



Definition of Risk Management

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements. 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 them.

The Council is aware that although some risks can never be eliminated fully, it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk, which:

- Identifies the key risks facing the Council
- Identifies what the risk may be
- Identifies the level of risk
- Evaluates the management and control of the risk and records findings
- Reviews, assesses and revises procedures if required.

Risk Assessment

Likelihood: Probability of occurrence.

Impact: If this risk occurs, what would be the effect on the Council?

Response

Prevention: The risk of occurrence is eliminated.

Mitigation: The impact of the risk is lessened.

Acceptance: The risk may occur and the Council will adopt tactical responses if it does.

Transfer: The risk is passed to another body (e.g. Insurance).

Date of review/ratification: 15/01/24, Minute 77.4.

Date of next review: January 2025

PARISH COUNCIL MANAGEMENT						
Subject	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Risk Control Measures (Alleviation of risk by OWPC)	Comments/Review
Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	M	H	Acceptance	Files and recent records are kept at the Clerk's house on a laptop, backed up by Cloudy IT. The Clerk has created a Business Continuity document, which holds all business related information, both Chair and Vice have instructions on how to access this information in the event the Clerk is not available.	Business Continuity document is live and updated regularly
Meeting Location	Adequacy / Health and Safety provision falls below standards required	L	L	Transfer	Meetings are held at St Marys Church, Woughton on the Green, health & safety provision falls under the church responsibility.	
Council Records (physical)	Loss through fire, theft, damage	L	L	Mitigation	Clerk scans all physical documents electronically. The physical signed minutes are kept in a folder and transferred to Bucks Archive for safe keeping.	
Council Records (Electronic)	Loss through damage, fire, computer hardware failure, malware, or hacking	L	L	Mitigation	All electronic data is backed up by Cloudy IT and relevant anti-virus software in place.	
FINANCIAL RISKS						
Subject	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Risk Control Measures (Alleviation of risk by OWPC)	Comments/Review
Precept	The amount of the precept may prove inadequate, meaning that the Council is unable to fulfil its function and meet its obligations.	M	H	Prevention	Annual Precept review supported by sound budgeting. Parish Council receives budget update information monthly at meetings. The budget and precept setting process begins in December each year, involving the full Council, and approved in January each year.	January 2024 - Clerk confirmation that procedures are being followed.
Insurance	Amount of Insurance inadequate.	L	M	Prevention	Annual review of all insurance arrangements in Apr, ready for approval in May meeting.	Insurance policy expires 21/06/24.
	Cost of insurance premium too high due to less and less companies wanting to insure the public sector.	M	M	Prevention	Competitive quotes are sort.	Next review in Apr 24 for insurance renewal.
	Insurance cover not compliant with requirements.	L	L	Prevention	Annual review of obligations carried out.	Next review in Apr 24 for insurance renewal.
	Fidelity Guarantee insurance not available.	M	M	Prevention	Annual review.	Next review in Apr 24 for insurance renewal.
Banking	Inadequate checks lead to financial loss	L	M	Prevention	The Council has Financial Regulations (reviewed annually) which set out the requirements for online banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. 2 signatories for payment of BACS and cheques. The Council has spread it's risk and has two bank accounts: Lloyds Treasurers Account for daily business and Metro Instant Access Account with savings.	Financial regulations reviewed in May 24. Jan 24, Clerk confirmation that procedures are being followed.

