

Fawkham 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 Fawkham Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

SUBJECT	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	H/M/L	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ASSESS/RE-VISE
FINANCIAL				
Precept	Inadequacy of precept meaning Council cannot carry out its statutory duties	L	To determine the precept amount required each year, the Council develops a forecast of income and expenditure for the forthcoming year and, taking into account the Council Tax Base advised by SDC, sets an appropriate precept.	Existing procedure adequate
Payment of election costs	Inability to meet the cost of elections in an election year or to fill a contested casual vacancy	M/L	Set aside 25% of estimated cost within each years' budget to cover the cost on a four year cycle	New process from 2019/20 budget year
Financial Records	Inadequate records/ financial irregularities	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Copies of all invoices, payments, quotes and tenders are retained and made available for inspection the internal auditor as part of the annual AGAR process	Existing procedure adequate; Financial Regulations are reviewed annually to ensure they remain fit for purpose

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Banking	Inappropriate signing of cheques	L	Cheques can only be approved when signed by two authorised signatories of the bank account. Invoices for payment are presented monthly meetings for counter-signing when cheques are signed. Cheque stubs are initialled by the signatories when signing the cheques.	Existing procedure is adequate
Banking	Bank errors	L	Monthly reconciliation of payments against the bank statement is presented to the meeting of the Parish Council by the Clerk. Reconciliation is signed and certified as correct by the Chair of the meeting of the Parish Council	Existing procedure
Financial Monitoring	Lack of monitoring leading to financial monitoring	L	Financial monitoring is a regular agenda item, with a finance monitoring report prepared and reviewed at each meeting and recorded in the minutes.	Existing procedures adequate
VAT	Non-reclaiming	L	The Council has financial regulations which set out the requirements. The finance monitoring report records any VAT to be reclaimed against each entry. VAT is reclaimed at the end of each financial year.	Existing procedures adequate
Grants	Misuse of grants received	L	If/when received, these are reported in the monthly finance monitoring report	Existing procedures adequate

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Grants and support payable	Misuse of power to pay	L	Any such expenditure goes through the required process of approval in accordance with the Financial Regulations, minuted and listed if a payment is made using s137 powers	Existing procedure
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly and/or unpaid tax due to HMRC	L	The Clerk formally reports to the Parish Council any changes on rates of pay following national awards under NJC terms and conditions, as notified by KALC. HMRC basic tools real-time reporting is used to determine tax due. Internal auditor is able to check appropriate processing.	Existing procedure
Insurance	Outdated asset register leading to under or over insurance	L	An asset register is updated annually and published on the PC website. Changes are notified to the Council's insurers.	Existing procedure adequate
PEOPLE				
Inappropriate behaviour	Inappropriate behaviour by employees or Councilors	L	Appropriate policies and code of conduct in place and communicated	To be reviewed Autumn 2020
Employees	Fraud by Clerk	L	Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance are adhered to regarding fraud. Monthly finance monitoring report, reconciliation of bank statements and internal audit process all act as checks	Existing procedures adequate

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Health and safety of employee	Risk to health and safety of the clerk	L	Role is largely working from home, and the Clerk is expected to maintain safe working practices and report any issues. A home working risk assessment is periodically undertaken. A separate risk assessment is maintained for the village hall (used for PC meetings) and agendas contain a notice detailing the procedure for an emergence evacuation of the hall	Monitor health and safety
Clerk as Proper Office and Finance Officer	Lack of professional knowledge leading to incorrect advice	M	The Parish Council supports the Clerk's attendance at relevant training offered by the Kent Association of Local Councils	Existing procedures adequate. Consideration to be given to CiCla accredited clerk training during 2021.
Health and safety of clerk, councillors and public	Personal injury	L	Liability insurance is held for clerk, callers and public carrying out volunteer duties such as inspections, lorry watch etc. Certificate is displayed at the village hall. A separate risk assessment is maintained for the village hall (used for PC meetings) and agendas contain a notice detailing the procedure for an emergence evacuation of the hall	Existing procedure adequate
GOVERNANCE				

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Annual Governance and Audit Return (AGAR)	Failure to suit within time limit and/or complete accurately	L	The AGAR is requested by the internal auditor and is shared in draft form with the internal auditor prior to presentation to the PC. It is completed and signed by the Clerk and Chair at a PC meeting, and submitted within the prescribed time by the clerk. Relevant statutory notices are published to the PC website. The Internal auditor checks annually that all relevant VAT has been reclaimed.	Existing procedure adequate
AGAR	Failure to follow up any matters recommended by the internal auditor.	L	There have been no such issues in recent years, but were they to arise they could be followed up and reviewed as part of the subsequent year's AGAR	Existing procedure adequate
Publication of information as required under the Transparency Code	Failure to publish the required information within the required time	L	The website to set out a list of the required information which is updated annually as part of the AGAR/Annual Council Meeting processes	Information to be updated and expanded as part of the new website design mid-20202
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the PC are resolved at Council Meetings and so open to public scrutiny	Existing procedure adequate

