

WAPPENHAM PARISH COUNCIL



RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Reviewed: 10th March 2021

Signed.....

WAPPENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Risk Management Policy

Wappenham Parish Council is committed to identifying and managing risks, using the following procedures, and to ensuring that risks are maintained at an acceptable level. Any action that is felt necessary will be taken by the Parish Council in order to minimise or manage all identified risks.

The Parish Council will review risks on a regular basis, including any newly identified risks, and will minute the findings and amend the 'Risk Assessment' as necessary. The review will include identification of any unacceptable levels of risk.

The Local Councils Governance and Accountability Guidance makes the following observations regarding risk management.

1. Risk management is not just about financial management: it is about setting objectives and achieving them in order to deliver high quality public services
2. The new approach places emphasis on local councils strengthening their own corporate governance arrangements, improving their stewardship of public funds and providing assurance to taxpayers.

It goes on to make the point that Members are ultimately responsible for risk management because risk threatens the achievement of policy objectives. Members should, therefore:

- a. take steps to identify key risks facing the Council
- b. evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place
- c. decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

The following pages tabulate the identified risks, assess the likelihood and severity of the identified risk and sets in place a management structure for the risk and a suitable review period.

Risk Assessment and Management

Subject	Risk Identified	Risk H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff Action	I A Freq. Months
Business Continuity	Risk of the Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	M	Loss of the Clerk or Council members so as to prevent a quorum being formed.	Loss of Clerk will result in the coverage of this role by other Council members. Loss of Councillors will result in the need to co-option of village members onto the Council at the next meeting	12
		H	In person Council Meetings made unlawful due to pandemic	Use of remote meeting platforms such as Zoom to ensure business continuity	3
Precept	Adequacy of precept	L	Financial + Budget review to ensure expenses to not exceed expectation and precept	Clerk + Council members – actions in 'Minute Book'	12
	Requirements not submitted to SNC	L	Budget review meeting following SNC reminder	Clerk to ensure Precept request is sent to SNC	12
	Precept not received	L	Bank account review at Ordinary meeting ensures precept is received Apr + Sept	Clerk + Council members actions in 'Minute Book'	6
Financial Records	Inadequate records	L	Auditors would identify shortcoming in records	Clerk to ensure records meet required standards	12
	Financial irregularities	L	Auditors would identify irregularities	Clerk + Members to act upon Auditors' findings	12
Bank + Banking	Bank or Council mistakes	L	The PC has two bank accounts (Current + interest). All expenditure is minuted and voted on and require two cheque signatures. The bank may make occasional errors but this will be identified when statements are reconciled.	Existing procedures are adequate for cheque expenditure. Clerk to reconcile bank statements. Identified risk due to irregular bank statements: short term addressed by ICC tight control, longer term to investigate more suitable banking options.	3
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council no longer holds any petty cash. This risk would need to be reviewed if this changed.	NFA	

Risk Assessment and Management					
Subject	Risk Identified	Risk H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff Action	I A Freq. Months
Reporting + Auditing	General Information + Communication	L	Regular financial statement reviews and the Council preparation of the annual financial statement needs to be timely.	Financial reviews minuted along with the submitted Financial Statement + Audit	12
	Compliance	L	Review of Audit findings	Review of Audit response Minuted and actions completed	12
	Compliance with transparency code	L	Procedure identified and minuted	Clerk responsible for ensuring compliance and reporting	EM
	External Audit service – no auditor appointed	L	Ensure Council remains opted in to new arrangements	Clerk to minute decision and take any further action required.	
Direct Costs + Overheads	Goods not supplied but paid for	L	Expenditure is so infrequent that non-supply of goods is picked up rapidly	Council member proposing expenditure will follow up on delivery.	EA
	Incorrect Invoicing	L	Invoice amount will tie back to minuted expense proposal	Clerk to ensure invoice matched minuted expense.	EA
	Payment value incorrect or Payee incorrect	L	As above + both cheque signatories should check the payee + amount	Signatories to check payee + amount	EA
Clerk's Wages	Fees incorrectly paid	L	The clerk is paid four times each year on presentation of pay slip – see above	ICC to cross reference pay slip with budgeted expenditure	EA
Election Costs	Risk of an election cost	H	This risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be taken to minimise having a contested election as this is the democratic process and must not be stifled	Clerk to obtain costs from SNC for both full elections and uncontested elections. Budget review should include assurance that the Council has reserves to cover the risk of election costs.	48
Insurance	Adequacy	M	An annual review is undertaken prior to renewal of all insurances to ensure suitability.	Clerk to obtain costs, and alternative specialist insurers quotes if possible	12
	Cost	L			
	Compliance	L			

Risk Assessment and Management

Subject	Risk Identified	Risk H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff Action	I A Freq. Months
Data Protection	Policy + provision	M	The data protection officer is NorthantsCALC. The Council is registered with the Information Commissioners Office.	Clerk to ensure membership is renewed/	12
Freedom of Information	The Council is aware of and works to the scheme for 'Local Councils'. As yet there has been no request for information over that published with the formal minutes	L	The Council is aware of its requirements to produce data if asked and will always work towards provide requested information	Clerk + Members	EA
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk to Third Party	L	An annual review to be undertaken	Clerk to develop a combined asset register and risk review	12
Meeting Location	Adequacy Health + Safety	L H	Meetings are almost invariably held in the village Hall which is suitable for the purpose intended. Activities are deemed to be safe but the approach to the Village Hall in the dark is poor and care needs to be taken. If in-person meetings are not permitted	N/A Councillors + Members of the public.	12 12
Council Records – Paper	Loss through: Accident Theft Fire Damage	L L L L	The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk, these include historical correspondence, minute book, insurances, financial and other sundry items. Most of the recent records are held on computer file.	Damage, with the exception of fire are thought unlikely, as is theft. No record of this type of risk occurring is known so the risk is deemed very low indeed	
Council Records – Computer	Loss through corruption/theft of laptop computer	M	Back-ups of PC records to be taken at regular intervals and stored on external hard drive or other appropriate removable system/medium Laptop to be protected with appropriate virus/firewall protection	Clerk to undertake file back-up. Clerk to ensure this is kept up to date	3 12
Employer Obligations	Risk of non-compliance to legislative changes	L	Use guidance from NorthantsCALC and Government Agencies to identify obligations	Clerk to keep up to date with current guidance and ensure the Council is aware of and complies with all requirements.	3

Risk Assessment and Management

Subject	Risk Identified	Risk H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff Action	I A Freq. Months
Minutes/Agendas Notices + statutory documents	Accuracy, legality and business conduct	L	Minutes are produced in the prescribed method. These are approved at the next meeting. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair	Clerk to ensure minutes are taken and published for approval at the next meeting.	EA
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payment	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Council to be resolved and minuted at full Parish Council Meetings	Minute Book to be kept a record of events = Clerk	EA
Members Interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members interest	M M	Councillors must declare an interest in any item raised within Council meetings. Register of Members interest should be updated and reviewed regularly	All Councillors. Clerk + Chair	EA 2 yrs
Parish Clerk's Working Environment	As identified by completion of HSE risk assessments	L	Completion of appropriate templates, with results reported to the Parish Council and any necessary actions undertaken	Clerk All Councillors	2yrs