

## Notes

“The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council.”

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

- a) Identify the areas to be reviewed.
- b) Identify what the risk may be.
- c) Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings.
- d) Review, assess and revise if required.

## FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / L	Management Control Of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Councillors	Losing Councillor membership	L	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow. This either leads to a bye-election or into a co-option process. An election is out of the Parish Council's control. The co-option process begins with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applicants and co-option vote at a Council meeting then appointment.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Having more than 8 vacancies at any one time	L	If there are more than 7 vacancies at any one time on the Council it is not quorate. The legal process of the District Council appointing members takes place.	Procedures of another body are adequate.
Business Continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance.	L	The Parish Council has both a clerk and Finance Officer. In an emergency they can cover each other's jobs. Ensure that Clerk and Finance Officer are aware of the location of Parish Records and documents.	Review when necessary.

Precept	Adequacy of precept	L	The Finance Sub Committee meets in October to decide on the budget for the following year and recommends a precept to full council at the following meeting. The full Council is given figures for the current year including an up to date budget report and the proposed budget for the following year. The Council examines the proposed budget and agrees the precept to be set for the following year. This figure is submitted by the Finance Officer in writing to WODC.	Existing procedure adequate
	Requirements not submitted to WODC in time	L	Precept should be considered by Council before the deadline - deadline should be ascertained from WODC asap.	Existing procedure adequate
	Amount not received from WODC	L	The Finance Officer informs Council when the monies are received (approx. April/May and September/October time).	Existing procedure adequate
Financial records	Inadequate records	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review of Financial Regulations on an annual basis
	Financial irregularities	L	All payments are reviewed at Parish Council meetings and cheques signed by two members. Finance Officer does not have access to Council Funds.	
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.	Existing procedure adequate
	Bank mistakes	L	The bank could make errors in processing cheques but these would be discovered when the Finance Officer reconciles the bank accounts on a monthly basis when the statement arrives. Any errors would be dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction.	
	Loss	L	Monitor the bank statements monthly.	
	Charges	L	Monitor the bank statements monthly.	
	Loss of signatories	L	Council would choose replacements but the bank takes time to implement changes, this mostly happens after an AGM/election.	

Cash / Loss	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Cash/cheques received are banked within 3 banking days. There is no petty cash or float. This is audited by the Internal Auditor annually.	Existing procedure adequate.
Litigation	Potential risk of legal action being taken against the Council	M	Public liability insurance covers general personal injury claims where the Council is found to be at fault, but not spurious or frivolous claims - these cannot be insured against.	Insurance is adequate for requirements but there is still risk of other claims.
Reporting and auditing	Information communication	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly and presented to Council, discussed and approved at the meeting. This statement includes, bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Compliance	L	Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee.	
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Cheque payable incorrect Loss of stock Unpaid invoices	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. At each Council meeting the list of invoices awaiting approval is distributed to Councillors, and considered. One Councillor is nominated to check each invoice against the cheque book and associated paperwork and initials the invoices. Council approves the list of requests for payment. The Council has minimal stocks, these are checked and monitored by the Finance Officer and Clerk. Unpaid invoices to the Council for the allotments or cemetery are pursued and where possible, payment is obtained in advance.	Existing procedure adequate.
Grants and support - payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors request S137 rules if required.
Grants - receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required.

Charges - rentals payable	Payments of charges, leases, rentals	L	The Parish Council leases the land for the allotments from Hanborough PCC. Payment is due in June each year and approved at full parish Council meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.
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		L	The Parish Council hires a room from Hanborough Playing Fields Association for monthly meetings. Invoices are received and checked by the Finance Officer. Payment is approved at full Parish Council meetings.	
Charges - rentals receivable	Receipt of rental Insurance implication	L	Allotments - Rentals are due on an annual basis. The Finance Officer issues an invoice in February/March each year and payment is due by 1st April . A tenancy agreement is signed by all allotment holders. The Parish Council copy of the agreement is held in Parish Council records. The cheque is received and banked. The Parish Council is notified accordingly.	Existing procedure adequate. Review agreement and fees annually.
		L	Cemetery - Charges are made for interments, sale of exclusive rights to burial and memorials. The Finance Officer receives payment from the deceased family or the undertaker and checks that the amount paid is correct. The Parish Council is notified accordingly.	Existing procedure adequate. Review agreement and fees annually.
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services		Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Finance Officer would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council. This is covered in the Financial Regulations.	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations annually.

