

Blankney Parish Council Risk Assessment May 2021

Notes

The greatest risk facing any local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Parish 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:

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

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Topic		Risk H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business Continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	H	The Council needs to develop and adopt a business continuity plan	To be developed
Precept	Adequacy of precept	L	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information and the precept is an agenda item at full Council. At the	Develop and adopt Plan and review when necessary

	<p>Requirements not submitted to District Council</p> <p>Amount not received by District Council</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>January Precept meeting Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to end the year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk.</p> <p>With this information the Council maps out the required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from the District Council. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to the District Council. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (approx. early April, due to circumstances with bank access it will be late May time this year).</p>	
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	New procedure introduced from 1 January 2021
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L	<p>The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.</p> <p>The bank may make occasional errors in processing cheques which will be discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts once a month after the statement arrives, these to be dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction.</p>	<p>Existing procedure adequate.</p> <p>Review the Financial Regulations annually.</p> <p>Existing procedure adequate.</p>

Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Any cash received is banked within 3 banking days. There is no petty cash or float.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list when necessary, especially after an AGM and an election. Monitor the bank statements monthly.
Reporting and Auditing	Information communication	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly before each Council meeting with the agenda, discussed and approved at the meeting. This statement includes, bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank. Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
	Compliance	M		
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed	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, considered and approved. Two Councillors are nominated to check each invoice against the cheque book and associated paperwork. Council approves the list of requests for payment. The Council has minimal stocks, these are checked and monitored by the Clerk. Unpaid invoices to the Council for adverts in the newsletter or services are pursued and where possible, payment is obtained in advance. Where possible regular creditors are paid by direct debit	Existing communication procedures adequate. Council to appoint a Councillor Auditor for Fidelity Compliance for remainder of current financial year and then annually.
	Incorrect invoicing	L		
	Cheque payable incorrect	L		
	Loss of stock	L		
	Unpaid invoices	L		
Direct Debit payments	L			

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 As specified in the Councils Grants and Donations Policy.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
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.	Existing procedure adequate. S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 rules if required
Best Value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	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 any major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required.
Salaries and associated 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	L L L L L L	The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees through a Personnel Working Group as per the recruitment policy. Salaries are examined at council meetings and signed off. The Tax and NI deductions are calculated by the Clerk All Tax and NI payments are submitted in the Inland Revenue Annual Return. The Clerk keeps a time record and will have a contract of employment and job description. All contracts of employment contain a section on overpayment and recoup.	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations.

Employees	<p>Loss of key personnel</p> <p>Fraud by staff</p> <p>Actions undertaken by staff</p> <p>Health & Safety</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>Reference to the Continuity Plan should be made in case of loss of key personnel.</p> <p>The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud.</p> <p>The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.</p> <p>Specific risk assessments where necessary.</p>	Existing appointment and payment system is adequate.
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	L	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors	<p>Existing procedure adequate.</p> <p>Purchase revised books. Monitor working conditions, safety requirements and insurance regularly.</p> <p>Existing procedure adequate.</p>
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	Risk is higher in an election year. When an 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 a contested election as this is a democratic process and should not be stifled.	No procedure required

VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online and to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame by the Clerk. 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	L	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.	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes/Agendas/Notices Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chairman.	Powers to be minuted
	Business conduct	L		
Members interests	Conflict of interest	L	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. Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
	Register of Members interests	M		

Insurance	Adequacy Cost	L L	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 the premium must be paid for promptly.	Existing procedure adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register.
	Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L M	Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance provision annually.
Data protection	Policy Provision	L	The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency	Review of compliance.
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L M	The Council has a model GDPR publication for Local Councils in place. There have been no requests for information to date but 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.	Ensure annual review of registration

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
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Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(is)/property	H L	An annual review of assets must be undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Introduce procedure
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities	H L	Any assets owned by the Parish Council such as the Old Telephone Box 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.	Existing procedure inadequate. Ensure inspections carried out. Ensure adequate insurance cover is in place
Notice boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety	L L	The Parish Council uses one notice board sited in the parish situated on The Old School building, its use and location has been approval by relevant parties, insured by others, inspected regularly by the Cllr Jason Robb - any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council/Cllr Jason Robb. Keys held by the Cllr Jason Robb.	Existing procedure adequate.
Dog Waste/Litter Bin and Street lamps	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	The Parish Council is responsible for items such as litter and dog waste bins (all identified in the Asset Register). All items are covered by insurance. Monthly inspections are carried out and all reports of damage or faults are reported to Council and/or dealt with.	Existing procedure adequate.
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L H	The Parish Council Meetings are held at the Old Estate Office Annex. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health and Safety and comfort aspects, but has limited disabled/wheelchair access.	Existing location is adequate with some health and safety risks. They are currently subject to investigation

Council records – paper	Loss through: theft fire damage	L M	The Parish Council records are stored at the Clerk’s home. Records and include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc.	Damage (apart from fire) and Theft is unlikely and so provision adequate
Council records - electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage corruption of computer	LM	The Parish Council’s electronic records are stored on the Clerks computer. Files constantly back up using Microsoft One Drive and can be accessed via username and password from any other terminal.	Files are backed up on Microsoft One Drive.

John F Money Parish Clerk 5th May 2021