

EDITH WESTON PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

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. Although some risks can never be eliminated fully, the Council has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk, which:

- Identifies the subject
- Identifies what may be at risk
- Identifies the level of risk
- Evaluates the management and control of the risk and records findings
- Reviews, assesses and revises procedures if required

MANAGEMENT

Hazard Identified (The Potential <u>to</u> <u>Cause</u> Harm)	People at Risk	Mitigating Controls Currently in Place	Likelihood (L) x Impact (Im)	Risk Category Score (L x Im)	Additional Control Measures Required	Revised Likelihood (L x Im)	Revised Risk Category Score (L x Im)
Business Continuity: Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	Parish Clerk	All relevant files and records are kept both in paper form at the Clerks house and online. In the event of the loss or long-term incapacity of the Clerk, the Chair to arrange for files and records to be obtained and gain access to the online storage. Electronic records are backed up on a hard disk drive – this will be stored by the Chair and updated regularly between meetings. Copies of passwords to access online data will be placed in a sealed envelope to be held by the Chair in case of emergencies	1 x 1	1	Existing procedure revised Sept 2024 and strengthened.		

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Meeting location: Adequacy, Health and Safety	Parish Councillors, Clerk, Public	Meetings are held at Edith Weston Village Hall. The Clerk holds the keys and in the event of the Clerk being unable to attend, the Chairman has access to a set of keys for the Hall. The Hall and facilities are considered to be adequate from a comfort and health and safety point of view for the Clerk, Councillors and members of the public who attend. Any person with special needs wishing to attend a meeting is asked to inform the Clerk not less than 12 hours prior to the meeting so that the appropriate arrangements can be made. Should the Village Hall be temporarily unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances there are a number of alternative venues that can be approached such as the school and the sailing club.	1 x 1 1 x 1 1 x 1 1 x 1	1 1 1 1			
Council records – paper: Loss through theft, fire or damage		Current papers are kept at the home of the Clerk. Confidential items are contained in a locked fireproof filing box away from other documents. Archived material is kept in a locked metal filing cabinet in a locked cupboard at the Village Hall.	1 x 1	1			

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Council records – electronic: Loss through fire, damage or corruption of computer		Electronic records are stored on the Parish Council computer issued to the Clerk. Back-ups are stored in a Dropbox facility on a live day to day basis and a separate hard-drive has been purchased for a secondary back up of the laptop. The laptop is protected by ESET. See Business Continuity section above.	1 x 1	1			
Suitability of incoming Clerk: Appointment of unsuitable individual particularly with regard to the security of Council funds		Candidates would need to meet the requirements set out in the Person Specification for the role of Clerk. These requirements would be evidenced by application form, interview and references being taken up. Financial Regulations are in place; the Parish Council holds no cash. On line banking is carried out by the Clerk and monthly bank reconciliations completed by a member of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee approves all expenditure prior to payment within the defined limits of the Financial Regulations; expenditure in excess of these limits is approved by the full Parish Council. A monthly finance report is presented to the Parish Council.	1 x 4	4			
FINANCE							

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Precept – adequacy of precept		The precept is an agenda item at the December Council meeting. At the precept meeting the Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to the end of the year. With this information the Council maps out the required monies for standing costs, projects and grants for village organisations for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings. The precept is set on the basis of the budget. Adequate reserves are maintained to cover moderate over spending during the year in line with the approved Reserves Policy.	1 x 4	4			
Insurance – adequacy, cost and compliance	The public, parish councillors	An annual review of the items covered and the level of cover is undertaken prior to the renewal date. Employer's liability is a statutory requirement.	1 x 1	1			
Bank and banking – inadequate checks		The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The Finance Committee approves expenditure up to a defined limit, above which items are approved by the Parish Council. Cheques are never used but if they were, the Financial Regulations require TWO signatories. Online banking is currently	1 x 1	1	Dual signatory set up to strengthen accountability 2024.		

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		carried out by the Clerk, expenditure is entered by the Clerk, an authorised Parish Councillor (there are 2) will authorise release of payment, income and expenditure is reviewed on a monthly basis at the Parish Council meeting. An independent Parish Councillor carries out bank reconciliations.					
Cash – loss through theft or dishonesty		The Council has no petty cash or float. Any cash transactions are made by the Clerk, and are fully receipted and reimbursed through submission of an expense claim.	1 x 1	1			
Financial controls and records – inadequate checks, financial regulations		A monthly income and expenditure report is prepared by the Responsible Financial Officer (the Clerk) and presented at each Parish Council meeting at which all income and expenditure is resolved and minuted. An annual audit of the accounts takes place by an external body. Any s137 payments must be recorded at the time of approval. Financial Regulations are in place and are reviewed annually.	1 x 1	1			
VAT – correct amount not reclaimed		VAT charged on all purchases is recorded in the financial software and a claim is submitted every six months for the total owed no later than one month after the end of the relevant month.	1 x 1	1			

