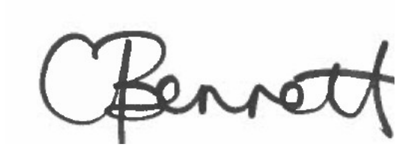
Ringwood Town Council

Ringwood Gateway,The Furlong, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 1AT
Tel: 01425 473883
www.ringwood.gov.uk

SUMMONS

Dear Member 23rd October 2025

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Town Council at the Forest Suite, Ringwood Gateway on 29th October 2025 at 7.00pm.



Mrs C Bennett
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1.* **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
There will be an opportunity for public participation for a period of up to 15 minutes at the start of the meeting

2. To receive Apologies for Absence

3. To receive Declarations of Interest

4. **POLICE REPORT**
To receive a report from Ringwood Police

5. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 24th September 2025

6. To receive Minutes of Committees and approve recommendations contained therein:

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	DATE :- 1st October 2025
Planning, Town & Environment	DATE:- 3rd October 2025
Policy & Finance	DATE:- 22nd October 2025

(*Recommendation:- External Audit (F/6477 refers)(See separate agenda item*))

7. **EXTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25**
To consider the recommendation from Policy & Finance Committee on 22nd October 2025 (*F/6477 refers)(Report A)* that:-
i) the external audit report be received and noted, along with the Town Clerk's responses to the observations made; and
ii) that the notice of conclusion of audit published on 30th September 2025 be noted.

8. **COMMITTEE COMPOSITION**
i) To appoint Cllr Dadford to the Staffing Committee
ii) To consider any other changes to the composition of council committees, sub-committees, working parties or panels

**No formal decisions can be made during this item.*

9. **STRATEGY REVIEW**
To review and approve the Council's Strategic Plan for 2026-2029 (*Report B*)

10.* To receive such communications as the Deputy Town Mayor may desire to lay before the Council

11.* To receive Reports from County and District Councillors

12.* To Receive Reports from Ringwood Town Councillors

13. Forthcoming Meetings – to note the following dates:

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 5th November 2025
Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 7th November 2025
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 19th November 2025
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 26th November 2025

14. **COMMUNICATIONS**
Members to decide on items requiring publicity and to confirm a spokesperson if required.

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
To consider exclusion of the press and public from the meeting, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, section 1(2), to transact business for which publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of its confidential nature

16. LEGAL MATTERS
To receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk on legal matters (*Confidential Reports C and D*)

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mrs Charmaine Benentt, Town Clerk, on 01425 484720 or charmaine.bennett@ringwood.gov.uk

Council Members:
Chairman: Cllr Rae Frederick, Town Mayor
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Philip Day, Deputy Mayor
Cllr Andrew Briers
Cllr Luke Dadford
Cllr Ingrid De Bruyn
Cllr Gareth DeBoos
Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Michael Thierry
Cllr Glenys Turner
Cllr Becci Windsor

Officers:
Charmaine Bennett, Town Clerk
Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk

**No formal decisions can be made during this item.*

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REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 22nd October 2025

Notice of conclusion of audit 2024/25

1.1 The audit of the Council Finances for 2024/25 has now been concluded. The auditors, BDO LLP, concluded that:

"On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met."

1.2 The auditors made three observations and the Town Clerk's comments are set out below each one.

1.2.1 "The smaller authority should give consideration to their level of reserves as, after accounting for earmarked reserves, general reserves are low. The Practitioners Guide notes that the generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure, dependent on the size and activity level between councils. The smaller authority's general reserves represent less than three months of expenditure."

The level of the general reserve will be considered when the budget discussions for 2026/27 commence.

1.2.2 "The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review:
- Box 10 was incorrect when initially submitted. The AGAR was returned for amendment and has been corrected.
- Question 11a and 11b was left blank in the Accounting Statements when originally submitted. The AGAR was returned for amendment and has been correctly answered Yes and Yes."

No action.

1.2.3 "The council have provided minutes resolving to re-appoint the internal auditor, but the minutes do not indicate whether the independence of the internal auditor has been considered, which is not in line with best practice contained in the practitioners' guide. Best practise requires the council obtaining a Letter of engagement that would include setting out the scope of work to be performed. In the absence of which the current scope of work schedule should be updated to ensure the council is aware of the scope of the work undertaken to address the risks of the council."