Salaries and assoc. Costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong hours paid Wrong rate paid False employee Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue		<p>The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees through a Committee. Salary rates are assessed annually by the Finance Committee and applied on 1 April each year.</p> <p>Salary analysis and slips are produced by the Finance Officer monthly together with a schedule of payments to the Inland Revenue (for Tax and NI). These are inspected at the Council meetings and signed off. The Tax and NI is worked out using an Inland Revenue approved programme updated annually.</p> <p>All Tax and NI payments are submitted in the Inland Revenue Annual Return. Each employee has a contract of employment and job description.</p> <p>All contracts of employment contain a section on overpayment and recoup. Salaries are paid at the time of the Parish Council meeting. If there is no Parish Council meeting the Finance Officer will prepare salary slips and payment approved at the previous Parish Council meeting.</p>	Existing appointment system adequate. Employees are not asked to keep timesheets. Hours should be reviewed on a regular basis.
Employees	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff Actions undertaken by staff Health & Safety		Reference to the Continuity Plan should be made in case of loss of key personnel. The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role. The Caretakers should be provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake the roles, i.e.. protective clothing and training.	Existing procedure adequate. Purchase revised books. Membership of the SLCC. Monitor working conditions, safety requirements and insurance regularly.
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction		No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors.	No procedure required.
Election costs	Risk of an election cost		Risk is higher in an election year, but on recent history there is now a high risk that a bye-election is called for any casual vacancies. When a scheduled election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the District Council for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having elections, as this is a democratic process.	Existing procedure is inadequate in the case of bye-elections. Council should consider precepting a larger amount each year, and saving each year to cover all costs.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging		The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. VAT is claimed regularly.	Existing procedure adequate.

Employers Annual Return	Paying and accounting for NI and Tax of employees salaries		Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame by the Finance Officer.	Existing procedure adequate.
Audit - Internal Audit	Completion within time limits		Internal auditor is appointed by the Council. Internal auditor is supplied with the relevant documents to audit and the form to complete and sign for the External Auditor.	Existing procedure adequate.
Annual Return	Completion/Submission within time limits		Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within time limit.	Existing procedure adequate.
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments		All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council Meetings, including a reference to the power used. As per the Financial Regulations prescribe.	Existing procedure adequate.
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct		Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements and best practice guidelines. Minutes are approved and signed at the following Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	Existing procedure adequate. Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Members interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members interests		Although not a requirement, the declaring of interests by members at a meeting should be an obvious process to remind Councillors of their duty and should remain on the agenda. Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing procedure adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee		An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.	Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance.
Data protection	Policy Provision		The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency.	Ensure annual renewal of registration.

Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision		The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. The Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this may require many hours of additional work. The Council is able to request a fee if the work will take more than 15 hours but the applicant also has the right to re-submit the request broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the F of I Act.
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(is)/property		An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of income or performance Risk to third parties		All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually. All public amenity land is inspected regularly by parish employees.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure inspections carried out.
Notice boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety		Parish Council has two notice boards sited around the parish. All locations have approval by relevant parties , insurance cover, inspected regularly by the Clerk - any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Keys held by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate.
Street furniture	Risk/damage/injury to third parties		The Parish Council is responsible for five bus shelters and two notice boards. No formalised programme of inspections is carried out, all reports of damage or faults are reported to Council and/or dealt with.	Existing procedure adequate.
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety		The Parish Council Meetings are held at the Pavilion. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety and comfort aspects.	Existing locations adequate.
Council records - paper	Loss through: theft fire damage		The Parish Council records are stored at the homes of the Clerk and the Finance Officer.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate.
Council records - electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage corruption of computer		The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerks computer. Back-ups of the files are taken at regular intervals.	Memory Stick back-up of electronic files exchanged by Clerk and Finance Officer.