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Legal costs – potential for substantial costs to be incurred in the event of eg. a planning appeal.		PC keeps an earmarked reserve for legal costs and requests an amount marked as ‘contingency’ as part of the annual precept request.	3 x 4	12	Advice to be sought by Council from LRALC in the event that a legal appeal is being considered, to ensure the Council is acting within its powers. If significant costs are expected then a public consultation or survey of residents’ opinions may take place to gauge support for this approach. If possible	2 x 4	8

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					multiple quotes for legal advice costs may be sought to ensure best value.		
Election costs – risk of costs not being budgeted		Risk is higher in an election year. An amount is always included when setting the annual budget.	1 x 3	3			
Actions by clerk – fraud, actions undertaken		Dual approval of electronic payments, bank reconciliations carried out by independent member of the Parish Council. Clerk provided with relevant training and access to assistance and legal advice via LRALC/SLCC.	1 x 1	1			
Employers annual return – accounting, and paying NI and tax on Clerk's salary		Production of monthly salary slips, and submission of Employers Annual Return is contracted out to a company providing payroll services. Their performance is monitored.	1 x 1	1			
Annual return – not submitted within time limited		The Annual Return is completed and signed by the Internal Auditor, then approved by the Parish Council in good time to be sent to the External Auditor before the due date. Regular reconciliations and other accounts checks take place through the course of the year. Scribe	2 x 2	4			

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		Accounts software in place to assist with year end accounts and calculations required for Annual Return submission.					
Freedom of Information Act – adequacy of policy	The public	The Parish Council has adopted the model publication scheme for Local Councils and has a policy in place which is reviewed annually	1 x 1	1			
Data Protection Act (GDPR)	The public, parish councillors	The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioner and has a policy in place which is reviewed annually.	1 x 1	1			
LIABILITY							
Legal Powers – illegal activity or payments		All activity and payments to be made within the powers of the Parish Council and to be resolved and clearly minuted.	1 x 1	1			
Minutes/Agendas/ Statutory documents – accuracy and legality, non-compliance with statutory requirements		Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed manner and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements.	1 x 1	1			
Public Liability – risk to third party property or individual	The public	Insurance is in place. An annual reminder is sent by current insurers when due for renewal.	1 x 4	4			

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Employer Liability – non-compliance with employment law	The clerk	Insurance is in place. An annual reminder is sent by current insurers when due for renewal.	1 x 4	4			
Members interest – conflict of interest, register of member's interests		Councillors are required to register disclosable pecuniary interests with the Monitoring Officer at Rutland County Council and declare any relating to a matter arising at a meeting; these are clearly minuted at each meeting.	1 x 1	1			
ASSETS							
Playground equipment – damage to equipment/risk to third parties		The Parish Council is not responsible for any play equipment.	1 x 1	1			
Seats/benches – damage to or theft of		The Parish Council have 5 benches. Ad hoc checks are made by Councillors. All seats/benches appear on the asset register and are covered by insurance.	1 x 1	1			
Notice boards – damage to		Both notice boards are checked monthly and are covered by insurance. All boards appear on the asset register and are covered by insurance.	1 x 1	1			
Bus shelters – damage to		The Council is responsible for two bus shelters. The bus shelters appear on the asset register and is covered by insurance.	1 x 1	1			

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Phone box defibrillators – damage to/theft		The Council is responsible for two phone boxes that contain defibrillators, both of which are covered by insurance. They appear on the asset register and are covered by insurance. The defibrillators are checked on a monthly basis; checks and maintenance are logged on the Community Heartbeat website.	1 x 1	1			
Grit and salt bins – damage to		The Council is responsible for 7 grit and salt bins. They appear on the asset register and are covered by insurance.	1 x 1	1			
Well Cross – damage to		The Council is responsible for the memorial stone at Well Cross. The memorial appears on the asset register and is covered by insurance.	1 x 1	1			
Laptop – damage to/theft		The Council has one laptop that is covered by the Clerk's home insurance. The laptop has ESET protection.	1 x 1	1			
Street lights – damage to		The Council is responsible for 21 streetlights. The streetlights are subject to an annual maintenance contract with Rutland County Council, appear on the asset register and are covered by insurance.	1 x 1	1			

Signed (Chair):

Dated:

Signed (Clerk):

Dated:

Likelihood		X	Impact		=	Risk Score	
1	Very unlikely		1	Very minor or no injury/no financial impact		1-5	No further controls required
2	Unlikely		2	Minor injury (e.g. cut)/small financial impact		6-8	Further controls to be considered - low priority
3	Possible		3	Serious injury/medium financial impact		9-15	Further controls required -medium priority
4	Probable		4	Major injury or permanent disability/major financial impact		16-20	Further controls required -high priority
5	Definite		5	Single or multiple deaths		21-25	Immediate action required