

Rickingham 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 Rickingham 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	Level	Management/control of Risk	Action
FINANCIAL & MANAGEMENT				
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Banks mistakes	L	Monthly reconciliation and internal audit review carried out annually.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Cheques cannot be signed in person (emergency)	L	Banking procedures allow online authorisation and oversight by multiple signatories.	Procedures set up in 2021.
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly. Overspend on services.	L M	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one estimate or 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. The Financial Regulations are reviewed annually to ensure that quote/tender requirements are at the appropriate levels.	Existing procedure adequate.
Budget/Precept	Adequacy of budget/precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties	L	When setting the annual budget, the Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information the Council determines whether the budget under each heading has been adequate and adjusts for the following year. The precept is determined, considering the projected position at the beginning of the next financial year and preservation of earmarked funds. The figure is submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council on the form provided. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received. The Council monitors the adequacy of the budget through quarterly budget reports. A contingency sum is included and funds are earmarked for unforeseen items such as byelections and parish polls.	Existing procedure adequate.

Subject	Risk(s) identified	Level	Management/control of Risk	Action
Data protection Data protection (cont.)	Policy Registration Insurance	L L L	The Council adopted GDPR policies including Information Security Incident Policy and Information Protection Policy in May 2018 and these will be reviewed annually. The Council appointed a third-party Data Protection Officer. All unwanted records destroyed by incineration or shredding The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner with automatic annual renewal. The Council has Public Liability insurance for loss, misuse or unauthorised disclosure of personal data arise which results in the infringement of a person's legal rights, up to £250,000. The Council also has legal defence cover for a civil claim made against the Parish Council, up to £500,000.	Existing procedures adequate.
Employees	Fraud by staff Health and safety Staff Issues	L L L	Employee Dishonest included in the insurance policy to £150,000. Old health and safety policy - 2012. Holiday, long-term sickness and resignation covered in Clerk's contract.	Existing procedures adequate. Policy updated in 2021. Existing procedures adequate
End of Year Finances (Annual Return)	External audit questions. Submitted late. Submitted with incorrect info.	L L	The Annual Return is checked thoroughly by the Clerk, Council and Internal auditor for completeness. The Annual Return is completed and submitted within the prescribed time frame by the Clerk. The Return submitted to a SAAA (Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments) approved internal auditor for completion and signing; inspected and signed by the Council; and submitted to the Government appointed external auditor.	Existing procedures adequate. Existing procedures adequate. Existing procedures adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements and these are reviewed annually.	Existing procedure adequate.
Freedom of Information	Policy Provision	L L	The Council has a Model Publication scheme in place. To date there have been no requests under FOI. The Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create additional work and a fee can be requested.	Monitor any requests made under FOI
Grants received	Non- receipt of grant	L	Income is reported on the agenda at each meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.
Grants and support made to others	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the process of approval, is minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 or other powers of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate.

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Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance	L L L	Insurance arrangements are reviewed annually. Advice from internal audit report concerning levels of cover and compliance is taken.	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments Inability to meet to resolve activities and payment at full Council Meetings	L M	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at full Council Meetings, including reference to the power used (for new or one-off payments) under the Finance section of agenda, except where Financial Regulations allow for Clerk-approved expenditure. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to allow for emergency delegation of powers to resolve activities and payments outside of meetings, with arranged authorisation.	Existing procedures adequate Amend Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
Members interests	Conflict of interests Out of date register of members interests	L M	Declarations of interest by members at meetings recorded. Register of members interests forms reviewed regularly and presented on website.	Existing procedure adequate. Members take responsibility to update register.
Mill Lane Allotments	Information not communicated Committee acts illegally.	L L	Overseen by Mill Lane Allotments Management Committee with reports made to PC when necessary. All changes to Constitution, Rules and Conditions of Tenancy, and Tenancy Agreement to be agreed by the Council. All major projects to be agreed by the Council.	Existing procedures adequate.
Minutes, agendas, Notices and Statutory Documents`	Not accurate or legal Business conduct	L L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manor by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Agendas are displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair. Members adhere to Suffolk Code of Conduct adopted on 7 June 2012.	Existing procedures adequate.
Reporting and auditing	Information not communicated	L	Financial information is reviewed and approved at each meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly. Unpaid Tax to HMRC. Unpaid Pension payments.	L L	A pay slip is available for inspection at each meeting – expenses (except mileage) paid on production of receipt. Payments made quarterly and are detailed on the agenda. Payments made monthly and are detailed on the agenda.	Existing procedures adequate.

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VAT	Not identifying/ reclaiming	L	VAT is recorded under a separate heading in the budget spreadsheet and is claimed at the end of the financial year. The amount is reported to the Council when received.	Existing procedures adequate

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THIRD PARTIES OR INDIVIDUALS				
Libel & Slander	Insurance		Insured to £500,000. All members sign up to the Suffolk Code of Conduct.	Existing procedures adequate.
Personal Accident	Insurance		Insured for Councillors and Clerk on Parish Council business.	Existing procedures adequate.
Third Party	Insurance		Action to minimise risk to third parties as below at council-owned property. The Council has no other public liabilities. Insurance cover in place to £10 million covering employees, councillors and volunteers acting on behalf of the Council. Cover for corporate manslaughter and corporate homicide up to £1,000,000.	Existing procedures adequate.