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Minutes/agendas/notices	Inaccuracy and illegality	L	Public notices, agendas and minutes are produced and published in the prescribed manner by the Clerk. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting, as required by the Standing Orders, and are published on the PC website, either in draft or final format, in the required timeframe	Existing procedure adequate
Members' interests	Pecuniary and other interests of councillors which may lead to conflict of interest	L	The Council adopted a new Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011. Updates to the register of members' interest are sought regularly, published on the PC website, and supplied to the Monitoring Officer at SDC. The Clerk provides advice on compliance with the adopted Code	Existing procedures adequate. Members take responsibility for advising of any changes to their declarations when required.
Planning	Inability to respond to statutory consultations in time	L	Where necessary, the date of a scheduled meeting is altered, or an extra meeting convened, so that formal response can be agreed and submitted to SDC within the 14 day deadline	Existing procedure adequate
Insurance	Inadequacy, poor value for money, non-compliance with legal requirements, Fidelity Guarantee	L	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements, including cost and adequacy. Fidelity check in place.	Existing procedure

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Data protection; Freedom of Information; Privacy Policy; Accessibility Regulations	Failure to provide relevant policy; failure to adhere to relevant policy	L	The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioner, with annual fee paid by direct debit; has a publication scheme in place; includes a Privacy Policy on the website; and is providing a new Accessibility Regulations compliant website by the deadline of September 2020.	Ensure new compliant website goes live by deadline. Other existing procedures are adequate.
Business as usual threat	Inability to manage Parish Council's business because of the unexpected absence of the Clerk	L	Neighbouring Parish Councils and/or the SLCC would be contacted for emergency cover. Or a Cllr would assume the responsibility of the Proper Officer and take Minutes, prepare agendas etc.	Existing procedures adequate
PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT				

SUBJECT	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	H/M/L	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ASSESS/RE- VISE
<p>Assets – Village Green benches, village signs, trees, electricity supply cupboard, village gateways, defibril- lator, dog waste bin, two notice- boards</p>	<p>Damage by 3rd Party; risk to third party</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>An annual review of assets is under- taken, including their condition, with steps taken to ensure repairs/main- tenance where required. All assets are covered by the PC's insurance policy where the value is above the minim- um. Trees: Periodic professional advise sought on risk, low branches, inspec- ted and cut as requested annually Cupboard: is padlocked Village gateways: sighted in accord- ance with KCC guidance Defibrillator: is inspected on a monthly basis Dog waste bin: is emptied under a contract with SDC Noticeboards: inspected monthly by the Clerk.</p>	<p>Existing procedure ad- equate</p>
<p>Assets – Other</p>	<p>Risk of loss or damage to asset; risk of damage to third party</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>An annual review of assets is under- taken for insurance and maintenance purposes. All assets are covered by the PC's insurance policy where the value is above the minimum.</p>	<p>Existing procedures ad- equate</p>

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Maintenance /re- placement of as- sets	Poor performance of assets or amenities; lack of funds to provide repairs/replace- ment	L	All assets owned by the Parish Coun- cil are reviewed at least annually. Maintenance is planned and budgeted for where possible. Any repair/re- placement is undertaken in accord- ance with the PC Standing Orders and Finance Regulations.	Existing procedures ad- equate
Council records – paper	Loss through: theft, fire or other damage	L	At present, all Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Going forward, only those items needed for current use will be stored there. In addition, some items are held in safe custody at Lloyds Bank in Gravesend.	Lockable filing cabinet to be purchased and in- stalled at the village hall for archive material such as old Minute books and other records. The items held in safe custody will be investigated by the clerk and Chair as their exact nature is unknown.
Council records – electronic	Loss through: theft, fire damage or corruption of computer	L	Documents are stored on the clerk’s personal laptop. Regular back up are made.	In addition, every six months, files are also to be copied onto two memory sticks, one held by the clerk and one by the Chair, commencing June 2020.
CONTRACTS/ CONTRACTORS				
Not insured or in- adequately insured	Public liability risk	L	Insurance cover held by contractors is checked before a contract is awarded and annually thereafter	Existing procedures ad- equate