

Crakehall with Langthorne Parish Council Risk Assessment – April 2022

Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements.

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.

This Risk Assessment was reviewed and amended by the clerk in preparation for Internal Audit but is subject to the approved of the council in May 2022.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review / Assess / Revise
Councillors	Council not quorate	L	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow. This either leads to a by-election or a co-option process. An election is out of the Parish Council's control but has a financial implication The co-option process begins with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applicants and co-option vote at a Council meeting followed by appointment.	Existing procedures adequate.
Council Meetings	Inability to meet	L	The usual risk would be very low level as a consequence of members not being able to agree a date to meet or a venue being unavailable. However, over the last couple of years, Covid-19 meant that face to face meetings were not possible. The council adapted well to remote meetings and there was some disappointment that the government did not leave this option available for use in future.	Existing procedures adequate.
Clerk	Fraud Loss of Clerk and inability to appoint a replacement	M	The Clerk is provided with opportunities for relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and support and legal advice. If the Clerk was indisposed the Council would designate one of its elected members at the meeting in question to be the minute taker for that particular meeting. If the absence of the clerk meant that the Council did not feel that they had the relevant advice or information to enable them to take informed decisions then the Council would defer any agenda items not requiring an immediate decision to a future meeting. If it anticipated that the Clerk would be absent for a longer period of time then the Council would resolve that one of its members would be the acting Clerk (in an unpaid capacity) until such time as the Clerk returned to work. Alternatively, the Council could resolve to employ a locum or temporary Clerk. Clerks will be encouraged to give good notice of their intention to resign so that recruitment for a replacement and arrangements for transition can be put in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Membership of YLCA maintained. Monitor working conditions.
Precept	Adequacy of precept	L	A rigorous approach to budgeting underpins the request for the level of annual precept. The Parish Council receives budget update information at every meeting. The precept is an agenda item at the November meeting. The Clerk informs Hambleton District Council of the Council's precept decision.	Existing procedures adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Bi-monthly reconciliation reports are prepared by the Clerk and distributed to the Council. Accounts are reviewed annually by the internal auditor and, if appropriate, the external auditor.	Existing procedure adequate. Review of Financial Regulations every four years. Next review due in 2024.

Banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking and cheques. Two Councillors and the Clerk are authorized to sign cheques and approve BACS payments and each payment requires the approval of two of these signatories.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations and bank signatory list, especially after an election or resignation of a Councillor.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. There is no petty cash or float. All cash expenditure relates to purchases made by the Clerk and is recorded in an Excel document which is presented to the Chairman and Vice Chairman for payment.	Existing procedures adequate.
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	L	Insurance is in place. Risk assessments are made of any individual event undertaken.	Existing procedures adequate.
Employer Liability	Non compliance with employment law	L	Advice is sought from the Yorkshire Local Councils Associations, the Internal Auditor or Scribe Accounts where necessary.	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal Liability	Legality of activities Proper and timely reporting via minutes	L	Clerk clarifies legal positions on proposals as required and seeks prior advice if necessary. The Council receives and approves minutes at meetings.	Existing procedures adequate.
Reporting and Auditing	Information communication Compliance	L	A statement including bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank is produced and presented to the Council at each meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.
Best Value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. The Parish Council strives to obtain three estimates where the value is below £2000 and above £500.	Existing procedure adequate.
Employees	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff Actions undertaken by staff Health & Safety	L	The Clerk has the opportunity for relevant training and access to reference books, assistance and legal advice as required to undertake the role. The maintenance personnel (including volunteers) are provided with adequate direction and safety equipment as needed to undertake the tasks.	Existing procedure adequate. Membership of the YLCA. Monitor working conditions, safety requirements and insurance regularly.
Salaries and Assoc Costs	Salary paid incorrectly	L	Salary rates for the Clerk comply with the national final salary award as recommended by the National Association of Local Councils and are assessed by the Parish Council. Payments for salary and expenses are authorized by the Chairman and Vice Chairman and reported to all other councillors as part of the financial reports. PAYE/NI is properly operated by the Council as confirmed by internal audit reports.	Existing payment system is adequate. The Clerk should have a contract of employment and job description. Ensure compliance for PAYE/NI with HMR&C.
Election Costs	Risk of an election cost	M	Risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimize the risk of having a contested election. Costs are covered using reserves if required. Payments are spread over a four-year period.	Existing arrangements are adequate and additional costs are included in the budget when setting the precept.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. VAT reclaims are undertaken electronically on a quarterly basis.	Existing procedure adequate.
Internal Audit	Completion within time limits	L	An independent internal auditor is appointed by the Council. The internal audit is undertaken in April / May.	Ensure that members declare any conflict of interest regarding the appointed internal auditor.
Annual Return	Completion/submission within time limits	L	The Clerk completes the Annual Return and along with the Governance Statement is approved by the Council within timescales set by the external auditor. Public notices are posted as per regulations.	Existing procedure adequate.
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed format by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the following Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements on the	Existing procedure adequate. Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of

