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**Statement of Internal Controls for Year ending March 2025**

**Scope**

Aberporth Community Council (the Council) is funded largely by public money. The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, 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 and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual accounts and accords with proper practice as set out in the Practitioners’ Guide Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in Wales (2019 Edition).

**The Internal Control Environment**

Organisation & Structures

The Council

The Council is the body for dealing with the approval of all financial matters.

The Council will make and keep under review its Financial Regulations and may include within its Standing Orders particular provisions relating to contracts.

The full Council normally meets eleven times each year.

It monitors progress by receiving relevant reports from the Responsible Financial Officer/Clerk.

Planning Committee

The Council has established a Planning Committee which meets when the Council is not able to consider responses to Planning Applications at its scheduled meetings.

Finance Committee

The Council has established a Finance Committee which meets 4 time a year and is responsible for ensuring that the Council’s finances and resources are managed in a responsible and prudent manner. The Finance Committee reports to the full Council.

Footpaths & Maintenance Committee

The Council has established a Footpath & Maintenance Committee; its purpose is to manage and maintain the Council’s land, properties and community assets in conjunction with the Clerk and to advise the Council on any matters which may need its attention.

Procedures Review Committee

The Council has established a Procedures Review Committee which reviews existing procedures, recommends necessary modifications, and oversees the implementation of changes to align with legal and regulatory requirements. The Committee reports to Full Council.

Community Enhancement and Social Wellbeing Committee

The Council has established a Community enhancement and Social Wellbeing Committee which oversees the planning and execution of community events, identifies and advocates for projects that improve local services, applies for grants to support initiatives, and manages projects that contribute to overall community well-being and growth.

**Rules**

Standing Orders

The Council adopted revised Standing Orders in March 2021. The new Standing Orders are based on Model Standing Orders as supplied by One Voice Wales.

Financial Regulations

The Council adopted its Financial Regulations in October 2019 based on Model Financial Regulations as supplied by One Voice Wales. The Financial Regulations have been reviewed and a new set adopted in March 2025 based on Model Financial Regulations supplied by One Voice Wales. As part of this process the Council has approved a Procurement Policy.

**Positions of Responsibility**

The Clerk

The Council employs a Clerk who is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk is appointed as the Council’s Proper Officer within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972 and provides advice to ensure that the Council’s procedures, control systems and policies are followed.

The Clerk has a comprehensive job description and a formal contract of employment based on the Society of Local Clerks model contract of employment.

The Clerk is paid via PAYE and the Council has made appropriate employer National Insurance contributions during 2024/25.

Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk as the Council’s Responsible Financial Officer is accountable for administering the Council’s finances.

**Assets**

The Council maintains a register of Assets which it reviews annually.

**Budget Setting**

The Council considered a draft budget for 2024/25 and approved the level of precept for the financial year in January 2024.

**Budgetary Reporting**

The Responsible Financial Officer provides regular budget monitoring reports to the Council.

**Contracts**

In February 2024 the contracts for Grass Maintenance and Footpath Trashing were put out to tender for the year 2024/25 and approved March 2024.

Insurance was renewed in March 2024 for 12 months with Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited

**Bank Mandates & Authorised Signatories**

Signatories for the Council’s accounts with Lloyds Bank Plc are authorised by the Council and are set out on the relevant bank mandate.

**Receipts & Payments**

All receipts and payments are reported to the Council.

Invoices are copied to the Finance Committee Dropbox for scrutiny.

All receipts and payment are recorded on the Councils Scribe Software system.

Monthly bank reconciliations and bank statements are copied to the Finance Committee Dropbox for scrutiny.

Payments are made electronically via online banking with the Clerk and one other bank signatory.

Cheques issued are signed by the Clerk and one other bank signatory.

**Petty Cash**

The Council does not maintain a Petty Cash account.

**Control of Risk**

Risk Management

The Council has reviewed the risks it considers relevant to its operations and has created a Risk Register detailing these. The register categorises risks as High, Medium or Low and details the Council’s strategy in response to each.

Internal Audit

The Council has appointed an independent internal auditor – Sina Rapthel who reports to the Council on the adequacy of its records, procedures, systems, internal control and risk management.

External Audit

The Council reports to its external auditors: Wales Audit Office

**REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS**

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, the Council has conducted a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control which included a review of the effectiveness of internal audit.

This review was completed on 8th April 2025 and was adopted on 8th April 2025 when the Council approved this Statement of Internal Control.

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Considered and adopted by Aberporth Community Council