

HALTON WITH AUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

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 the probability of them occurring or minimise the impacts of the risk.

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

Reviewed and adopted 13th September 2023

Area/Item	Hazard	Management of Risk	Probability	Impact	Review, Assess or Revise
Precept	Inadequate precept Requirements not submitted to Lancaster City Council. Amount not received from LCC Errors in the calculation of the precept	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information monthly and the precept is an agenda item at full Council. At the Precept meeting Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to end of the year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the RFO. With this information the Council maps out the required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from Lancaster City Council. Deadline to be added to the Annual Cycle of Work document to prompt Clerk to submit the precept demand. The Clerk to check bank account in April to verify receipt. Council to be informed when the monies are received. Ensure that the calculations are reviewed by at least one nominated councillor prior to approval and submission.	Low	High	Diary
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Fidelity Insurance covers fraud. Additionally, there is a twice yearly internal audit review and annual external audit.	Low	High	Review the Financial Regulations Annually.
Banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The bank does make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the RFO reconciles the bank account once a month when the statement arrives. Ensure that funds held by single bank do not exceed £75,000 (FSCS protection limit)	Low	Low	Review the Financial Regulations Annually Internal Audit.

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	Charges	Charges, such as overdraft charges can be minimised by ensuring that the monthly payment of accounts process ensures that there is sufficient funds in the current account to cover all approved payments.			
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	Fidelity Insurance covers fraud. Minimise loss of any cash by banking within 3 banking days. In reality little cash is ever handled. There is no petty cash or float.	Low	Low	Review Annually
Reporting and auditing	Information and communication	A Finance Statement is produced for approval at each monthly Council meeting. This statement includes bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank.	Low	Medium	Existing communication Procedures adequate.
	Compliance	Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee.	Medium	Low	Council annually to appoint an Internal Auditor for Fidelity compliance.
Direct costs Overhead Expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing and cheques payable incorrect Loss of stock Unpaid invoices	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. At each Council meeting the list of invoices awaiting approval is distributed to Councillors, and considered. One Councillor is nominated to check each invoice against the draft payment and associated paperwork and initialise the invoices. Council approves the list of requests for payment. The Council has no stocks. Unpaid invoices to the council for services are pursued and where possible payment is obtained in advance.	Low	Medium	Review Financial Regulations Annually. Internal Audit.
Grants – Payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure	Low	Low	Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors request a S137 rules if required.
Grants – Receivable	Receipts of Grant	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One off grants would Come with terms and conditions to be satisfied	Low	Low	Procedure would need to be formed if required.
Charges – Payable	Payment of charges, leases, rentals	The Parish Council leases St Wilfrid’s Park from the City Council– invoices payable for the rental amounts will be entered into the normal payment system for authorisation.	Low	Low	Existing procedure adequate.
Charges – Receivable	Receipt of rental Insurance implication	Allotments – Reminders are sent annually to allotment holders. Insurance covered by the Council. Castle Hill – A reminder is sent annually with the renewal lease. Insurance covered by the	Low Low	Low Low	Exiting procedure adequate. Review agreement and fees annually.

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		Council HCA - reminder is sent annually. HCA arranges its own insurance and provides a copy to the Parish Council each year.	Low	High	Ensure payment and copy of insurance document received.
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	Normal Parish Council practise would be to seek if possible more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council	Low	Medium	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations.
Salaries and assoc. costs	Salary paid incorrectly, incl. wrong hours or rate paid	The Parish Council authorise the appointment of all employees at full committee. Each has a contract of Employment and job description. Salary rates are assessed annually by the full committee and applied on 1 April each year.	Low	Medium	Internal Audit.
	Wrong deductions of NI or tax	Employees submit monthly timesheet containing hours and tasks. These are checked by the Clerk and by the appointed councillor when signing off payment. The hours and rates, including holiday entitlement are included in the Financial Report provided to each monthly meeting by the RFO.			
	Unpaid tax and NI contributions to the HMRC	The RFO calculates deductions using the HMRC RTI application on a monthly basis. Deadlines for HMRC payments to be added to the Annual Cycle of Work document to prompt Clerk to submit the HMRC payment.	Medium	Medium	
Councillor Allowances	Councillors over-paid	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors	N/A	N/A	No procedure required.
Election Costs	Risk of an election cost	Election costs currently paid by City Council	N/A	N/A	No procedure required.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out requirements	Low	Low	Review Financial Regulations Annually
Business Continuity	Risks of Council not being able to continue business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstances Inquorate Parish Council due to loss of Councillors	All working files and recent records are kept at the Clerks home. Clerk takes regular backups of files. Clerk provides Chair with emergency password to the email & file store. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed the Chair to contact Lancaster City Council for advice. Regularly ask for new Parish Councillors in the Parish Prattle and Facebook.	Low	Medium	Existing procedures adequate
Employees	Loss of key personnel	Ensure multiple councillors understand the operation of the PC. Ask City Council or local Parish Councils for support in the event of the Parish Clerk being unavailable.	Low	Low	As required
	Fraud by staff	The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to	Low	Medium	

