Saxilby with Ingleby Parish Council

Non-confidential

Confirm the engagement of Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) to undertake the internal audit service, confirming their independence and competence.

Report to: Full Council

Meeting Date: 04 November 2026

Report by: Clerk

Power/duty which decision falls under:
Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, regulation 5

Which council objective(s) it falls under:
N/A – council governance and finance

SUMMARY:

The council has agreed for LALC to provide their internal audit services for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

To meet Assertion 6 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) the Council must confirm annually that its internal auditor is competent and independent.

LALC has appointed Stacey Knowles as internal auditor for 2026/27. As Clerk to Bracebridge Heath Parish Council, a similar-sized authority, she has relevant experience and is independent of the Council's financial decision-making, with no involvement in its day-to-day financial management, payment authorisation, budget management or accounts preparation.

The internal auditor confirmed by email on 30 October 2026:

> "I can confirm that I am independent of any officer or council member at Saxilby with Ingleby Parish Council. I have been an internal auditor for LALC since 2022 and have been a clerk and RFO since 2017. I have also completed and passed the CiLCA qualification."

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. To confirm LALC's Stacey Knowles as the Council's internal auditor for 2026/27.
2. To confirm the auditor's competence.
3. To confirm the auditor's independence.

Public Sector Equality Duty:
Consider how policies/decisions affect those protected under the Equality Act)

The appointment and oversight of the internal auditor is not expected to have a direct impact on equality.

Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity:
N/A.

Consideration on carbon reduction:
N/A.

Impact on staff:
None.

Does the report consider any new activity? If 'Yes', has a risk assessment, including risk management proposals, been included for consideration and adoption by the council?
(Financial Regulation 17b)
No

REPORT

Councils are required to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) as part of its financial reporting responsibilities. To meet Assertion 6 (Internal Audit) on the return, one of the statements is:

> "We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.
>
> To warrant a positive response to this assertion, the authority needs to have taken the following actions:
> 1.34 Internal audit - The authority needs to appoint an independent and competent person to undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes considering internal auditing guidance for smaller authorities.
> 1.35 The internal auditor must be able to demonstrate independence from the authority's financial decision making."

The Council has agreed for Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) to carry out the internal audit for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Due to the reporting requirements being annually, the auditor and their independence and competence are required to be confirmed for each financial year.

Auditor Appointment

LALC have appointed Stacey Knowles as the internal auditor for Saxilby with Ingleby Parish Council for 2026/27.

Competence

Stacey Knowles is clerk to Bracebridge Heath Parish Council; a similar sized council with 13 councillors and a precept of £200,000.

Independence

Stacey Knowles is independent from the authority's financial decision making. She does not approve expenditure, authorise payments, manage the budget, prepare accounts or make financial decisions on behalf of the council. She has no involvement in the council's day-to-day financial management.