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EMPLOYER LIABILITY				
	Employment Law	L	Contract of Employment in place for Clerk. Grievance and Disciplinary procedures in place. PAYE is operated. Pension requirements are met.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Health and Safety	M	The Clerk works from her own home. The Council provides updated IT and office equipment as required. The Contractor uses protective clothing and equipment as advised by the District Council/County Council as street sweeping and Public Rights of Way maintenance are carried out on an agency basis. A copy of the Contractor's Public Liability Insurance is kept by the Council. Where deemed appropriate, all persons operating machinery and equipment must be appropriately trained. The Contractor shall provide adequate proof that all operatives are well trained and conversant with Health and Safety legislation, competent in their operating methods and compliant with current Suffolk County Council Highways regulations.	Existing procedures adequate.

Subject	Risk(s) identified	Level	Management/control of Risk	Action
	Insurance	L	Insurance cover in place to £10 million (Covers the Clerk and Street Sweeping Contractor on a self-employed, labour only basis) including injury. Cover for corporate manslaughter and corporate homicide up to £1,000,000.	Existing procedures adequate.

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PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party's property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision. Insurance in place as per Aviva Policy 1 st October 2021 – 30 th September 2022.	Existing procedures adequate
Maintenance inc Allotments	Poor performance of assets or amenities.	L	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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Royal Observer Corp Post</u>: Underground chamber sealed to prevent access. Site inspected on a three-monthly basis. • <u>Low Meadow</u>: Grass meadow only. • <u>Wherry Land</u>: Grassed area only. • <u>Northfield Wood</u>: Inspected on a regular basis by Barwoods. Any item of equipment found to be in a state of disrepair is refurbished or taken out of service. • <u>Mill Lane Allotments</u>: Overseen by Mill Lane Allotments Management Committee. 	Existing procedures adequate.
Meeting locations	Adequacy Accessibility Health & Safety	L M M	The Council meetings are held in a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and the general public. The meeting venue is wheelchair accessible. The Clerk records presence at meetings. Members are aware of fire exits/procedures in the event of an emergency. The Council has put in place emergency procedures in case of pandemic, etc (see Emergencies).	Existing procedures adequate. Make general public aware of fire exits/ procedures at meetings.

Council records – paper	Loss through: Theft Fire Damage	L M L	The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk in a lockable file cabinet. All meeting documents since 2011 have been digitised and filed on Dropbox so can be retrieved if damaged. Some historic documents are stored at the County Records Office.	Existing provision is adequate. Deposit further documents at Records Office.
Council records – electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer	L	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Clerk’s computer and backed up on Dropbox.	Existing provision is adequate.

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EMERGENCIES (SUCH AS COVID-19)				
Meetings	Spread of Disease (e.g. Covid-19 Coronavirus)	L	<p>Social Distancing/Cleaning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Parish Council will use conference calls instead of face to face meetings where possible. 2. When face to face meetings can be held, the PC will ensure that the venue (following references are to the Rickinghall village hall) is adhering to government guidelines. 3. The PC will adhere to the guidelines issued by the venue including the following instructions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hirer to designate 'Responsible Officer' to control entry, exit and movement within the hall b. Hirer to keep doors and windows open throughout event c. Hirer to only use upstairs toilet d. Hirer’s Responsible Officer to supervise taking down hall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience to vacate hall under close supervision of the Responsible Officer • Chairs to be placed against wall by 2-3 individuals • Tables to be left in situ. <p>Hand washing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PC will ask all attendees to use gel sanitisers on entrance to the venue and before exiting. Where there are hand washing facilities in the venue, use will be discouraged to minimise the amount of movement and contact within the venue. <p>PPE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PC will ask all attendees to use a face covering or mask. 	These actions will continue as long as advised by government and the Public Health Authority.

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			<p>Symptoms of Covid-19:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PC will inform potential attendees that they should not attend the meeting if they or anyone in their household has Covid-19 symptoms or if they are in a shielding or at-risk category. 2. The PC will maintain records of attendees, including members of the public. 3. The PC will contact the Public Health Authority for advice on any actions or precautions that should be taken if advised that a recent attendee has developed Covid-19. 	
<p>Site Visits and Meetings held by other organisations</p>	<p>Spread of Disease (e.g. Covid-19 Coronavirus)</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>The PC will encourage the use of conference/video calls instead of face to face meetings where possible.</p> <p>The PC will ask staff and councillors to adhere to current government guidelines on social distancing and hold meetings outdoors where possible.</p> <p>The PC will ask staff and councillors to use a face covering/mask and/or comply with the requirements of the venue.</p>	<p>These actions will continue as long as advised by government and the Public Health Authority.</p>