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	<p>Actions undertaken by staff</p> <p>Health & Safety</p> <p>Safety of staff working alone</p> <p>Employee references not taken up</p> <p>Illegal Working</p>	<p>Fraud. The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.</p> <p>The Groundsmen should be provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake the roles, ie. PPE and training. Risk assessments will be carried out for all grounds maintenance duties and periodically reviewed.</p> <p>Clerk will not see members of the public alone in own home</p> <p>A reference will always be obtained for new employee from a previous employer or other reputable person who knows the person concerned.</p> <p>Check appropriate documents</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p>	
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	<p>Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online and to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame by the RFO.</p> <p>Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing and then checked and sent to the External Auditor within time limit. Agenda Item</p>	Low	Medium	Annually
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at full Parish Council Meetings.	Low	Medium	Diary.
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory Documents	<p>Accuracy and legality</p> <p>Business conduct</p>	<p>Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements.</p> <p>Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Existing procedure adequate.</p> <p>Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.</p>
Members Interests	<p>Conflict of interest</p> <p>Register of Members interests</p>	<p>Although not a requirement, the declaring of interests by members at a meeting should be an obvious process to remind Councillors of their duty and should remain on the agenda.</p> <p>Register of Members interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>	<p>Existing procedure adequate.</p> <p>Members take responsibility to update their Register.</p>
Insurance	<p>Adequacy</p> <p>Cost</p> <p>Compliance</p> <p>Fidelity Guarantee</p>	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.	Low	Medium	<p>Review insurance provision annually.</p> <p>Review of compliance.</p>

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Data Protection	Policy Provision	The Council is registered under the Data Protection Act.	Low	Low	Ensure annual renewal of registration.
	Compliance	Provide training and or support in the understanding and application of Data Protection.	Medium	Medium	
Freedom of Information Act.	Policy Provision	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. There have been no requests for information to date but the Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this may require many hours of additional work. The Council is able to request a fee if the work will take more than 15 hours but the applicant has the right to re-submit the request broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee.	Low	Low	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the F of I Act. Review Annually.
Assets	Loss or damage	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions	Low	Medium	Review annually
	Risk/damage to third Party(ies) property	Land is registered. Appropriate insurance.			
Asset Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of income or performance Risk to third parties	All assets owned by the Parish Council are reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually. All public amenity land is inspected regularly by parish employees/councillors	Low	Low	Annually
Burial Ground	Risk/damage injury	Burial ground inspected regularly. The Groundsmen maintains the areas and grass cutting carried out by Contractor. Memorials inspected annually.	Low	Medium	Annually
Allotments	Risk/damage injury	All allotment holders must sign an agreement which regulates use and maintenance of the plots. Regular checks of the plots and paths to ensure compliance with the rules.	Medium	Medium	Existing procedures adequate
Play Areas	Risk/ damage injury to third parties	Play areas should be inspected weekly and faults reported to the Clerk. Annual ROSPA inspection and a report submitted. Any required action undertaken promptly.	Medium	High	Annually
Grounds Maintenance	Safety of general public	Risk assessments will be carried out for all grounds maintenance duties and periodically reviewed.	Medium	High	
		Herbicides/pesticides will only be used by staff who have received formal training and certification (L2 Award in the Safe Application of Pesticides)	Low	Medium	
War Memorial	Risk/damage to injury third parties	War Memorial inspected quarterly.	Low	Low	Annually
Recreation Ground	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	Parish Council owns the football pitch and it is covered for use by insurance. This area is managed by the HCA committee and users are made aware of their responsibilities.	Medium	High	Existing procedures adequate

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HCA	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	Adequate insurance cover Parish Council has 2 representatives on HCA Management Committee to ensure proper procedures with regard to Health and Safety are followed	Medium	High	Existing Procedures adequate
Notice boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety	The Parish Council has 3 notice boards sited around the village. All locations have approval by relevant parties, insurance cover, inspected regularly by the Clerk – any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Keys held by Clerk.	Low	Medium	Existing procedure adequate.
Street Furniture	Risk/damage/injury to Third parties	The Parish Council is responsible for 10 seats, 3 bus shelters and 16 litter bins around the village and covered by insurance. No formalised programme of inspections is carried out, all reports of damage or faults are reported to the Council and/or dealt with.	Low	Low	Existing procedure adequate.
Meeting Location	Adequacy Health & Safety	The Parish Council meetings are held at The Centre. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety and comfort aspects.	Low	Low	Existing locations adequate.
Council Records – papers	Loss through Theft Fire Damage	Records include historical correspondence, minutes and copies, leases for land or property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. Working papers and records are held by the Clerk at home. Recent materials are stored in a metal filing cabinet (not fire proof), currently in the store room in Halton Mill. Older more historical records are stored with the Lancaster City Council.	Low	Medium	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate. Deeds/leases copied and deposited off-site.
Council records - electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage Corruption of computer	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerks computer. The Clerk will store a record of the email password with the paper records. All files are backed up to the Cloud automatically. Back-ups of the files are taken at regular intervals onto an external hard-drive.	Low	Medium	External backups of electronic files produced each meeting and given to the Chair.