GORING-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

COMBINED APPENDIX I & J

Statement of Internal Control & Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit

Prepared in accordance with the Practitioners' Guide (2026/2027) and the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015

1. Introduction

This combined review has been prepared in accordance with:

- **Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015**, Regulation 6(1)(a) and (b), requiring smaller authorities to conduct an annual review of (a) the system of internal control and (b) the effectiveness of internal audit.
- **Practitioners' Guide (PG) 2026/2027**, which set out the proper practices for completing the Annual Governance Accounting Regulations(AGAR)

The purpose of this document is to provide assurance that Goring-on-Thames Parish Council (GoTPC)maintains sound governance, financial management, and internal control systems, and that its internal audit arrangements are effective and compliant with proper practices.

2. Statement of Internal Control (AGAR Requirement)

2.1 Governance Framework

GoTPC operates within a framework of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and a Scheme of Delegation. PG requires authorities to maintain robust governance documents and review them regularly. GoTPC complies with this requirement.

2.2 Financial Management

In accordance with PG, GoTPC maintains:

- regular budget monitoring
- monthly bank reconciliations
- documented financial procedures
- councillor review of financial reports

These controls ensure compliance with Regulation 4 of the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 (responsibility for internal control).

2.3 Internal Financial Controls

PG requires smaller authorities to have proportionate but effective internal financial controls. GoTPC has:

- segregation of duties

- dual authorisation of payments
- controlled access to financial systems
- documented payroll and VAT procedures
- asset register maintained in accordance with PG

2.4 Risk Management

GoTPC maintains a risk register reviewed annually, meeting PG requirements for identifying and managing financial and operational risks.

2.5 Compliance

GoTPC complies with:

- Transparency Code (where applicable)
- Public Contracts Regulations 2015 procurement thresholds
- GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018
- AGAR publication requirements

2.6 Conclusion – Internal Control

In accordance with PG, GoTPC concludes that its internal control environment is sound and operating effectively.

3. Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit (AGAR requirement)

(PG-Internal Audit Proper Practices)

3.1 Independence & Competence

PG requires internal audit to be independent of GoTPC's financial operations. The appointed Internal Auditor meets this requirement and has appropriate knowledge of local council governance.

3.2 Scope of Internal Audit

The scope of work follows PG requirements, covering:

- accounting records
- internal controls
- risk management
- budgetary control

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- asset management
- compliance with legislation and proper practices
- AGAR review

3.3 Reporting

The Internal Auditor provides a written report in accordance with PG confirming:

- adequacy of controls
- compliance with proper practices
- recommendations for improvement

Reports are formally received by GoTPC and minuted.

3.4 Follow-up of Recommendations

PG requires authorities to consider and act on internal audit recommendations. GoTPC monitors progress on these actions throughout the year.

3.5 Appointment of Internal Auditor

GoTPC formally appoints its Internal Auditor annually, including reconfirming annually if on a longer contract, ensuring independence and competence as required by PG and Regulation 6 of the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015.

3.6 Conclusion – Effectiveness of Internal Audit

The Council concludes that its internal audit arrangements are effective, compliant with PG proper practices, and provide sufficient assurance for the AGAR

4. Overall Conclusion

In accordance with Regulation 6 of the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 and the PG Practitioners' Guide, GoTPC has completed a full review of AGAR requirements:

- the system of internal control
- the effectiveness of internal audit

GoTPC is satisfied that both are operating effectively and meet the requirements of proper practice.

Approved for use at Full Council 12 October 2026

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