HENLOW PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

2024-2025

NOTES

"The greatest risk facing the local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council."

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify all potential risks inherent in the pace or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible, making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable Henlow 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.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	**Risk(s) Identified**	**H/M/L**	**Management/Control of Risk**	**Review/Assess/Revise**
Business continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	In the event of long-term incapacity of the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk will stand in place of the Clerk and contact BATPC for advice/standing-in Deputy Clerk	Existing procedures are adequate.
Precept	Adequacy of precept. Requirements not submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council. Amount not received from CBC.	L L L	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information and the precept is an agenda item at Full Council. At the precept meeting the Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to end the year and indicate figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information the Council determines the required monies for revenue costs and capital 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 CBC. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to CBC. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received.	Existing procedures are adequate.
Financial records	Inadequate records. Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations for adequacy and improvement annually.
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, internet banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial

	Loss Charges	L L	The Parish Council has two bank accounts (Lloyds Bank & Co-op), a 7-day notice account (Scottish Widows) and a 1-year fixed bond (Redwood Bank). Cheques require two signatures; nominated Councillors are signatories and names registered with the banks. Internet banking requires the Clerk to set up the payments and two Councillors to authorise payments. Any mistakes made by the bank would be immediately picked up when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts once a month and presents the reconciliation at Council.	Regulations and bank signatory list, especially after an election or resignation of Councillor. Monitor the bank statements monthly.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Cash received is banked by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk. There is no petty cash or float.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations every two years.
Reporting and auditing	Information communication Compliance	L M	A statement is produced regularly before each Council meeting with the agenda, discussed and approved at the meeting. This statement includes bank reconciliation, breakdown of receipts and payments. Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee	Existing communication procedures adequate. Council has appointed an Internal Auditor for compliance.
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Amount payable incorrect Unpaid invoices	L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. The Council approves the list of requests for payment. Unpaid invoices to the Council for services are pursued.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations every two years.
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure to go through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the relevant powers of expenditure	Existing procedure adequate.
Grants receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required.
Charges Rentals receivable	Receipt of lease rental Insurance implication	L	The Council would issue an agreement for usage, both parties sign the agreement and the Parish Council copy to be held in Parish Council records. An invoice for rental amount would be issued by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk. Any lessee to arrange its own insurance and provide a copy to the Parish Council each year.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure any payments and copy of insurance document received annually.
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	Normal Parish Council practice is to seek more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods – in accordance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations.
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong deduction of NI and Tax Unpaid Tax and NI contributions to the Inland Revenue	L L L	The Parish Council authorises the appointment of the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Site Agent. Salary rates are assessed annually and applied on 1 April each year or as and when the annual pay award is announced. Salary analysis and slips are produced by the Clerk together with a schedule of payments to the Inland Revenue (for tax and NI payments). The Tax and NI is worked out using HMRC RTI on-line calculator monthly, and also Annual return submitted at the end of each financial year. The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Site Agent to keep a record of hours worked and have a contract of employment and job description.	Existing appointment and payment system is adequate. Procedures for complaints procedure and annual specifics for reviews of salary adequate.

Employee	Fraud by employee Actions taken by staff	L L	The requirement of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.	Existing procedure adequate. Purchase of revised books. Monitor safety requirements and insurance regularly.
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	N/A	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors	No procedure required
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	Risk is higher in an election year. When election due CBC provide an estimate of costs for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election as this is a democratic process and should not be stifled.	Existing procedure adequate
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual return	Submit within time limits	L	The Clerk completes the Employer's Annual Return online and submits to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame.	Existing procedure adequate
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at full Council meetings and the Clerk to ensure there is a legal power available to spend	Existing procedure adequate
Minutes/Agendas/ Notices Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	L L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	Existing procedure adequate Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct
Members Interests	Conflict of Interests Register of Members Interests	L L	The declaring of interests by members at a meeting should be an obvious process to remind Councillors of their duty and should always be an item on the agenda. A list of Councillors Interests is available on the Unitary Authority (CBC) website. Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing procedure adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L L	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 and must be paid for. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure fidelity checks are in place.	Existing procedure adequate Review insurance provision annual Review of compliance
Data protection	Policy Provision	M	The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency (Information Commissioner's Office.)	Annual Data Protection Agency registration
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L M	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. ~~T~~The Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this may require many hours of additional work. The Council can request a fee if the work will take more than 15 hours but the application also has the right to re-submit the request broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under Freedom of Information Act

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 property or individuals	L	An annual review of assets should be undertaken	Existing procedures adequate Review asset register, insurance provision
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of performance Risk/damage 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. All assets are insured and reviewed annually. All public amenity land is inspected regularly.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure inspections are carried out.
Notice Boards	Risk/damage/injury to third party	L	The Parish Council is responsible for five notice boards sited in the Parish. The locations are approved by the relevant parties. The notice boards are inspected regularly and any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council.	Existing procedure adequate
Street furniture	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	This Parish Council is responsible for several benches, 5 bus shelters, 91 streetlights and various fencing and gates. These items are all covered by insurance. A formalised programme of inspections is carried out; all reports of damage are brought to the attention of the Parish Council.	Existing procedure adequate
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Parish Council meetings are held in Henlow Park Pavilion. All premises and the facilities are adequate for the staff, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety and comfort aspects.	Existing locations adequate
Playgrounds	Play Equipment – The Pit, Church Road Henlow Park, Coach Rd The Railway Flightpath	L	The Parish Council are responsible for play equipment at the four playgrounds it owns. The equipment is visually inspected, and records kept. The Clerk has authority to instigate immediate repairs, if necessary, on H&S grounds, or report non-urgent items back to the relevant Committees & Full Council for action to be determined. All the equipment is also independently inspected annually by ROSPA. A full report is provided by ROSPA, and all recommendations must be, and are, acted upon.	Existing procedure adequate
Christmas Trees	Installation of Christmas Trees – Church Road, Henlow	L	Area clear of services. Augured hole minimum of 1m deep, and a permanent fixture set into the ground. Lights low voltage sealed bulbs, sockets, low voltage supply, all installed by qualified electrician. Sockets and leads all at high level, secured to inside of roof to the Pump, covered with mesh internally.	Keep twice daily check on situation on site. Review after event.
Council records - paper	Loss through: Theft Fire Damage	 L M L	The Parish Council records are stored in the Clerk's Office and locked storage cupboard at Henlow Park Pavilion. Records include historical correspondence, minutes and copies, leases for land, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. Recent materials are in a metal filing cabinet (not fireproof) and older more historical records in filing cabinet / bookshelves, in locked storeroom in Henlow Park Pavilion.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate. Committee to look at provision of fireproof containers.

Council records - electronic	Loss through: Theft Fire Damage Corruption of computer	L L L M	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerk's computer. Back-ups of the files are taken at regular intervals on the web-based system, and on-to separate hard-drive.	Carbonite back up system installed on computer – automatic regular back up carried out. Existing system adequate

Reviewed and adopted at Full Council 13th May 2024

This Policy must be reviewed and adopted annually