

WEEDON PARISH COUNCIL Risk Assessment

Risk Management is:

Understanding what our risks and obstacles are; considering the likelihood of them occurring; looking to see what impact they might have; deciding whether we can bear the risk or not; looking to reduce, remove or transfer them.

Section	Hazard	Risk	Impact	WPC Control	Responsibility
1. Business Continuity	1. Incapacity of Clerk	Low	High	Designate a person to temporarily act as Clerk in an emergency	All Members
	2. Resignation of the Clerk	Low	High	Undertake succession planning	All Members
	3. Loss or theft of records	Low	Low	All old copies of Minutes prior to electronic use are deposited with the County Records.	Clerk
				All current minutes are held on the Council's website. All records are backed up monthly to a suitable electronic device.	Clerk
4. Failure to retain or secure the necessary number of Members for a Council	Low	High	Maintain an up to date attendance register. Advertise for an election immediately a vacancy exists. Co-opt Members where no election held.	Clerk Clerk All Members	
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2. To ensure compliance with Acts of Parliament, Council's financial regulations and code of conduct	1. Lack of knowledge of regulations and codes	Low	High	Ensure that all Councillors have available relevant Acts. That a Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place. Highlight essential parts and provide training where appropriate.	Clerk /Chair
	2. Absence of standing orders	Low	High	Ensure that Standing Orders are produced, adopted by Council, understood by Councillors, and reviewed annually.	Clerk /Chair
	3. Actions by the Parish Council outside its powers laid down by Parliament.	Low	High	As at 2.1 above, but ensure that powers are highlighted or extracted into effective summary.	Clerk /Chair
	4. Lack of commitment to regulations and procedures	Low	High	Regular reference to appropriate regulations in agenda items. Delegation of responsibilities to individual councillors	Clerk /Chair All Members
	5. Items purchased without proper tendering procedures not providing value for money or resulting in accusations of commercial favouritism.	Low	High	Ensure that all councillors are aware of regulations re budgetary control and tender procedures. Introduce practice of estimates for all purchases over a figure agreed in the financial regulations.	Clerk /Chair
	6. Payments made without prior approval and adequate control.	Low	High	Ensure all payments are approved in Council meetings and recorded in minutes. Where prior payment is required, this is approved by the Chair or Vice Chair.	Clerk

To ensure compliance with the Acts of Parliament, Council's financial regulations and code of conduct (cont.)	7.Lack of control of signatories to cheques.	Low	High	All Councillors as authorised signatories.	Clerk
	8.VAT not properly accounted for	Low	Med	Ensure appropriate publications held and that Clerk has good knowledge of regulations.	Clerk /Chair
	9.Insufficient notice of meeting.	Low	Med	A notice of meeting including the agenda are placed on the notice board in the village and on the Council's website giving the required notice for each meeting.	Clerk
	10.Failure to approve minutes	Low	Med	Minutes are approved at the next meeting of the Council.	All Members
	11.Inadequate Register of Interests	Low	High	Members are required to declare an interest in any item of business and this is recorded in the minutes. Completed 'Register of Financial & Other Interest' Forms are submitted to the Monitoring Officer and regularly reviewed.	All Members Clerk All Members
	12.Non – compliance with Freedom Of Information Act	Low	High	The Council has adopted the model scheme and registered with the Information Commissioner.	Clerk
Section	Hazard	Risk	Impact	WPC Control	Responsibility
3. To identify and regularly review the Council's priorities	1. Lack of knowledge of how to set objectives, set priorities, and identify risks to their achievement.	Low	Med	All councillors to be made aware of need for objectives and identification of risk. Agree objectives and Priorities as part of Annual Report. Attend training sessions if practicable.	Clerk All Members
	2. Lack of commitment by Council Members	Low	Med	Add risk assessment to agenda at least annually, reviewing particular items, and results against those items.	Clerk /Chair
	3. No risk analysis carried out	Low	High	As at 3.1 above. Ensure that completion of the risk assessment is given high priority, as a requirement of the Audit Commission.	Clerk /Chair
	4. No steps taken to combat identified risks	Low	High	As at 3.2 above.	All Members
	5. Impact of potential Public Spending Cuts	High	High	All councillors to be made aware that priorities must be set on the basis of the financial capacity of the Parish Council to deliver. Attend Training where appropriate.	All Members Clerk