Subject	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Risk Control Measures (Alleviation of risk by OWPC)	Comments/Review
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	N/A	N/A		The Council does not hold any cash	
Financial Controls and Records	Inadequate checks lead to financial loss	L	M	Prevention	Monthly reconciliation carried out and saved in the Finance folder for all councillors to see. Two signatories on cheques/BACS. Internal and external audit. Any payments must be resolved and clearly minuted. Rialtas 'Alpha' software in place since April 2016. System is back-up whenever the Clerk has logged out of the system and the main data is backed up by Cloudy IT.	January 2024 - Clerk confirmation that procedures are being followed. 2024/25 budget includes an overall training budget for both Clerk and Clrs for £264.
Freedom of Information Act	Prosecution for failure to meet the policy provisions of the FOI Act.	L	L	Mitigation	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. There have been no outstanding requests for information to date. The Council is able to request a fee if the work will take over 15 hours. However the request can be resubmitted, broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee. Any requests made under FOI will trigger a review and a report to the Council.	Freedom of Information and Publication Policy needs reviewing, last updated 09/03/15.
Payroll	Paid incorrectly.	L	M	Prevention	Clerk submits a full time sheet each month, detailing hours and actions. This is submitted, together with a copy of the HMRC Basic Tools payroll information, to all signatories, before approved by two signatories. PAYE is paid based on the HMRC Basic Tools calculations.	
Election Costs	Additional costs incurred due to a contested election.	L	M	Mitigation	The main Parish Council elections (every 4-years) are run at the same time as MKCC election and therefore not costs are currently passed down. It is unlikely that there will be a contested election.	Clerk (RFO) has included this as a budget line however, Council decision not to include in the annual budget 2024/25.
VAT	Underpayment/Over payment of VAT leads to investigation or possible prosecution.	L	M	Prevention	The Council has financial regulations (updated annually) which set out the requirements. VAT return is calculated by the Rialtas 'Alpha' system and checked by the internal auditor before Clerk submits.	Financial regulations to be reviewed May 2024. Jan 2024 - Clerk confirmation procedures are being followed.
Annual Return (AGAR)	Failure to submit within required timescales leads to additional payment being required/ prosecution.	L	M	Prevention	Annual return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the Internal Auditor for completion and signing, then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within time limit. If the Parish Council budget is under £25K, it only has to submit a Certificate of Exemption to the external auditor.	Jan 2024 - Clerk confirmation procedures are being followed.
ASSET RISKS						
Subject	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Risk Control Measures (Alleviation of risk by OWPC)	Comments/Review
Asset Register	Loss or damage of assets	L	L	Transfer	List of all assets and maintenance status covered by Asset Register and annual Risk Assessments (to be inspected as per the details set out). Risks covered by Insurance and minimal replacement provision is included	Meeting 13/11/23, Minute 65, Clerk presented the latest Risk Assessment on Bins and noticeboards, together with replacement/refurbishment recommendations.
	Damage to 3rd Party Properties	L	L	Transfer		
Office Equipment	Loss or damage of assets	L	L	Acceptance	Laptop, scanner/printer, all owned by the PC. Funding set aside for replacement as and when required. Migrated to Microsoft 365, IT platform fully managed by Cloudy IT. Cloud file storage with all the appropriate backups and antivirus solution to protect data.	
LIABILITY RISKS						
Subject	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Risk Control Measures (Alleviation of risk by OWPC)	Comments/Review
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments.	L	H	Prevention	The Parish Council has General Power of Competence. All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted. Ensure established with clear terms of reference. Clerk clarifies legal position on any new proposal. Legal advice to be sought where necessary. BALC. NALC. SLCC.	Jan 2024 - Clerk confirmation procedures are being followed.
	Working Groups making decisions.	M	M	Prevention	All decisions to be made only by Council. All spending by working groups must be agreed in advance and monitored monthly.	Meeting 11/09/23, minute FC23/24-51, council agreed overall Terms of Reference for Working Groups. Meeting 13/11/23, minute FC23/24-62, council carried forward the action for each working group to put forward their draft terms for council consideration and approval. Communications, Finance, Planning and Allotments.
Minutes of Meetings / Agendas / Statutory Documents	Accuracy and Legality not adequate or compliant with statutory requirements.	L	L	Prevention	Minutes and documents are produced in accordance with statutory procedures and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at next meeting Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings managed by the Chair in accordance with Standing Orders. Council Members adhere to adopted Code of Conduct. Original minutes are held at District Authority archive (Aylesbury).	In the absence of a Clerk, the likelihood and impact will be medium to high. Council to liaise with BALC and NALC on the legal way forward. Council to check if the original Deeds for the Patch Allotment site are held with the district archive or with a member of the council. Document Retention Policy implemented meeting 15/05/23, minute FC23/24-15.6. Council to review all documents against this policy.
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	L	M	Transfer	Insurance is in place. Risk assessment of any individual event should be undertaken.	Council to ensure that their annual residents event is risk assessed.

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Legal Liability	Non-compliance with Data Protection Act	L	M	Mitigation	Policies in place: Information and Subject Access Policy. Data Protection Policy.	Policies to be reviewed.
	Legality of Activities	L	M	Mitigation	Clerk explains legal position on proposals and seeks advice if necessary.	Jan 2024 - Clerk confirmation procedures are being followed.
Employer Liability	Failure to comply with employment law.	L	M	Mitigation	Ensure that training is undertaken by the Clerk and that all relevant employment policies are in place. Councillors to read and fully understand their obligations as an employer. Ref: NALC-The Good Councillor's Guide to Employment.	Training Policy to be developed. Policy review to be undertaken.
	Employee contract/job description; Tribunal or other legal challenge	L	M	Mitigation	Ensure employee contracts and job descriptions are in place. The Parish Council subscribes to the various national and regional bodies (NALC/BALC/SLCC) for help and support.	
	Safety of Staff and visitors (office in Clerk's home)	L	M	Mitigation	Inspection of Clerk's house for hazards and work station assessment to be carried out periodically by Clerk and Councillor. Annual insurance reviewed.	Next insurance review Apr 24
	Clerk on long term absence	L	H	Mitigation	The Parish Council subscribes to the various national and regional bodies (NALC/BALC/SLCC) for help and support. Locum Clerk can be sourced through these bodies.	No financial reserves earmarked.
	Clerk Resignation	H	H	Mitigation	Locum Clerk can be sourced through regional and national bodies (NALC/BALC/SLCC)	The current status of available Clerk's is low to non-existent within the sector.
COUNCILLOR'S PROPRIETY						
Subject	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Risk Control Measures (Alleviation of risk by OWPC)	Comments/Review
Member's Interests	Conflict of Interest.	L	M	Mitigation	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting. Register of Members Interests form to be reviewed annually in May and maintained as a permanent public record.	Next review May 24
Gifts and Hospitality					Clerk to keep a register of councillors gifts and hospitality.	New policy to be added.
Defamation/Code of Conduct. Standing Orders	Legal challenged against the council.	L	M	Mitigation	Both Standing Orders and Code of Conduct reviewed annually. All Councillors required to attend a Councillor Induction training course.	Next review May 24