

# WOOLASTON PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. 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.

The Parish Council will review all risks annually and annotate actions.

Subject	Risk Assessment / Risks Identified	H M L	Management/Control of Risk	Review / assess / revise
<b>MANAGEMENT</b>				
Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	In the event of council not being able to meet in person to conduct business, a Business Continuity Motion is set up to enable Clerk, Chairman & Vice Chairman to make decisions on behalf of the council. All files and recent records (both paper and electronic) are kept at the Clerk's home. The Clerk makes regular backups of electronic files to an external hard drive (retained by the chairman). In the event of the Clerk being indisposed, the chairman to contact GAPTC for advice.	Review when necessary.  Ensure procedures below are undertaken.
Clerk	Loss of Clerk  Fraud  Actions undertaken	M  L  L	In the event of the Clerk resigning or being indisposed, the Council will enlist the support of GAPTC until a replacement has been appointed at the same time advertising for a new clerk  The requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance must be adhered to.  Internal procedures in place. Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice.	Maintain membership of GAPTC Clerk to produce 'Chairman's Box' to include log in details and passwords to be used to enable access to laptop, online accounts etc if clerk indisposed.
Meeting Locations	Adequacy  Health & Safety	L  M	Parish Council meeting is held in a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and the general public. WMH Committee has its own risk assessment and procedures	Existing procedures adequate
Council Records – Paper	Loss through: Theft  Fire Damage	L  L	The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondences, minutes, insurance, and bank records.  The house has three smoke alarms and general domestic fire prevention precautions are taken. Older historical records retained at Gloucestershire archives	Damage from theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate.  Existing procedures adequate

Council Records – Electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer	M	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Council laptop held with the Clerk at her home. Back-ups of electronic data is made at regular intervals to external hard drive which is stored with the chairman.	Suggest enable Electronic records to be automatically replicated to Cloud storage by the Clerk
Parish Web Site	Out of date	M	The Clerk is responsible for maintaining the web-site, and to ensure content is updated following each meeting.	Update to include accessibility required.
	Hacked by third party	M		

<b>FINANCIAL</b>				
Precept (Fund activities undertaken by the council for the benefit of the community)	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties or being unable to meet expectations of electorate	L	Council regularly receives quarterly budget update information. Council reviews the budget update / actual position / projected position to the end of year and projects required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings. The total is resolved to be the precept amount requested from FODDC in January by the Clerk in writing. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received (by BACS)	Existing procedures considered adequate
	Requirements not submitted to FoDDC	L		
	Amount not Received by FODDC	L		
Financial Records	Inadequate records	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements. Records to be updated and presented monthly and balanced quarterly, six monthly and annually. Councillor to carry out Internal Control checks quarterly.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial regulations annually.
	Financial irregularities	L		
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks Incur bank charges Fraudulent Practices Bank's mistakes	M L L L	Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements. Two signatories per cheque, clerk cannot sign cheques. Online banking – clerk creates the payment which requires an additional signatory to authorise. A councillor carries out independent internal controls to check bank reconciliation quarterly. Monthly reconciliation carried out by clerk to check and note errors- forwarded with Agenda and approved at PC meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.
Theft of Cash	Loss through dishonesty	L	No petty cash held, any cash /cheques collected is banked by the Clerk and included in the reconciliation procedure. The councils insurance has a Fidelity Guarantee	Existing procedure adequate.
Reporting and Auditing	Information communication	L	Financial information is a regular agenda item and discussed/reviewed and approved at each meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.
Grants Outgoing	Mis-recording of the Payment of grants	L	Grant requests / forms submitted in accordance with procedure and reviewed and agreed (or not) and minuted at Council meetings.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Grant applications to parish council incorrectly and inconsistently assessed	L		
	Transparency	L	All expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers, it is recorded as such.	

