

Woodhurst Parish Council Risk Assessment

January 2019

Cllr Neil Farbon (Chairman)

Date of Next Review December 2019

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INTRODUCTION

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks 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 the level of risk
- Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings
- Review, assess and revise as required

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Business Continuity

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance.

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

Most files and recent records are kept at Clerks home in secure filing cabinets. The Clerk has a dedicated laptop and regular back-ups are made. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed, the Chairman is to contact CAPALC.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Procedures should be adequate- check on back-ups every quarter.

Precept

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Adequacy of Precept/Submission of Precept Request

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

The Council reviews the Precept annually against the actual financial position from the current year and projected budget for the next financial year. The precept then has to be unanimously agreed and the Clerk then submits the precept request to HDC and confirms to the Council when the monies are received.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedures Adequate.

Financial Records

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Inadequate Records/Financial Irregularities/Internal Audit

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. The Council undertook an extensive Internal Audit into all procedures carried out by Kristi Johnson FCCA CTA in September 2018.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing procedures adequate. Internal Audit recommendations completed. Review Financial Regulations annually.

Bank and Banking

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Inadequate Checks/Bank Mistakes/Loss/Charges

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

The Council has Financial Regulations and a Banking Policy that set out the requirements for banking, cheques, payments and reconciliation of accounts. Banking now online via Unity Trust Bank where payments have to be signed off by two Councillors. Internal Audit carried out into procedures as per Financial Records item. Account reconciliation reviewed at each meeting and statements signed off at each meeting together with review of list of payments made at each meeting. Accounting software to be introduced in 2019.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate. Review Financial Regulations and Banking Policy annually.

Handling of Cash

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Loss of cash through theft of dishonesty

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. Cash received to be banked within three days of receipt. No petty cash is held. The Council's Insurance Policy has a Fidelity Guarantee.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate. Review Financial Regulations and Insurance annually.

Accountability of Required Works

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Works awarded incorrectly/Overspend

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

Council practice would be to obtain at least two quotations and ideally three for projects over £500 which have to be assessed and unanimously voted on at the relevant meeting. Works below £500 also have to be voted on. Any problems to be investigated in the first instance by the Clerk to report back to the next meeting.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate

Clerk/Other Workers

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Employment Status/Correct Clerk's Salary/PAYE/Employee Wellbeing/Loss of Clerk

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

The Clerk is the only employee of Woodhurst Parish Council. Any other workers are outside contractors and regular contractors have to supply confirmation of self-employment and confirmation of Public Liability insurance. The Council's Insurance Policy is legally required to include Employers Liability insurance.

The Clerk's salary is reviewed in June as per Contract start date and the salary is reviewed in line with Local Government Services Pay Scales supplied by CAPALC. Salary is paid by Standing Order and PAYE due to be introduced during early 2019.

An Annual Appraisal was carried out in May 2018 and this is to continue annually to review performance and provide the Clerk and the Council with the opportunity to have a joint discussion with a view to identifying and agreeing ways of ensuring both continuous work-related and personal development. A standard Appraisal for supplied by CAPALC is to be used.

A budget item is to be included for Clerk's training via CAPALC and the Clerk is to be offered the opportunity to go through full CiCLA training. The Clerk is to be provided with the Council Laptop and appropriate back up services for this and provided with all other materials required and a £75.00 per year budget item for Office Costs.

In the event of needing to appoint a new Clerk a full job description is to be advertised and a full interview process is to be followed with an Interview Panel of three Councillors.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing procedures adequate. PAYE to be introduced in 2019. Monitor working conditions. Maintain CAPALC or similar membership.

Election Costs

LEVEL OF RISK

Low/Medium

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Risk of an election cost.

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

Risk is higher in an election year- last election was 2018 and was uncontested. The Council to include budget item for full elections costs as issued by HDC in the precept budget for an election year.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVIEW

Existing Procedure Adequate

VAT

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Re-claiming/Charging

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. VAT is to be re-claimed in annual return by the Clerk.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate- Monitor VAT Re-claim

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Misc Financial Items

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Councillor Expenses/Illegal Activity or Payments/Financial Records/Insurance

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

There is no budget for Councillor Expenses or Allowances. Any legitimate costs incurred by Councillors are refunded as payments which go before the Council as payment items at the relevant meeting.

All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and fully minuted at Full Council Meetings.

