

HEELIS & LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

Internal Audit Report for Barking Parish Council – 2025/2026

The following Internal Audit was carried out on the adequacy of systems of control in accordance with the requirements of the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015 and the guidance and instruction in the Practitioners Guide 2025. The following recommendations/comments have been made:

Income: £63,650.47 Expenditure: £49,761.78 Ear Reserves: £265,655 Reserves: £16,500

2026 AGAR Completion:

Section One: **No**

Section Two: **Yes – to be approved by council**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/2026: **Yes**

Certificate of Exemption: **No**

Proper book-keeping Cash Book and reconciliation of financial transactions in Cash Book with bank statements. Supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts

All were found to be in order. LGAs137 and VAT payments are tracked and identified within the year end accounts.

The cashbook is referenced, providing a clear audit trail. Supporting documentation is in place and well-referenced.

Financial regulations Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
Tenders
Appropriate payment controls including acting within the legal framework with reference to council minutes
Identifying VAT payments and reclamation
Cheque books, paying-in books and other relevant documents

Standing Orders in place: **Yes**

Reviewed: **15th May 2025 (Ref: 11/25)**

Financial Regulations in place: **Yes**

Reviewed: **15th May 2025 (Ref: 9/25i)**

VAT reclaimed during the year: **Yes** Registered: **No**

Submission Period: **Amount:**
01/04/2025-30/11/2025 **£2,139.10**

General Power of Competence: **No**

There were no tenders during the year that exceeded the £30,000 Public Contract Regulations threshold.

Contact details : 1 Hembling Terrace, Mill Lane, Suffolk, IP13 0PP

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Heather Heelis Dip HE Local Policy FILCM

Lynne Lodge Dip HE Local Policy

Risk Assessment

Appropriate procedures in place for the activities of the council
Compliance with Data Protection regulations

Risk Assessment document in place: Yes
Data Protection registration: Yes – ZA048094 Expiry 18/05/2026

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulations came into force on 25 May 2018. It is likely that this will affect how the Council handles its data. Due to the financial risk associated with the General Data Protection Regulations, the Council has included this in their Risk Assessment.

Insurance was in place for the year of the audit (valid 01/10/2025 to 30/09/2026). The Risk Assessment was reviewed at a full Council meeting held on 15th May 2025 (Ref: 9/25g).

Statement of Internal Controls in place: Yes

The Council have effective internal financial controls in place. The Clerk provides financial reports to council meetings. Councillors are provided with information to enable them to make informed decisions.

Fidelity Cover: £500,000

The level of Fidelity cover is within the recommended guidelines of year-end balances plus 50% of the precept.

Transparency

Compliance with **Assertion 10**:

Website link: www.barkingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Privacy Policy published: Yes

Link: <https://www.barkingparishcouncil.gov.uk/home/parish-council/complaints-procedure-and-other-adopted-policies/>

IT Policy in place: Yes

IT Policy published: Yes

Link: <https://www.barkingparishcouncil.gov.uk/home/parish-council/complaints-procedure-and-other-adopted-policies/>

Data Protection Policy in place: Yes

Data Protection Policy published: Yes

Link: <https://www.barkingparishcouncil.gov.uk/home/parish-council/complaints-procedure-and-other-adopted-policies/>

Accessibility Statement in place: Yes

Accessibility Statement published: Yes

Link: <https://barkingparishcouncil.gov.uk/accessibility-statement>

Generic Council email addresses for officials in place: Yes

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Under **The Accounts & Audit Regulations**, councils must publish on their website:

Audited AGAR:

2025 Annual Return, Section One Published – Yes

2025 Annual Return, Section Two Published – Yes

2025 Annual Return, Section Three Published – Yes

Notice of period for the exercise of public rights (2025)

Published – Yes

Period of Exercise of Public Rights

Publication Date: 20/05/2025 Start Date: 03/06/2025 End Date: 14/07/2025

Notice of Conclusion of Audit (2025)

Published – Yes

Under the requirements of the **Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 13(2b)** the council is required to display AGARs for the five years 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-2025 on their website.

	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3 (Audited)
2020 - 2021	Yes	Yes	Yes
2021 - 2022	Yes	Yes	Yes
2022 - 2023	No	No	N/A
2023 - 2024	No	No	N/A
2024 - 2025	Yes	Yes	Yes

The Council have not met the publication requirements.

Recommendation (1): *The Council should publish the missing information.*

Under the **Transparency code for smaller authorities**, smaller councils with income/expenditure under £25,000 should publish on their website from 1 April 2015:

The council's income and expenditure for 2025 to 2026 exceeds £25,000.