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4. To influence Government and other organisations to fulfil the requirements of the Parish population.	1. Lack of effective lines of communication with other organisations	Low	Med	Note all communication lines that are essential or beneficial and make information available to Councillors. Establish contacts by name and where possible face-to-face.	Clerk
	2. Lack of effective lines of communication with parishioners	Low	High	Implement Communications and Engagement Strategy. Take every opportunity to publicise role of Parish Council through Parish newsletters and website. Effective use of Notice boards and “fliers”. Create Parish Plan through the use of parishioners’ views from detailed questionnaires and public meetings. Use key issues to raise profile of Parish Council and to test parishioners’ views.	Clerk All Members Chair
	3. Lack of preparation on subjects requiring influence	Low	Med	Ensure that all Councillors are aware of need for careful research and are guided as to where to obtain relevant information on issues under discussion.	All Members
	4. Lack of confidence by Parish Councillors	Low	Med	As at 4.1 above. Experienced councillors to assist newcomers and provide relevant training where necessary	Chair
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5. To ensure that all councillors are aware of their responsibilities, and possible liabilities, and to provide adequate insurance cover for all possible risks.	1. Lack of knowledge of possible culpability of Councillors.	Med	High	Creation of standing orders and familiarisation with those where greatest risk occurs.	Clerk
	2. Lack of education of Councillors regarding culpability.	Med	High	As at 5.1 above. Delegate responsibility to one or two experienced Councillors to assist newcomers to understand culpability. Attend any training courses available.	Chair All Members All Members
	3. Inadequate insurance cover taken out – property, personal liability, employer’s liability	Low	High	Review risk assessment by including on agenda of Parish Council meetings at least annually. Ensure a risk assessment is carried out for all new assets and appropriate insurance cover considered.	All Members All Members

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6.To keep appropriate books of account accurately and up to date throughout the financial year	1. Lack of knowledge of accounting requirements	Low	/High	Ensure that all Councillors are familiar with current financial regulations and include them in standing orders. Regularly review standing orders.	All Members
	2. Lack of commitment to accounting requirements	Low	High	As at 6.1 above. Clerk to produce up to date financial reports at all meetings. Internal and External audit reports to be made available to all Councillors and any recommendations to be acted upon promptly.	All Members Clerk Clerk
	3. Bank charges unnecessarily incurred.	Low	Low	Clerk to balance accounts against bank statements monthly.	Clerk
	4. Inaccuracies in recording amounts, totals in books of account, and bank reconciliations.	Low	High	Clerk to ensure that books of account are formatted in such a way that internal controls are included and activated. Annual internal audits to advise on internal controls required.	Clerk Internal Auditor
	5. Not following Banking procedure	Low	High	All banking and drawing of cheques to be in accordance with Section 5 & 6 of Financial Regulations	Clerk
	6. Inaccuracies and interest losses caused by account transfers.	Low	Low	Keep number of accounts to a minimum but ensure that any large credit balances are deposited in an interest bearing account.	Clerk
	7. The most beneficial interest terms not being employed.	Low	Low	Ensure that favourable interest rate is obtained in deposit accounts and review against alternatives, but bearing in mind the risks in changing accounts.	Clerk
	8. Books of account not kept up to date/ invoices not posted promptly.	Low	high	Regular weekly/monthly update of accounts by Clerk. Financial reports at all Parish Council meetings.	Clerk Clerk
	9. Payments missed or delayed due to inadequate filing of invoices.	Low	Low	All invoices to be checked and filed as pending on receipt and reported to next Parish Council meeting.	Clerk
	10. Internal controls not in place or not operated.	Low	High	As at 6.8 above.	Clerk

