

Do the Numbers Limited

3rd March 2019

Janet Stanton, Clerk
Fleet Town Council
The Harlington Centre
Fleet,
GU51 4BY

Dear Janet,

Subject: Review of matters arising from interim Internal Audit visits 2018/19

Further to my visit to the office last week please find below a list of those points which should be addressed before the year end. Overall I found the systems and records of the council to be in excellent order.

Control area	Issue	Recommended Action
Brexit	The council has contracts and equipment suppliers across the EU whose services and agreements may be affected by Brexit. IT, ticketing, theatre equipment and cafe supplies are the particular areas to check.	Members and officers should carry out a brief review of resilience and seek assurances from suppliers where possible that services to electors will be maintained .
Electronic payments	The council has still not effected the change to electronic payments.	This should be done without further delay and be complete in advance of the year end.
Payment summary approval	At present members are initialling every line, rather than the whole page.	So long as members are assured that every line is valid, a single approval should suffice.
Code of Conduct	The Town Council does not appear to use the same code of conduct as the District council, increasing complexity and limiting the efficiency of monitoring officer reviews.	If the council has the same rules as the larger authorities, requirements on members are more transparent and understandable.
Grants for travel	The council has been approached to provide grant funding towards travel to education which is not within its powers.	The council should support the charity linked to the school to find ways to meet the neds of electors without double taxation.
Fixed asset locations	The transparency code requires councils to detail the location and size of all land and buildings.	An annotated map of the land and facilities of FTC should be added to the website without delay.
Recharges and internal grants	The council should be wary of internal recharges that might distort the total income and expenditure figures for the accounts.	So long as any recharges stay within a nominal code (so are between cost centres) the overall figure sshould stay correct.

eleanorgreene@thedunnefamily.co.uk

37 Upper Brownhill Road, Southampton, SO16 5NG, 023 8077 2341

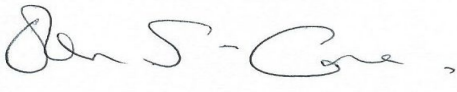
Registered in England No. 7871759

Director: Eleanor S Greene

Reports to finance meetings	The reports being presented to members are not those which provide the clearest overview of the position of the council.	The statutory I&E and balance sheet and the Annual return financial summary provide the most information in the least pages.
Earmarked reserves	Some of the balances set up as EMR do not met the current guidance for capital projects, particularly those relating to wages.	Revenue costs such as wages increments should always be covered from general reserves. All earmarked reserves should have a date by which they will be fully spent and closed.

I will return to the office in may to complete my review.
If either you or your members have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards



Eleanor S Greene

eleanorgreene@thedunnefamily.co.uk

37 Upper Brownhill Road, Southampton, SO16 5NG, 023 8077 2341

Registered in England No. 7871759

Director: Eleanor S Greene

Do the Numbers Limited

5th November 2018

Janet Stanton, Clerk
Fleet Town Council
The Harlington Centre
Fleet,
GU51 4BY

Dear Janet,

Subject: Review of matters arising from interim Internal Audit visits 2018/19

Further to my visit to the office today please find below a list of those points still to be addressed from previous reports and matters arising from my review today. These should be dealt with in advance of the year end.

Control area	Issue	Recommended Action
GDPR – naming members of the public.	The council currently names those residents who attend and speak at council meetings. This is not best practice under GDPR as signed minutes can never be removed under the “right to be forgotten”.	It is better practice to minute the number of electors present and minute only “an elector asked”. Those electors attending meetings in more than one capacity (eg members of other bodies) should clarify whether they are speaking as an individual or on behalf of those other bodies.
Electronic payments	The council has still not effected the change to electronic payments.	This should be done without further delay and be complete in advance of the year end.
Planning enforcement	FTC currently includes details of enforcement in its minutes and agenda packs.	As FTC is not the planning authority and the information is not routinely published by HDC, it may be worth relegating this item to a verbal report by the clerk to that committee.
Contract approval	It appears that some contracts have been approved in confidential session, rather than just the decision process.	Approval of all contracts and grants should be clearly and publicly minuted.
Staffing structure	It is a requirement of the transparency code that the staffing structure of FTC is published on the website.	Highlighting the activity areas undertaken by the council and the hours covered will be to the benefit of FTC.
Fixed asset locations	The transparency code requires councils to detail the location and size of all land and buildings.	An annotated map of the land and facilities of FTC should be added to the website without delay.

eleangreene@thedunnefamily.co.uk

37 Upper Brownhill Road, Southampton, SO16 5NG, 023 8077 2341

Registered in England No. 7871759

Director: Eleanor S Greene

Journal creating "grant"	The income and expenditure accounts have both been distorted by a £180,000 journal transaction which attempts to quantify the amount that the Precept supports one of the council cost centres.	<p>This journal should be reversed.</p> <p>Each of the primary cost centres of the council shows that expenditure is greater than income.</p> <p>This is the basic principle of publicly funded services and facilities and should not be hidden.</p> <p>Every community theatre / hall facility in the country is supported with public sector grants – from town, district or county councils or even the Arts Council.</p> <p>Keeping hire costs low enough that all sectors of the electorate and community can make use of the facilities will always result in a requirement for Precept funding.</p>
Earmarked reserves	Some of the balances set up as EMR do not met the current guidance for capital projects, particularly those relating to wages.	Revenue costs such as wages increments should always be covered from general reserves.

Please find attached my invoice for the interim fee. If either you or your members have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards



Eleanor S Greene

eleanorgreene@thedunnefamily.co.uk

37 Upper Brownhill Road, Southampton, SO16 5NG, 023 8077 2341

Registered in England No. 7871759

Director: Eleanor S Greene