

# HILBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL – INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT 2026.

## 1. Scope of responsibility.

Hilborough Parish council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

## 2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

## 3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

### **THE COUNCIL:**

The council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its December meeting. The December meeting of the council approves the level of precept for the following financial year. The full council meets monthly, except August, each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the clerk who is also the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO). The council carries out quarterly reviews of its budget at the council meeting, and it is recorded in the minutes for the appropriate meeting.

**Clerk to the council/responsible finance officer:**

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

**Payments:**

All payments are reported to the council for approval. Two members of the council must sign every cheque or authorise online payments. The signatories should consider each cheque against the relevant invoice; pdf invoices are provided with each payment schedule. All authorised cheque signatories are members of the Council. No officer of the Council can sign cheques. All payments are loaded onto the system by the RFO and then approved by Councillors.

**Income:** All income is received and banked in the council's name in a timely manner and reported to the council.

**Risk Assessments/Risk Management:** The council reviews its risk assessment annually and reviews its systems and controls.

**Internal Audit:**

The council appoints an independent internal auditor who reports to the council on an annual basis on the adequacy of it's:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management

The report is presented to Council and displayed on the website.

**External Audit:**

The council's external auditors, submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council.

#### 4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The results of that review must be considered by the Council, which should also approve the Statement on Internal Control.

Signature:

Chairman Signature: