

INTERNAL AUDIT FOR HARESCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL.

Report by Mrs Irena Litton BEM

Dated 25th January 2026, 5th February 2026 and 24th March 2026

	Comments and Recommendations
1. Accounting records	<p>Adequately kept on a payments and receipts system.</p> <p>Cashbook is regularly maintained.</p> <p>Members can access records online and receive regular updates as recorded in the minutes.</p>
2. Payments, Receipts & Budget	<p>A budget for Financial Year 2025/2026 was prepared and minuted. Min Ref 24.126</p> <p>A copy of the budget is published on the Councils website.</p> <p>Payments are clearly recorded in the Minutes.</p> <p>Receipts are clearly recorded in the Minutes.</p> <p>Spending and Quotes are duly considered in line with the Councils Financial Regulations.</p>
3. Budget vs spend.	<p>The half yearly review of the budget was considered in the September 2025 meeting. Min Ref 25.122</p> <p>An overspend on Village Maintenance was recorded as to be taken from EMRs.</p>
4. Bank reconciliations	<p>Bank reconciliations are regularly recorded in the minutes and are verified as part of the internal controls.</p>
5. Investments and Petty Cash	<p>Circa £11 K is invested in a savers account.</p> <p>The Council does not hold Petty Cash.</p>
6. Reserves	<p>Ear Marked Reserves have been reviewed and clearly defined as part of the budget report. Min Ref 26.13</p> <p>General Reserves are reasonable and again are clearly defined as part of the budget report.</p>

7. Precept	<p>For FY 2025/26 was clearly recorded in the minutes. Min Ref: 24.127</p> <p>Precept demand for £5,720.</p>
8. Asset Register	<p>The Fixed Asset Register was reviewed in May 2025. Min Ref: 25.44</p> <p>A copy of the Fixed Asset Register is published on the Council's website</p>
9. Insurance	<p>The Council is in the 3rd year of 3 year agreement.</p> <p>The Council reviewed the insurance and confirmed that it still meets their needs. Min Ref: 25.54</p> <p>Insurance Cover is with Community First Insurance (Zurich Insurance).</p>
10. Risk Assessment Policy	<p>Risk Assessment Policy was reviewed in March 25 Min Ref 25.21.</p> <p>A copy is published on the Councils Website.</p>
11. Assets Maintained	<p>Reporting of asset maintenance is recorded in the minutes. Examples include Defibrillator maintenance and Village Sign.</p> <p>Council reviewed the Winter Plan – Min Ref 25.170</p>
12. Financial Regulations	<p>Most recent NALC adapted version reviewed Min Ref: 25.63</p> <p>A copy of the Financial Regulations are published on the Councils website.</p>
13. Standing Orders	<p>Most recent NALC adapted version reviewed Min Ref 25.62</p> <p>A copy of the Standing Orders are published on the Councils website.</p>
14. Powers to Spend	<p>The Council confirmed that it met the criteria and adopted the General Power of Competency Min Ref 25.10 and reconfirmed 25.65</p>
15. S.137 spending & Grants	<p>Expenditure was within the limits (£11.10 per electorate, for Financial Year 2025/2026).</p> <p>The Council have reviewed their Grants Awarding Policy – Min Ref 26.26</p>

	Grants were awarded included £50 to Cotswold Wardens, £150 and to Air Ambulance.
16. VAT	VAT of £32.68 reclaimed May 25 . Clearly recorded in the minutes. Min Ref: 25.53
17. Borrowing	There are no Loan arrangements.
18. Internal Control	Internal Financial Checks carried out regularly, which are clearly recorded in the minutes.
19. Direct Debits/Regular Payment List and Debit Card	Council reviewed the schedule of payment list. Min Ref: 25.51 Council approved Debit Card in line with their Financial Regulations – Min Refs 25.88 and 25.147
20. Bank Signatories	Council reviewed an updated bank mandate – Min Refs 25.52, 25.146 and 25.151
21. Employment	Council is registered with HMRC. There are no new employees. Contract for the Clerk is in place. Salary is paid in line with contract. External Payroll provider (PATA). Annual Pay Award was recorded in the minutes. Min Ref: 25.117
22. Pension	The new Clerk declined a Pension. Auto Enrolment declaration – Min Ref 25.152 (Next Due 2028).
23. Councillor Allowances/Expenses	The Councillors are not paid an allowance. Expenses are clearly recorded in the minutes. (See Min Ref 25.90)
24. End of Year Accounts	Approved and correctly recorded in the minutes. Min Ref: 25.43
25. AGAR Section 1 Governance Statement	Approved and correctly recorded in the minutes. Min Ref: 25.48 Copy is published on the Councils website.

