THORPE MORIEUX PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL CONTROL POLICY

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Thorpe Morieux Parish Council is a local authority funded by public money and 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, Thorpe Morieux Parish Council (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 in accordance with the Practitioners' Guide. Governance and Accountability in Local Councils.
The Council has adopted the model NALC Financial Regulations 2024, which fully explains procedures and sections of such are used through this policy.

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 INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves a budget for the following year at its November or December meeting. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year. The Council meets six times each year. A member of the council shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification at every meeting. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council.

Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk 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 also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and

policies are adhered to. When the Council is to enter a contract of above £100 and below £3,000 the Clerk/RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. The RFO shall provide the council with a bi-monthly statement of receipts and payments to date allowing the council to compare actual expenditure against that planned as shown in the agreed budget.

Payments

All expenditure over £50 must be authorised by the Council. Items under £50 may be authorised by the Clerk prior to a meeting if the invoice is presented for payment at the next meeting. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council.

Payments will be made by bank payment using internet banking wherever possible. The Clerk is authorised to view and set up payments only. At least two Cllrs will be authorised to view and approve payments. If payment must be made by cheque two members of the Council must sign every cheque for payment. The Clerk must not sign any cheques. The signatories check each cheque against the relevant invoice (which has been signed by the Clerk), sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil. All authorised cheque signatories are members of the Council.

Payments shall not normally be presented for approval other than at a council meeting, unless necessary for safety or risk remediation or to avoid payment penalties (e.g. PAYE charges). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council at the next convenient meeting.

Internal Audit

The Council has appointed an Independent internal auditor (Heelis and Lodge) who will report to the Council on the adequacy of its records, procedures, systems, internal control and risk management.

The system of internal control as detailed in this policy will be reviewed annually by the Council.

DATA PROTECTION COMPLIANCE

The Council has fully complied with the Data Protection legislation which came into force in the United Kingdom on 25 May 2018 and keeps its compliance under regular review. The UK GDPR sets out the information you should supply and when individuals should be informed. The Parish Council has procedures in place to review the information it supplies about the processing of personal data and ensures that it is:

- concise, transparent, intelligible and easily accessible.
- written in clear and plain language, and
- free of charge

Risks and all policies associated with Data Protection are reviewed by the Policy and Resources Committee on an annual basis.

Approved and adopted by Thorpe Morieux Parish Council July 2024.

Reviewed: November 2025