BORDEN PARISH COUNCIL –

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2025/26

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Borden Parish Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and 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.

2. 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 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 for the year ended **31 March 2026** and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and, except for the details of significant internal control issues at section 5, accords with proper practice.

3. 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 budgets for the following year at its December or January meeting. At this meeting the Council approves the level of precept for the following financial year.
The Council has appointed a Finance Committee, which meets to monitor progress against objectives, financial systems and procedures, budgetary control, and carry out regular reviews of financial matters.

The Full Council meets 12 times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives, and receives relevant recommendations from the Finance Committee's meetings.

The Council reviews the effectiveness of its internal control arrangements at least annually.

Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer: The Council has appointed a Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer. The Clerk acts as the Council's advisor and administrator and is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

As the Council's Responsible Financial Officer, they are responsible for administering the Council's finances.

Payments: All payments are presented to the Council for approval or ratification. Two Members of the Council must authorise every cheque, BACS payment or direct debit.

Risk Assessments / Risk Management: The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of actions and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

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

- records
- procedures
- systems
- internal control
- regulations
- risk management
- reviews

The effectiveness of the internal audit system is reviewed annually.

External Audit: The Council's External Auditors, Mazars LLP, will submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is presented to the Council.

4. 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

- Full Council;
- the Finance Committee
- the Clerk to the Council
- the 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;
- Mazars LLP, the Council's external auditors, who complete the annual assurance review using the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Chairman, and the Internal Auditor. Mazars LLP will issue an annual audit certificate detailing any significant issues raised during the year.

5. SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

The Council's review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control did not identify any significant weaknesses during the financial year ended 31 March 2026. The accounts remain subject to external audit.

The Council is committed to the continuous improvement of its systems of internal control and will address any recommendations and minor matters arising from internal audit reviews and routine governance monitoring.

Signed:

[redacted].....**Chair** .....**RFO** **Date**.....21.05.26

Minute Reference 23b (Annual Parish Council Meeting)