Members will be invited to consider the independence of the internal auditor who will be appointed early in 2026.

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1.3 The external auditor's certificate is appended along with the notice of conclusion of audit which was published on 30th September.

2 RECOMMENDATION

It is **recommended to Council** that: -

2.1 The conclusions of the external auditor be received and noted along with the Town Clerk's responses to the observations made.

2.2 The notice of conclusion of audit published on 30th September be noted.

For further information please contact:
Charmaine Bennett, Town Clerk
Tel: 01425 484720
Charmaine.bennett@ringwood.gov.uk

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3 A

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- **where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or**
- **where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:**
  - **are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or**
  - **have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)**

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
   - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
   - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
   - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025.**
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2025.** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
   - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
   - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
   - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
   - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
   - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

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- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2025.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements **(Section 2, page 5)**. An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2024) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2025).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2025.**

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including **the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights**, been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at **31 March 2025** been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? **NB:** do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

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Ringwood Town Council

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✔		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✔		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✔		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✔		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✔		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✔		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✔		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✔		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✔		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✔		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✔
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✔		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*	✔		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR *(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).*	✔		

	Yes	No	Not applicable
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	✔		

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken: 02/04/2025 – 21/05/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: KAREN ROSS

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: [signature]

Date: 21/05/2025

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

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Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

Ringwood Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed Yes	Agreed No*		'Yes' means that this authority:
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✔			*prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✔			*made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.*
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✔			*has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.*
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✔			*during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.*
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✔			*considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.*
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✔			*arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.*
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✔			*responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.*
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✔			*disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.*
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes ✔	No	N/A	*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

25/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

C/7381

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair [signature]

Clerk [signature]

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

Ringwood Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	634,461	639,190	*Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.*
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	610,429	643,525	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	2,328,089	752,396	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	467,469	515,614	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	46,436	61,478	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	2,419,884	791,126	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	639,190	666,893	*Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).*
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	699,968	493,494	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March –* ***To agree with bank reconciliation.***
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,629,881	6,977,614	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	785,654	761,~~696~~ 181	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			*The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.*
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			*The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date 24/06/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

25/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

C/7381

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024/25

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In respect of Ringwood Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit,** it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/ .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The smaller authority should give consideration to their level of reserves as, after accounting for earmarked reserves, general reserves are low. The Practitioners Guide notes that the generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure, dependent on the size and activity level between councils. The smaller authority's general reserves represent less than three months of expenditure.

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review:
- Box 10 was incorrect when initially submitted. The AGAR was returned for amendment and has been corrected.
• Question 11a and 11b was left blank in the Accounting Statements when originally submitted. The AGAR was returned for amendment and has been correctly answered Yes and Yes.

The council have provided minutes resolving to re-appoint the internal auditor, but the minutes do not indicate whether the independence of the internal auditor has been considered, which is not in line with best practice contained in the practitioners' guide. Best practise requires the council obtaining a Letter of engagement that would include setting out the scope of work to be performed . In the absence of which the current scope of work schedule should be updated to ensure the council is aware of the scope of the work undertaken to address the risks of the council.

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name

BDO LLP - Southampton

External Auditor Signature

DocuSigned by:
BDO LLP
467DFB746A8A428...

Date 25 September 2025

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Ringwood Town Council

Notice of conclusion of audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2025

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

		Notes
1.	The audit of accounts for Ringwood Town Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 has been completed and the accounts have been published.	This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the AGAR must be published by 30 September. This must include publication on the smaller authority's website. The smaller authority must decide how long to publish the Notice for; the AGAR and external auditor report must be publicly available for 5 years.
2.	The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Ringwood Town Council on application to:	
(a)	Charmaine Bennett, Town Clerk, Ringwood Town Council, Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood BH24 1AT	(a) Insert the names, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the AGAR.
(b)	Monday to Friday, 09.30 to 16.30 (by appointment)	(b) Insert the hours during which the inspection rights may be exercised.
3.	Copies will be provided to any person on payment of £2.50 for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.	(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs.
(d)	Announcement made: Charmaine Bennett, Town Clerk	(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice.
(e)	Date of announcement: 30th September 2025	(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice.