Budgetary controls Verifying the budgetary process with reference to council minutes and supporting documents

Precept: £16,500 (2025-2026) Date: 16th January 2025 (Ref: 88/24d)

Precept: £17,500 (2026-2027) Date: 15th January 2026 (Ref: 84/25d)

Effective budgetary procedures are in place. The precept was agreed in full council, and the precept decision and amount have been clearly minuted. The Clerk ensures the council are aware of responsibilities, commitments, forward planning and the need for adequate reserves. Budget papers are prepared to ensure councillors have sufficient information to make informed decisions. Budgets are monitored during the year.

Income controls Precept and other income, including credit control mechanisms

All were found to be in order. Income controls were checked, and a sample of income received and banked was cross-referenced with the Cash Book and bank statements.

Cash Associated books and established system in place

There have been no cash payments made during the year of audit.

Payroll controls PAYE and NIC in place where necessary.
Compliance with Inland Revenue procedures
Records relating to contracts of employment and pensions

PAYE System in place: **Yes – PAYE Tools**

Employer's Reference: **475/LA56110**

P60s issued: **Yes**

The Council continue to operate RTI in accordance with HMRC regulations. Supporting paperwork is in place, and a P60 has been produced as part of the year-end process.

No eligible employees have joined the nominated pension scheme. The last date of re-declaration of compliance was 16th December 2025.

It is noted that the Council conducted a salary review at a meeting held on 18th September 2025 (Ref: 50/25e).

Asset control Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets
 Cross checking on insurance cover

A separate asset register is in place. Values are recorded at insurance value. The total value of assets are recorded at £35,268. The figure in the asset register corresponds with the figure in Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR.

The asset register was reviewed at meeting on 18th September 2025 (Ref: 50/25c).

Bank Reconciliation Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements

All were in order. Bank Reconciliations are carried out regularly. The bank statements reconciled with the end of year accounts and bank reconciliations for all accounts.

Bank Balances at 31 March were confirmed as:

<i>Barclays Community</i>	<i>£ 12,699.44</i>
<i>Barclays Premium</i>	<i>£ 16,600.36 as at 23/03/2026</i>
<i>CCLA</i>	<i>£255,198.52</i>

The Council had no outstanding loans at the year-end.

Reserves General Reserves are reasonable for the activities of the Council
 Earmarked Reserves are identified

The Council has adequate general reserves (£16,500) and has identified earmarked reserves of £265,655 in their year-end accounts.

Year-end procedures Appropriate accounting procedures are used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents
 Verifying sample payments and income
 Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate.

End of year accounts are prepared on a Receipts & Payments basis.

Sole Trustee The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee

The Council is not a sole trustee.

Internal Audit Procedures

The 2024-2025 Internal Audit report was considered by the Council at a meeting held on 15th May 2025 (Ref: 9/25f).

A review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was carried out on 24th July 2025 (Ref: 31/25c).

Heelis & Lodge were appointed as Internal Auditor at a meeting held on 24th July 2025 (Ref: 31/25b).

External Audit

The Council formally approved the 2025 AGAR at a meeting of the full Council held on 15th May 2025 (Ref:9/25c & d).

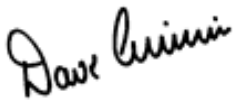
The External Auditor's report was considered at a meeting held on 18th September 2025 (Ref: 50/25b).

The following matters were brought to the attention of the Council:

The smaller authority has disclosed that it complied with laws, regulations and proper practices during the year 2024/25 by answering yes to Section 1, assertion 3. However the declaration of exemption, from an external review was not minuted and published on its website and the 2024/25 AGAR was also not published on the website. As a result, this assertion should have been answered No. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor's response to Internal Control Objectives K and N.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

- The Annual Parish Council meeting was held on 15th May 2025. The first item of business was the Election of Chairman, in accordance with Standing Orders.
- There are no additional comments/recommendations to make in relation to this audit.
- I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for the quality of the Audit file submitted for the Internal Audit process.



Dave Crimmin
Heelis & Lodge
28th April 2026

HEELIS&LODGE

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www.heelisandlodge.co.uk

INVOICE

To:

Lucinda Rogers
Barking Parish Council

Invoice No: HLD2504
Date: 28th April 2026

Details	Quantity	Amount (£)	Total (£)
To carry out Year-end Internal Audit for Barking Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2026.	1	285.00	285.00
Total			285.00

Please make cheques payable to: H J Heelis

Bank Details: Account 92002930 Sort Code 40-47-80

NB Change to bank account details

Terms – 14 days

Thank you.

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