

**CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT OF
INTERNAL CONTROL
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2026**

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Chigwell Parish Council (like all parish councils) forms the first tier of local government and is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. Much of the law to which parish councils are subject may seem pedantic at the parish level and can be onerous, but it is nevertheless essential for parish councils to adhere to it.

In discharging this overall responsibility, Chigwell Parish Council (the Council) is also 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.

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, not absolute, assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing 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.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2026 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

The Council has appointed a Chairman who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful.

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves the following year's budget at its January meeting. The January Council meeting approves the precept level for the following financial year.

The Council has appointed a Finance and Governance Committee of Members who now meet regularly during the year. Members of the Committee monitor progress against objectives, bank reconciliations, financial systems and procedures, and budgetary control, and carry out regular reviews of financial matters. The Finance and Governance Committee reports to the Council.

The full Council meets eleven times each year. It monitors progress by receiving relevant

reports from the RFO. The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems, and procedures quarterly by an appointed Councillor.

Clerk & Proper Officer to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer:

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

Payments:

All payments are reported to the Council / Finance and Governance Committee for approval. Two Members of the Council must authorise every payment in public.

Risk Assessments / Risk Management:

The Council has adopted a Risk Management programme, and work will be ongoing.

Internal Audit:

The Council has appointed an Independent Internal Auditor who reports to the Council on the adequacy of its:

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

The effectiveness of the internal audit is reviewed annually by the Council.

External Audit:

The Council's External Auditors submit an annual Certificate of Audit which is presented to the Council.

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

- The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:
 - The Full Council;
 - The Finance & Governance Committee;
 - The Clerk & Proper Officer to the Council & Responsible Financial Officer who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risks;
 - The independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's system of internal control;
 - The Council's external auditors, who make the final check using the Annual Return, a

form completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, Clerk & Proper Officer, the Chair and the Internal Auditor. The external auditors issue an annual audit certificate.

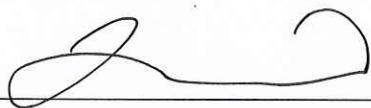
- The number of significant issues that are raised during the year.

SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

There are no significant internal control issues arising during 2025-2026.

The Council strives for the continuous improvement of the system it has adopted for internal control and is addressing any issues and weaknesses raised and reported during the review process.

(Chair) _____ Date: 25 June 2026

(Clerk)  _____ Date: 19 June 2026

(RFO)  _____ Date: 19 June 2026