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7. To ensure that payments made from council funds and the use of assets, represent value for money, are adequately managed, and comply generally with the wishes of the residents.	1. Use of funds not giving value for money.	Low	High	Effective budget planning process. Creation of annual plan from parish plan and any consultation process.	All Members All members
	2. Use of funds not in accordance with the wishes of the residents.	Low	High	As at 7.1 above Appointment of RFO/Clerk to create effective financial management.	All Members All Members
	3. Charges for use of facilities inadequate.	Low	Med	Effective financial management and prompt collection by RFO. Internal audit checks.	Clerk Internal Auditor
	4. Fund raising not properly controlled or not in accordance with regulations	Low	High	All Councillors to be aware of need to check regulations before commencing fund-raising activities. Effective financial management by RFO.	All Members Clerk
8. To ensure that the annual precept requirements results from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget is regularly monitored; and reserves are appropriate.	1. Lack of knowledge of budgetary process, and Council regulations.	Low	High	Include regulations in Standing Orders issued to all Councillors. Place item on agenda early in year to remind councillors of budget process and actions required.	All Members Clerk
	2. Inadequate internal controls with regard to monitoring expenditure.	Low	High	Financial and budget progress to all Parish Council meetings	Clerk
	3. Reserves to low	Low	High	As 8.2 above	All Members
9. To explore all possible sources of income, and to ensure that expected income is fully received	1. Lack of knowledge of possible sources of income e.g. grants, funding streams	Med	Med	Work closely with local association and residents' groups to gain experience of all grants/funds available and application procedures	Clerk All Members
	2. Non receipts not banked or not banked promptly	Low	Med	All applications and approvals reported through the minutes to create an audit trail	Clerk
	3. VAT claims not made promptly or made incorrectly	Low	Med	Ensure Clerk has appropriate and up-to-date VAT official publications. Financial and budget progress reports to all Parish Council meetings. Internal audit checks.	Clerk Internal Auditor

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10. To ensure that salaries paid to employees and amounts paid to contractors are paid in accordance with Council regulations, and adequately monitored.	1. Inappropriate rate of pay to employees	Low	Low	A contract of employment and job description and person specification is agreed for the clerk Ensure employee regulations are available and understood by Clerk Financial and budget progress reports to all Parish Council meetings Terms and conditions are agree in the minutes	All Members Clerk/Chair Clerk All Members
	2. Tax and NI arrangements not in accordance with regulations	Low	Med	No additional payment without Council approval	All Members
	3. Amounts paid to contractors not in accordance with contract and inadequately monitored	Low	Low	Liability reported through Council Minutes Internal audit checks Financial and budget progress reports to all Parish Council meetings. Appoint Councillor to monitor contract work carried out. Internal audit checks	Clerk Internal auditor Clerk All Members Internal auditor
11. To ensure that year end accounts are prepared on the correct accounting basis, on time, and supported by an adequate audit trail.	1. Lack of knowledge of Council regulations and procedures.	Low	high	Include financial regulations in Standing Orders. Attend training seminars where available.	All members
	2. Late or non-submissions of annual accounts.	Low	high	Include a time table in Standing Orders/Financial Regulations. Financial and budget progress reports to all Parish Council meetings.	Clerk Clerk
	3. Year end accounts not prepared, inaccurate, or not in accordance with Council requirements.	Low	high	Financial and budget progress reports to all Parish Council meetings. Internal audit checks.	Clerk Internal Auditor
	4. Inadequate audit trail from records to final accounts.	Low	high	As at 11.3 above	Internal Auditor

Section	Hazard	Risk	Impact	WPC Control	Responsibility
12. To identify, value, and maintain all the assets of the Parish Council, and ensure that asset registers are complete, accurate and properly maintained.	1. Lack of knowledge of assets of Parish Council.	Low	Med	Ascertain and record all assets for which Parish Council is responsible. Create permanent asset register and include in final accounts. Establish who is responsible for security and maintenance of each asset.	All Member Clerk All Members
	2. Assets lost or misappropriated.	Low	Med	Appoint Councillor responsible for regular monitoring of location and use of assets.	All Members
	3. Inadequate or inaccurate valuation of the Council's assets.	Low	Med	Arrange for periodic review of valuations and arrange for professional valuation where necessary. Internal Audit checks.	Clerk Internal Auditor
	4. Asset register not established or inadequately maintained.	Low	Med	Create asset register in accordance with Audit Commission requirements.	Clerk
13. To comply with appropriate Government legislation regarding disability, racial equality, safeguarding children etc.	1. Lack of knowledge of applicable legislation.	Med	Med	Clerk to have all appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at Parish Council meetings.	Clerk All Members
	2. Failure to comply with applicable legislation.	Med	Med	As at 13.1 above.	All Members
14. To carry out adequate safety checks on all buildings, properties, and equipment for which the council is responsible.	1. Lack of information on properties, buildings and equipment.	Low	Med	Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by Clerk. Include in asset register all properties and assets for which Parish Council is responsible. Ensure that all assets and details of all risks are adequately detailed with insurance company.	Clerk Clerk Clerk
	2. Lack of knowledge of safety requirements or commitment to carry out safety checks.	Low	Med	Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by Clerk	Clerk

Adopted: 4th June 2015