



## Brixworth Parish Council

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019

### Report of the Verification Officer (Q2)

I have examined a representative sample of transactions today from the Council's accounts with regards to accuracy and good practice.

Subject to the following comments below, it is my opinion that the accounts were in good order and carried out with compliance with the necessary financial procedures. I thank Peter for his assistance with the audit.

#### **Advisory point.**

Timely inspections should be made of stock levels of consumables and orders for replenishments made before supplies actually run out. When this has not been done, in order to enable the smooth running of facilities, staff have in fact paid for supplies out of their own pocket and then been reimbursed.

1. As the Council carries no petty cash float, there is not a ready alternative when expediency is paramount. But staff should not be placed in a position where they have to make purchases using their own money for later reimbursement. We should be grateful they showed initiative to enable services to continue by this action, but this does run counter to our procurement procedures; there is no record of prior approval from the Clerk, for instance, and it raises the question as to whether VAT can be reclaimed.

In the event, the amounts involved were small and of perhaps lesser concern than if larger amounts had been involved. Had a closer note been taken of supply levels, the situation could have been easily avoided.

2. Several purchases were made for which the purchaser was later reimbursed. They received what was in effect a discount from the supplier but appear to have claimed reimbursement from the Council for the full retail price.

It would seem to be good accounting practice in my opinion to reimburse staff only for their out of pocket costs, not the full retail price. The amounts involved were very small and I make no personal criticism those concerned. But this is a further reason to recognise that whilst being thankful for their efforts, that good forward planning would avoid such situations.

Councillor Ian Barratt

18th November 2019