

NEWTON & BIGGIN PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF RISK - February 2024

This document has been produced to enable Newton & Biggin 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:

- 1 Identify the areas to be reviewed.
- 2 Identify what the risk may be.
- 3 Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings.
- 4 Review, assess and revise if required.

H - High
M - Medium
L - Low

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
SUBJECT	RISK	H/M/L	MANAGEMENT / CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW / ASSESS / REVISE
Precept	Adequacy of Precept		To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget update information. At the precept meeting Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of year. 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 Rugby Borough Council.	
	Requirements not submitted to RBC		The Clerk submits the precept to RBC and copies the Chair into the e-mail. The Clerk requests acknowledgement that the request has been received and confirms that RBC has received the precept request.	
	Amount not received		The clerk reports back to the council when the instalments of the precept are received (May and September) under the statement of accounts item of the agenda.	
Financial records	Inadequate records		The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. The clerk reports to every council meeting with a statement of accounts and bank reconciliation. Bank reconciliation is checked and approved by the Cllr who leads financial controls.	
	Financial Irregularities		Internal and external audits are carried out annually in addition to the clerk reporting to every council meeting with a statement of accounts and bank reconciliation. Bank reconciliation is checked and approved by the Cllr who leads financial controls.	
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks		The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The clerk checks the monthly bank statement against actual income and expenditure. The clerk reports to every council meeting with a statement of accounts and bank reconciliation. Internet banking is in place for the Clerk and all councillors. Payment controls have been approved and set up. Bank signatories are up to date. Cheques are rarely used but must be signed by two councillors.	
	Bank errors		Any discrepancies / errors made by the bank would be challenged by the clerk when they become apparent and the clerk would report any such errors and the action taken to rectify the error to the council. Payments controls approved and in place for internet banking to reduce risk of errors.	
Cash	Loss through theft / dishonesty		No petty cash / float is held	

VAT	Reclaiming		Vat is to be reclaimed on a quarterly basis unless under £100, the minimum amount that may be claimed. Receipt of VAT refund reported to the Council.	
Reporting and auditing	Information communication		Financial reporting is a monthly agenda item. Members have the opportunity to discuss, question, review financial matters during the monthly Parish Council meeting.	
Grants	Receipt of grants		The Council does apply for one-off grants to help fund larger projects. Grant applications/procedures are followed, and decisions shared with members as and when relevant.	
Grants and support payable	Power / Authorisation of Council to pay		All such expenditure must adhere to the Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure. S137 expenditure is tracked and coded in Scribe accounts software accordingly.	
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly		Financial Regulations followed. Quotations/estimates obtained where required.	
	Overspend on services.		If a problem is encountered with a contract, the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation / tender, research the problem and report to the council.	
Salaries and assoc. costs	Salary paid.		Contract of Employment in place for all employees. Annual review of salaries in line with NALC pay scales and approved pay awards. Clerk's timesheet is approved by the Chair. Payroll services are outsourced.	
	Tax/NI to Inland Revenue.		HM Revenue and Customs REAL TIME procedures followed for NI and PAYE	
Employees	Fraud by staff		Finance reports presented to the Council. End of Year information reported / internal and external audit controls. Payments controls approved and in place for internet banking to reduce risk of fraud.	
	Competence		Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference material, access to assistance and legal advice.	
	Health and safety		All employees to be provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles	
External Audit Annual Return	Submit financial documentation as required within time limits		External Audit Annual Return (AGAR) completed and signed by the Council, submitted to internal auditor for completion and relevant checks. The Clerk to ensure that further requests from the External Auditor are responded to promptly and reported to the Full Council.	
Insurance	Adequacy, cost, compliance and Fidelity Guarantee		An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements to include: Employers and Employee liabilities Fidelity Public Liability Assets and equipment	

LIABILITY

Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments		All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved/approved at full Council Meetings. Control presented through monthly finance reports	
Minutes /agendas / notices / statutory documents	Accuracy and legality relating to official business documentation		Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are consecutively numbered, signed and dated by the chair. Agenda displayed according to legal requirements.	
	Business Conduct		Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	

Members interests	Conflict of interests		Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings.	
	Register of members interests		Register of members interests' forms reviewed regularly and passed on to the local authority.	
Data protection	Policy provision		The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office	

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS

Assets	Loss or damage Risk / damage to third party property		An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision and Annual Return	
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities. Risk to third parties.		All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly inspected, reviewed, and maintained. (At least quarterly as per Health and Safety policy) All repairs and relevant expenditure relating to repairs are actioned / authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. Assets are insured.	
Meeting locations	Adequacy		The Parish Council meeting is held in a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members, and the general public.	
	Health & Safety		The venue is compliant with Disability Laws.	
Council records – paper	Loss through: Theft Fire Damage		The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, records such as insurance, invoices and banking documents. All documents are kept secure.	
Council records – electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer		The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Council laptop held with the Clerk/RFO at their home. All documents are stored onto One Drive - a cloud-based service allowing documents to be accessed from any device.	
Five Arches Wildlife Site	Risk to third parties		Rugby Borough Council are responsible for the Five Arches site.	

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Business Continuity	Incapacity of Clerk		Designate a person to temporarily act as Clerk in an emergency.	
	Resignation of the Clerk		Process to be in place, job description, person specification in place (advice from WALC)	
	Loss or theft of records		All old copies of Minutes prior to electronic to be deposited with the County Records. All minutes from 2013 are held on the Council's website All records are backed up onto One Drive.	
	Failure to retain or secure the necessary number of Members for a Council		Maintain an up-to-date attendance register. Advertise for an election immediately a vacancy exists. Co-opt Members where no election held.	
	Pandemic		Make arrangements to delegate authority to the Clerk to make decisions on behalf of Council, in the event that Council cannot meet in person, to ensure that the business of the Council may continue uninterrupted. This would be in the event that no legislation has been passed by Government to hold meetings remotely using video conferencing.	

OTHER

Other	Decisions made by the Council that do not enjoy general community support.		All decisions made by the Council are to be made at public meetings where there is an open session for residents to speak (unless a confidential agenda item). The Council are aware of their legal powers when making decisions. Where possible, the community should be engaged and opinions sought.	
	Reputational damage arising from the actions or inactions of the Council.		All actions of the Council to be documented with a clear audit trail. All Councillors to follow the agreed Code of Conduct for Councillors. Any areas for improvement identified by internal or external auditors are reviewed by the Council and an action plan put in place to address.	

Format approved:

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General Assessment of Risk Completed:

Reviewed by
Date

Results Reported to Council:

Date
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