Grants (Incoming)	Risk of loss of grant / wrong amount paid	L	The council financial regulations set how grants should be received. All receipts are reported to the council at the next meeting. Any one-off grants awarded would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied. Receipts on behalf of other groups recorded as such in council accounts	Existing procedure adequate
Procurement / Best Value Accountability	Failure to achieve value for money or purchase items/services not fit for purpose Work awarded Incorrectly Overspend on services	M L L M	Normal Parish Council practice is to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major work competitive tenders would be sought. If problems encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	Existing procedure adequate Include when reviewing Financial regulations
Salaries and expenses	Payment error  Risk of financial penalty if HMRC PAYE obligations not met Payroll Error (Breach of employment or tax laws)	L  L M	Salary rates follow the NJC national pay scale and are assessed annually by the council and applied on 1 April each year. Monthly salary slip lists expenses and is reviewed and signed by chairman in advance of meeting. HMRC / PAYE software (Basic Tools) used for payment and tax records. Tax is paid monthly to HMRC. Salary paid monthly by direct payment to Clerk's bank account, authorised by a signatory.	Existing procedure adequate.  Council to review pay, expenses and pension provision periodically
VAT	Reclaiming/charging Eligible VAT payments not recovered	L L	Financial Regulations set out the requirements, Clerk records VAT on purchases separately and retains VAT receipts, reclaims VAT annually and reports to Council. Ensures invoices include VAT registration number.	Existing procedures adequate
Election	Election / Co-option process not carried out legally  Risk of an election costs undercutting provision of statutory services	M  M	Produce internal procedure using guidelines from FODDC and GAPTC; Acceptance of Office forms to be submitted to FODDC and a copy retained by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate  Council to continue to provide earmarked reserves and set aside for election costs as well as a reserve fund to withstand unexpected expenditure
Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Audit)	Missed deadlines, lack of legal compliance  Unable to satisfy requirements to submit within time limits to government appointed auditor	L  L	Ensure accurate and timely record keeping is maintained and financial procedures are strictly adhered to; All accounting records and procedures to be reviewed annually by an external/independent person (Internal Auditor). Annual return completed by Clerk, approved by Council and signed by Chairman, and sent to External Auditor within time frame	Existing procedures are now adequate

<b>LIABILITY</b>				
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and clearly minuted at full Council	Existing procedures considered adequate

	Working parties taking decisions	L	Ensure any Working Group established are provided with clear terms of reference	
Minutes and agendas Notices Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed and dated at the next Council meeting signed by the Chairman. Agenda and minutes displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chairman.	Existing procedures adequate  Ensure Members undertake adequate training to adhere to Code of Conduct
	Record of decisions agreed and actions taken are lost	L		
	Business Conduct	L		
Insurance (Public Liability)	Risk to third party, property or individual.	L	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements. Employers and employee liabilities is a necessity and within policies. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Fidelity checks in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Insurance reviewed annually
	Adequacy	L		
	Cost	L		
	Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	M L		
Data protection	Privacy breach or sensitive data stored with no reason	L	The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and renews annually, prompted by a renewal notice. The council adheres to its Data Protection and Privacy Policy	Ensure annual renewal of registration  Review periodically to ensure ongoing compliance
	Provision iaw General Data Protection Register (GDPR) 2018	L		
Freedom of Information	Lack of transparency	L	The Council will fulfil its legal obligation to react to requests. FOI requests are processed by the Clerk, receipt of information is confirmed by signature of the requester. The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request was received it could create a number of additional hours work. The Parish Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours.	Monitor any requests made under FOI  Information to be made available in accordance with FOI Act 2000
	Extra cost through administrative time taken in the event of a FOI request	M		
	Non compliance with Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000	L		
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.

<b>PHYSICAL AREAS, EQUIPMENT AND ASSETS</b>				
Assets – street furniture, Bus shelters  Open spaces, public areas	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party property Failure to account for assets – their condition or whereabouts could lead to additional costs / insurance implications	L L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision. All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is actioned/ authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. Assets are insured.	Existing procedures adequate
	Damage or Injury to member of public Trips & Falls	M M	Keep areas clean of weeds and moss and other vegetation	

Trees	Injury to member of public from falling trees or branches	M	Full Arborists Inspection Tree Report survey to be obtained and actioned every 3 years in line with British Standard 3998: 2010 and records maintained Consultant to be Arboriculture Association approved	Inspection to be booked May 2023
Closed Churchyard and Cemetery	See separate Risk Assessment		See separate Risk Assessment <i>Churchyard wall survey to be obtained and actioned every 3 years</i>	Separate risk assessment required
Christmas Tree Lights	See separate Risk Assessment		See separate Risk Assessment	Separate risk assessment required

<b>COUNCILLORS' PROPRIETY</b>				
Members' Interests	Conflict of interests	M	Councillors have a duty for Declarations of interest by members at start of Council meetings.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Register of members interests	M	Register of member's interests forms reviewed regularly by councillors.	Members take responsibility to update their register, reviewed at annual meeting
	Opportunity for impropriety	M	Councillors to notify clerk of any gifts/ hospitality received over £50	

<b>COUNCIL REPUTATION</b>				
Councillors & Clerk Actions	Bringing the council into disrepute (Inappropriate behaviour not in accordance with Standing Orders or Code of Conduct)	M	Councillors understand and receive training on the Code of Conduct. A professional approach is undertaken on all Parish Council matters. Code of conduct is approved and dictates councillor behaviour. Councillors given copy of standing orders and encouraged to identify training needs	Not all Councillors have received training. Members to identify any training needs and register on training courses.