26. AGAR Section 2 Accounting Statement	<p>Approved and correctly recorded in the minutes. Min Ref: 25.49</p> <p>Copy is published on the Councils website.</p>
<p>27. a. Internal Audit Report / AGAR</p> <p>b. Internal Audit Report – reviewed and actions taken.</p> <p>c. Appointment of Internal Auditor for Financial Year ending 31st March 2026</p>	<p>a. AGAR – correctly recorded in the minutes. Min Ref: 25.47</p> <p>A copy is published on Councils website</p> <p>b. Report reviewed and recommended actions have been carried out. Min Ref: 25.46</p> <p>c. Council approved the appointment of a competent and independent Internal Auditor. Min Ref: 26.8</p>
28. External Audit Report / AGAR OR Certificate of Exemption.	<p>Council correctly certified that it is exempt from a limited assurance review. Min Ref: 25.45</p> <p>A copy is published on the Councils website.</p>
29. Exercise in Public Rights	<p>The Council complied with the Notice of Exercise in Public Rights.</p> <p>Dates were reported 3rd June – 14th July 2025. Min Ref: 25.50</p> <p>A copy of the notice is published on the Councils website.</p>
30. Policies & Data Security.	<p>The following Policies regarding Data Protection are published on the Councils website:</p> <p>Data Protection Policy – Min ref 25.98</p> <p>Information Technology – Min ref 25.99</p> <p>Primary Contact is now a .gov email address – Min ref 25.171</p> <p>Council has registered with the ICO.</p>
31. Accessibility Statement	The website complies with the 2018 Accessibility Regulations.
32. Agendas and Summons	Agendas are issued and published within regulations.

	Agendas clearly show the appropriate summons.
33. Publication Scheme ,Code of Conduct, DPIs , Members responsibilities and Minutes	<p>Model Publication Scheme – Min Ref 25.131</p> <p>Code of Conduct – reviewed Min Ref 25.97</p> <p>Minutes clearly record DPIs</p> <p>Members Register of Interests are published on Stroud District Councils website but can be accessed by a link from the Parish Councils website.</p> <p>Members responsibilities are published on the Councils website.</p> <p>Minutes are published in draft form on Councils website within 28 days.</p> <p>Minutes are duly signed as a true record.</p>
34. Other Observations.	<p>a. The Council is not a burial authority.</p> <p>b. The Council is not responsible for Managing Trusts.</p> <p>c. Council is following good practice and has complied with all the previous recommendations and the new requirements as laid out in the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) Practitioners Guide 2025 – this is highly commendable.</p>

Sampling carried out on the 5th February 2026

Description	Payer	Date	Amount
Precept (receipt)	Stroud District Council	28 th April 2025 30 th September 2025	£2,860 £2,860
VAT Refund (receipt)	HMRC	9 th May 2025	£32.68
Defib Training (receipt)	Individual (seen by IA)	17 th November 2025	£20.00
Subscription (payment)	GAPTC	19 th May 2025	£71.13 (note small refund due-overcharged as Clerk is Cilca qualified).
Payroll Admin (Payment)	PATA	19 th December 2025	£20.25
Annual Licence (Payment)	ICO	22 nd August 2025	£47.00
Email Hosting (Payment)	Hugo Fox	18 th September 2025	£2.99 (£.50p VAT)
Insurance	Zurich	6 th May 2025	£128.07

Additional Documents viewed:

- Clerks contract checked, in the IA for FY 2023/24
- Insurance Schedule with Community First (Zurich Insurance).
- 12th May 2025, signed minutes viewed.
- Cashbook viewed
- Bank Statements and copy invoices viewed.
- Copy of Internal Checkers Report dated 12th January 2026, signed by Cllr G Williams.
- Copy of January 2026 Bank Reconciliation, signed by Cllr G Williams.