

# **WICKHAM ST PAULS PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT for the Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019**

My role is to inspect the many and various parts of Council's governance in respect of its stewardship of public assets. This includes not just the production of Council's annual accounts, but also the regulations that govern how Council's slice of public money is controlled throughout the year under review. In passing, your other policies and regulations for managing your staff and other tangible assets are reviewed.

I have had a couple of face-to-face meetings with your Clerk and have inspected the records she holds and asked her a number of pertinent questions about how Council operates and manages its affairs. I am pleased to Note the annual reviews of the sundry standing orders and regulations governing the way Council operates. Nothing has come to my notice that gives me cause to criticise the work of this Council or its Clerk.

Turning now specifically to your Annual Accounts, the record keeping and audit trail are in very good shape, as are the management accounts provided to Council on a regular basis. Your own Financial Regulations are appropriate and appear to have been followed fully.

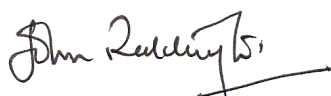
During the year under review council's cash flow has been significantly increased by grants received for, and largely spent, on the excellent children's Playground Project.

Council has also taken over custodianship of a residual fund following earlier community firework displays. I note that without consulting your Responsible Finance Officer an additional (and probably unnecessary) current bank account was opened to hold this sum, £2,178.27. Until such time as this money is spent on fireworks, Council's accounts will show the diminishing balance in its annual accounts – see note 4 to the Statement Of Financial Activities (SOFA).

Similarly, Council received an Essex County Council Community Initiative grant of £7,000 to support a village Handyman for the next 3-5 years. So, the diminishing balance of that fund will also be recorded separately in Note 4 of Council's annual SOFA.

The national guidelines for Parish Councils is that they might reasonably hold cash reserves of around twice the value of the annual precept to meet any unexpected demands upon its finances. Wickham St Pauls general cash reserve exceeds that recommendation; currently three times the annual precept. Council is recommended to give some thought as to the purpose for which that level of cash is being retained and how it might be utilised in future.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to ask them.



John Reddington  
Internal Auditor

Coggeshall  
1st May 2019