Papers records are stored at the home of the Clerk and in the Chairman's file. Records include historical correspondence, agendas and minutes, documents, insurance schedules, employment documents.

Specialist Parish Council insurance is to be maintained - currently provided by Community Action Suffolk under a Long Term Undertaking expiring in 2022 and is reviewed annually. Public Liability Insurance level is noted at £10 million.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate. Review Insurance Policy Annually.

External Audit

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Correct Submission/Late Submission

LEVEL OF RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

As recommended in Internal Audit carried out in 2018, bank reconciliations to be prepared on a monthly basis together with list of creditors/debtors and year end accounts to be drawn up by 30th June at the latest. All these measures should enable timely and simple completion of the required External Audit by the Clerk which can then be checked by the Internal Auditor before final timely

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submission to Moore Stephens Auditors. Once approved the Annual Governance Statement is to be publicised to the Parish.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate. Liaise with Clerk to ensure timely submission of External Audit.

Council Policies

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Continued Use of Outdated Policies

RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

All Council Policies to be reviewed by Clerk to ensure up to date versions are being used as per updates from CAPALC. Review to take place in time for AGM where revised Policy list can be formally adopted.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Liaise with Clerk.

Data Protection/ G.D.P.R./ Freedom of Information

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Correct Policy Provision and Implementation

RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

Woodhurst Parish Council has carried out a significant amount of work on GDPR and the implications for the running of the Council and its responsibilities within the new legislation. The Council maintains its status as a Data Controller through the ICO and has appointed CAPALC to act the Council's Data Protection Officer. A GDPR Policy has been adopted and implemented and all Councillors have signed a declaration regarding the use and storage of their details in connection with Council business. Specific Contact and Consent forms are available for the wider Parish and Public. A review of documents kept has resulted in historic planning documents being securely

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shredded so no personal details relating to these and no kept and a wider review in the form of a Personal Data Register is due to be completed.

Freedom of Information requests are dealt with according to the regulations and processes set out for such requests.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing procedure adequate once Data Register Review completed. Ensure existing G.D.P.R. Policy is up to date.

Meeting Location

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Adequacy/Health and Safety

RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK

The Parish Council Meetings are held in the Village Hall which is run by the Village Hall Management Committee. The premises are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health and Safety and comfort aspects. The Village Hall Committee Treasurer has confirmed that the Hall carries Public Liability Insurance to a level of £10 million.

Running of Meetings

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Compliance with Code of Conducts/Legality of Activities/Accuracy/Conflict of Interests/Councillor Interests

RISK

Low/Medium

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISKS

Councillors have a duty to adhere to the recognised Code of Good Conduct and in line with the adopted Standing Orders. Councillors have a duty to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in agenda items at the start of meeting and are required to update their Register of Interests annually at AGM.

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Minutes and Agendas are produced by the Clerk in the prescribed method and to adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council Meeting and Minutes and Agendas are displayed according to the requirements set out in the adopted Standing Orders.

All activities and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council are to be resolved and clearly minuted.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate

PARISH COUNCIL ASSET REGISTER

Streetlights

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Streetlights not working

RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISKS

The Parish Council owns 15 lights which were upgraded in 2015 by Balfour Beatty. A Maintenance Contract is in force with Balfour Beatty for all 15 lights. The Parish Council maintains Impact only insurance on the streetlights.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Existing Procedure Adequate

All Street Furniture

RISKS IDENTIFIED

Breakage and Safety of Furniture. Risk/damage/injury to Third Parties

RISK

Low

MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISKS

All street furniture owned by the Parish Council was inspected by the Chairman and Vice Chairman on 3rd November 2018. Maintenance on benches, phone box, bins and barrel planters has been

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carried out by JJ's Garden Maintenance during the course of 2018. Other items such as the bus shelter, noticeboards and village sign were noted to be in good order. Extensive work was carried out on the (disconnected) village pump in 2015 by Roger Gowler. The only items on the Asset Register requiring further examination are the fire hooks on Horseshoe Cottage for which the timbers require checking and possible redecoration.

The Council does not own any Play Area or Play Area Equipment and does not own any open spaces or areas of land.

REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE

Fire Hooks to be reviewed further during 2019. Review Asset Register at AGM and ensure Insurance Policy is covered on the same basis of cover and values.

ADOPTION

This Document was adopted by Woodhurst Parish Council on 13th February 2019

Agenda item 135