B

Report to Full Council

29 October 2025
Ringwood Town Council- Strategic Plan 2026-2029

1. Purpose of the report
   1.1 To present the final draft of the Town Council Strategy 2026–2029 for consideration and approval ahead of its implementation from April 2026.

2. Background
   2.1 During October, each committee and working party reviewed the draft Town Council Strategy, focusing on the areas most relevant to their responsibilities. The Town Clerk would like to thank all councillors and staff who contributed their time and ideas to these discussions.
   2.2 The draft has since been amended to reflect the feedback received, ensuring that the Strategy represents the Council's collective priorities and ambitions for the next three years.
   2.3 As part of the final editing process, the vision statement has been refined to express more clearly the Council's shared values and aspirations for the town. The updated version reads:

   "Ringwood Town Council will continue to help our market town thrive — focusing on the things that matter most to our residents, businesses, and visitors."

   2.4 The final version is now presented for any final comments and formal approval by Full Council.

3. Implementation
   3.1 Following approval, the Strategy will guide the Council's forward planning, service delivery, and budget discussions for 2026–27 and beyond. It will take effect from April 2026 and be published on the Council's website towards the end of the current financial year.

4. Recommendation

   That Full Council:

   4.1 Approves the final version of the Town Council Strategy 2026–2029; and
   4.2 Notes that the Strategy will take effect from April 2026 and be published publicly nearer the end of the current financial year.

For further information, contact:

Charmaine Bennett, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: Charmaine.bennett@ringwood.gov.uk

Ringwood Town Council – Strategy 2026-2029

B

VISION

Ringwood Town Council will continue to help our market town thrive — focusing on the things that matter most to our residents, businesses, and visitors.

Today

Ringwood Town Council is recognised for organising great events, overseeing planning applications, caring for valued green spaces, demonstrating strong financial stewardship, and being a good employer.

Improve our facilities, services and green spaces

Year 3: 2028–29
Implement play strategy

Year 2: 2027–28
Scope and develop Play Strategy
Finalise phase 2 of Carvers Masterplan
Review requirements for Phase 3.
Review outcome of any piloted youth work. Develop longer term plan.

Year 1: 2026–27
Deliver the Cemetery Development Plan
Progress the new Grounds Department facility
Deliver and monitor Open Space Management Plans
Advance Phase 2 of the Carvers Masterplan
Explore options for future youth work

Develop, energise and facilitate events

Year 3: 2028–29
Ringwood Events review - plan for next 3 years

Year 2: 2027–28
Depending on outcome of Thriving Market Place, consider options for Town Centre events to support local economy

Year 1: 2026–27
Hold and/or facilitate series of events to mark 800th Anniversary of Market Charter

Improve communication and engagement with local community and businesses

Year 3: 2028–29
Launch new website
Community consultation for Town Council Strategy

Year 2: 2027–28
Draft requirements for new website
Develop proposals for community consultation for Town Council Strategy 2029+

Year 1: 2026–27
Enhance meeting technology at the Gateway
Refresh the Annual Town Assembly
Strengthen engagement with local businesses

Protect and enhance the town's character while shaping sustainable development

Year 3: 2028–29
Identify infrastructure needs to support new development and guide CIL spending

Year 2: 2027–28
Review and update the Neighbourhood Plan in response to revised Local Plans
Carry out signage review
Implementation of improvements to signage and entrance to town

Year 1: 2026–27
Progress design and implementation of the Thriving Market Place project
Implementation of Bus Shelter Improvement Action Plan

Tomorrow

Ringwood Town Council will continue to be known for organising great events, overseeing planning applications, caring for valued green spaces, demonstrating strong financial stewardship, and being a good employer.
We will act as the first point of contact for local public services, engage residents on the issues that matter most to them, and provide valued support to Ringwood's businesses and local economy.

ENABLERS and DISRUPTORS

Our ability to deliver this strategy depends on a number of enablers. New IT, skilled and dedicated staff and councillors, and a culture of civility and respect will all support success. We are further strengthened by volunteers, community groups, and the Neighbourhood Plan. However, there are also disruptors that may slow progress. Staff changes, financial and resource constraints, or delays with new technology could hold us back. Local government reorganisation may create new opportunities and assets, but also risks disruption to existing services.