

**3 Fernbeck Cottages, Tippings Lane, Farnsfield, Newark NG22 8EP**

Barkestone, Plungar and Redmile Parish Council  
5 Cropwell Manor Court  
Cropwell Bishop  
Nottinghamshire  
NG12 3GS

28 April 2015

Dear Councillors

**Annual internal audit for the year ended 31 March 2015**

I certify that I have completed the internal audit of your accounts for the year ending 31 March 2015 acting in my capacity as an independent auditor.

The audit has included carrying out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls in accordance with the guidelines for Internal Audit laid down in the Practitioner's Guide (England) 2014 to Governance and Accountability for Local Councils and specifically set out in Appendix 9 – an approach to internal audit testing.

I am pleased to report that there are no matters arising from the audit which need to be brought to your attention and which would have prevented me from signing off Section 4 of the Annual Return with a clean bill of health. The accounts themselves and the controls in place are sound and robust.

Councillors will be aware that Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, which inter alia required that every cheque or other order for payment be signed by two members of the council, has been repealed in order to allow councils to take advantage of technological advances and modernise their arrangements for the payment of goods and services. This gives significant efficiency improvements. Most of the Town and Parish Councils which I audit have successfully gone down this route and make full use of internet banking.

The extra safeguards Councils need to implement are set out in the new Appendix 10 – (Safeguarding public money) to the Practitioner’s Guide of which your clerk has a copy. Fortunately the clerk has already implemented the main provisions to protect the council by ensuring Councillors each month see and countersign the bank statements and the bank reconciliation. All that remains is for her to produce a detailed list of payments required each month, for Council to authorise payment (minuted) and for the list to be signed by two authorised bank signatories. That gives the clerk authority to effect payment by whatever means she thinks fit. Occasionally it will undoubtedly still mean a cheque (signed again by two bank signatories), envelopes written, stamps purchased and placed in the hands of Royal Mail. Most payments will be made electronically direct to the payee’s bank account.

Changes will need to be made to your Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. I am happy to help in this respect (at no charge to the Council) using my experience with other Councils.

I would like to thank the Clerk for her help when I was conducting the audit.

Yours sincerely

David G C Slight