Documents			website and notice boards. Business conducted at Council meetings is managed by the Chair.	Conduct.
Members Interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members Interests	L M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest on agenda items during the meeting. These would be recorded in the minutes. Register of Members Interests are available to view on Hambleton District Council's website and is reviewed regularly by Councillors with any amendments notified to the proper officer.	Existing procedures adequate. Members to take responsibility to update their register.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers Liability, Public Liability and Fidelity Guarantee are a statutory requirement. Councillors are assigned areas of lead responsibility and are encouraged to be proactive with inspections and raising any issues or concerns.	Review insurance provision annually.
Data Protection	Policy Provision	L M	The Council is registered as a data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office. The Council is fully compliant with GDPR requirements.	Ensure annual renewal of registration. Ensure compliance.

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review / Assess / Revise
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedures adequate. Review asset register and insurance provision.
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities. Risk to third parties	L	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.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure servicing is undertaken.
Notice Boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	The Parish Council is responsible for three notice boards. These are inspected regularly by the Clerk and any repairs or maintenance requirements are brought to the attention of the Parish Council.	Existing procedure adequate.
Street Furniture and Playground Equipment	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	The Parish Council is responsible for the Old Chapel, a number of benches, bus shelters, various fences and gates and all playground equipment. An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks are made on all playground equipment by the Lead Councillor and a safety inspection is undertaken annually by a qualified inspector. The Old Chapel is used only by the maintenance personnel and Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate. Any maintenance required is highlighted to the Council. The playground inspector's report is addressed by the Chairman and member of the community. Only the maintenance personnel and Clerk have a key for the Old Chapel.
Meeting Location	Adequacy Health and Safety	L M	Meetings are held at Crakehall Village Hall. Access to the key is via a Key Safe with the code being known to the clerk and Chairman. The premises and facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from a health and safety and comfort aspect.	Existing procedure adequate.
Council Paper Records	Loss through theft, fire or damage	M	Paper records are stored at the home of the Clerk and in the council's storage facility at the village hall. Records include deeds, historical correspondence, minute books, insurance and planning applications.	Damage or theft is unlikely and so provision adequate.
Council Electronic Records	Loss through theft, fire, damage, corruption of computer	M	Electronic records are stored on the Clerk's computer. A back up of the files to an external hard drive is undertaken at least monthly.	Adequate risk control in place.
Allotment	Existing tenant claiming "adverse possession"	H	The existing tenant is understood to believe that he could claim the allotment for his own by virtue of adverse possession. The council disputes this and is seeking to	Appropriate action being taken.

			register the land in its name. The council believes that it has a very strong case but a lack of previous administrative processes do not help the case.	
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CEMETERY MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review / Assess / Revise
Administration	Absence or loss of the administrator	L	The Chairman of the council currently undertakes administration on a voluntary capacity. The previous administrator and / or the clerk could be called upon in the event of problems,	Adequate control in place.
	Loss of paper records	L	The administrator is in the process of transferring all paper files onto the Scribe Cemetery module. This will significantly minimize risk.	Adequate control in place.
Care and maintenance of grounds and graves	Neglect could lead to untidy grounds and damaged headstones.	L	Situation monitored regularly. Grounds maintained under contract and moles dealt with by specialist. Damaged graves reported to next of kin (if they can be found) or, in one case, a bequest has been used for repairs.	Adequate control in place.