confirm that all charities of which the council is a Trustee are up to date with CC filing requirements. - that the council is the sole trustee on the Charity Commission register. - that the council is acting in accordance with the Trust deed. - that the Charity meetings and accounts are recorded separately from those of the council. - review the level and activity of the charity and where a risk	N/A	

	based approach suggests such, review the Independent Examiners report.		
15.5	Has the Transparency code been correctly applied, and information published in accordance with current legislation?	N/A	
15.6	Has the Council registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO)?	Yes	Z1600718 Expiry – 02/02/2027 Tier 1
15.7	Is the Council compliant with the General Data Protection requirements?	Yes	
15.8	Has the Council published a website accessibility statement on their website in line with Regulations?	No	No website accessibility statement on website.
15.9	Does the Council have official email addresses/ for correspondence owned and paid for by Council?	No	brimingtonparishcouncil@outlook.com
15.10	Is the Council website meeting WCAG2.2AA (Website accessibility guidelines)?	No	No website accessibility statement available on the website.
15.11	Has the Council updated their website accessibility statement?	No	As above.
15.12	Does the Council have an up to date IT Policy?	No	The IT Policy was not adopted until after the yearend.
15.13	Is there evidence that electronic files are backed up?	No	Electronic data is not currently backed up.
15.14	Do the terms of reference exist for all committee and is there evidence these are regularly reviewed?	No	Terms of reference to be reviewed annually.

Annual Return (Page 5)			
		Year ending 31 March 2025 RESTATED	Year ending 31 March 2026
		£	£
1	Balances brought forward	213,068	197,284
2	Annual precept	59,211	61,580
3	Total other receipts	23,975	40,721
4	Staff costs	56,577	67,257
5	Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6	Total other payments	42,393	72,586
7	Balances carried forward	197,284	159,742
8	Total cash and investments	193,571	150,832
9	Total fixed assets and long term investments and assets	594,877	598,231
10	Total borrowings	0	0
11	Section 2 annual return figures completed and cross referenced	Yes	Yes

Appendix 1

Payee invoice check	Hollinsend Fire	NWCE
Ledger date	07/05/2025	30/11/2025
Item/Budget heading	Maintenance	Kitchen
Ref/cheque no.	BACS	BACS
Payment minute ref	49/25-26	146/2026
Invoice value	£1,066.20	£14,102.68
Minute value	£1,066.20	£14,102.68
Payment value	£1,066.20	£14,102.68
Bank Statement value	£1,066.20	£14,102.68
Timely payment	Yes	Yes
VAT recorded	Yes	Yes
S137 recorded	N/A	N/A
S137 minuted	N/A	N/A

Conclusion:

Governance and Transparency

1. Publication of Agendas and Minutes

Findings: Not all agendas and minutes were available on the Parish Council website.

Recommendation: The Council to ensure that all agendas and approved minutes are published on the website and retained. A regular review of website content should be undertaken to ensure completeness. Parish Clerk did state the Council are changing website provider currently to Cuttlefish.

2. Publication of AGAR Documents and Public Notices

Findings: Previous years' public notice and the External Auditor's Certificate were not available on the website.

Recommendation: The Council should publish all documents required under the Accounts and Audit Regulations, including AGAR forms, public rights notices, and External Auditor reports, and ensure these remain accessible for the prescribed period.

3. Website Accessibility Statement

Findings: No website accessibility statement was available.

Recommendation: The Council should publish a compliant website accessibility statement and regularly review accessibility arrangements to ensure ongoing compliance.

Financial Management and Internal Control

4. Presentation of Income and Payments

Findings: Income is no longer minuted alongside payments to Full Council.

Recommendation: Financial reports presented to Council to include both income and expenditure transactions to ensure Members receive complete financial information and can exercise effective budgetary oversight and minute that this has occurred.

5. Insurance Renewal and Asset Register

Findings: Insurance renewal was not formally approved by Full Council alongside the asset register review.

Recommendation: Annual insurance renewal and the review of the asset register should be considered and formally approved by Full Council, with decisions clearly recorded in the minutes.

6. Approval of Bank Balances and Reconciliations

Findings: Bank balances and supporting bank statements are presented to Council but not formally minuted.

Recommendation: Bank balances, bank reconciliations and supporting bank statements to be presented to Full Council on a regular basis and formally noted or approved in the minutes. This will strengthen financial oversight, provide assurance that reconciliations are being completed accurately and in a timely manner, and help Members fulfil their responsibility for monitoring the Council's financial position.

7. Budget Monitoring

Findings: Budget to actual income and expenditure reports are presented to Council this requires minuting.

Recommendation: Detailed budget monitoring reports comparing actual income and expenditure against the approved budget should be presented to Full Council regularly, ideally at each meeting or at least quarterly. Significant variances should be investigated and explained to Members, with any necessary corrective action recorded in the minutes. This will strengthen financial management, improve budgetary control and assist the Council in meeting its fiduciary responsibilities.

Risk Management

8. Annual Review of Risk Assessment

Findings: The Council's Risk Assessment had not been reviewed during the year.

Recommendation: The Risk Assessment should be reviewed and approved annually by Full Council, with evidence of the review recorded in the minutes.

9. Committee Terms of Reference

Findings: Committee Terms of Reference are not reviewed annually.

Recommendation: Terms of Reference for all committees should be reviewed and approved annually by Full Council to ensure they remain current and fit for purpose.

Information Technology and Data Security

10. Council-Owned Email System

Findings: The email address in use is not owned or paid for by the Council.

Recommendation: The Council should adopt and use a council-owned email domain and account for all official business to improve security, continuity and compliance with data protection requirements.

11. IT Policy

Findings: No IT Policy was in place as at 31 March 2026, although one was adopted in April 2026.

Recommendation: The Council should ensure the newly adopted IT Policy is implemented, communicated to all users and reviewed annually.

12. Data Backup Arrangements

Findings: Electronic data is not currently backed up.

Recommendation: The Council should implement a formal backup solution for all electronic records, with regular testing to ensure data can be recovered in the event of system failure, cyber incident or accidental loss.

Overall Conclusion

The audit identified a number of areas where controls require strengthening, particularly in relation to transparency, governance documentation, and IT security arrangements. The Council should address the recommendations above as a priority to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and to strengthen its framework of governance and internal control.

The Clerk and/or RFO should certify the accounts before the full council approves them.

The Notice for the public inspection period must detail that it is for a single period of 30 working days and must include the first ten days of July (ie 03.06 – 14.07 or 01.07-11.08