

Fittleworth Parish Council

Business Risk Assessment

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.

Purpose of Document

This document has been produced to enable Fittleworth 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 is developing a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focuses 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.

Responsibility

Fittleworth Parish Council is committed to identifying and managing risks using procedures and ensuring that risks are maintained at an acceptable level. Any action that is felt necessary to undertake to reduce risks will be done so by Fittleworth Parish Council. The Clerk/RFO and Councillors will review risks on a regular basis, including any newly identified risks, and report at least annually to the Parish Council. The review will include identification of any unacceptable levels of risk.

Members are ultimately responsible for risk management because risk threatens the achievements of policy objectives. Members should therefore:

- Take steps to identify key risks facing the Council;
- Evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place;
- Decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

Fittleworth Parish Council

| MANAGEMENT | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H/M/L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Financial | Council has insufficient funds to cover it's liabilities | L | Budget is agreed by full council every year. All payments are presented to Full Council Meeting monthly. Minimum of 2 signatories required on Cheques or online banking transaction. Financial regulations are reviewed annually. | Review annually |
| Business Continuity | Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance | L/M | All computer files are backed up on a regular basis using cloud storage. Access is available via IT support if required. Paper records are more at risk, consideration should be given to risk of loss. In the event of the clerk being indisposed the Chair has access to the Parish Council laptop. The Chair will contact WSALC for advice/support. | Review annually |
| Meeting Location | Adequacy Health and Safety | L | Meetings are held at Fittleworth Sports Pavilion and Fittleworth Village Hall. The clerk is made aware of the venues health and safety policy of these venues. | Review annually |
| Council records – paper | Loss through theft, fire, flood or other damage | L | Paper records are stored at the Pavilion, Councillor homes and the Clerk's home. Original Legal documents are held by the Parish Council's Solicitors, Anderson Rowntree LLP of Petworth. The provision is considered as adequate. The Document Retention & Disposal Policy is reviewed annually. | Review annually |
| Council records – Electronic | Loss through damage, fire, flood, corruption of data | M | Electronic records are stored on the Clerk's laptop. Back-ups are regularly made onto cloud storage. | Review annually |

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| | | | Back-Ups are also made monthly on a hard drive stored at the Clerk's home address. | |
| Staff | Fraud Actions carried out | L L | Fidelity guarantee in place via insurance. Councillors carry out regular review of bank reconciliation. All financial transaction required a 2 nd signature. Regular reporting of actions completed and outstanding via reports to council/committees. Staff to be adequately trained and review carried out via appraisal process. | Review annually Review annually |
| Trees and property | Damage caused to persons or property from Parish Council owned trees and property. | M | A professional tree survey is carried out every 3 to 4 years and works identified are carried out in order of priority. The council has adequate budget and reserves to enable adequate tree works to be completed. All land and property is regularly inspected by Councillors and reports returned to the Clerk to organise any remedial work. | Assessed throughout the year |
| Global Pandemic | Not being able to continue with the business of the council. | M | Keep up to date with government guidelines and implement recommendations. Regularly review the scheme of delegation. Be prepared to return to on-line meetings. | Constant review |

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| FINANCE | | | | |
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| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H/M/L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Precept | Adequacy of precept to allow the Council to carry out it's statutory duties | M | Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept. The Council receive budget information regularly. The budget is set in the autumn and agreed by the Council by January. The process is backed by the Financial Regulations and reviewed by the internal audit. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Insurance | Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee | L L L M | There is an annual review of all insurance arrangements. | Existing procedure adequate. |
| Banking | Inadequate procedures | L | The financial regulations are comprehensive and set out all the requirements including details of bank reconciliations. | Review via Financial Regulations annually. |
| Cash | Loss via theft or dishonesty | L | No petty cash held. | Existing procedures adequate Review via Financial Regulations annually. |
| Financial controls and records | Inadequate checks Financial irregularities | L | Payments are only made against authorised invoices. Monthly expenditure is recorded in the minutes. All payments are processed using three separate people. One instigator (usually the Clerk) and two authorisers (usually two Councillors). Internal and external audit. Financial regulations are in place. | Review via Financial Regulations and internal controls annually. |
| Salary | Incorrect payment or process | L | Payroll outsourced to WSCC payroll services. Salary adjustments are approved by the Council | Existing procedure adequate. |
| VAT | Reclaim not processed | L | Reporting to Full Parish Council via financial reports. The Financial Regulations set out the requirements. | Existing procedure adequate. |
| Annual Return | Not submitted within time limits | L | Councillors are aware of the timing process and relevant legislation. The Annual Return is completed, checked by the internal auditor and signed by the council. Checked and sent on to the external auditor. | Existing procedures adequate |
| PROCEDURAL | | | | |

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| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H/M/L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------|--|--|
| Freedom of Information | Non-compliance with Act | L | The Council has a model publication scheme in place. There is a comprehensive procedure in place which is reviewed annually | Annual review of FOI policy |
| Data Protection | Non-compliance with Act | L L | Fittleworth Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioners Office. The Clerk receives regular updates from SSALC and SLCC. Processes are up to date and the Council is compliant with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) | Ensure annual review of registration. Continue regular reviews and updates. |

| LIABILITY | | | | |
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| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H/M/L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |

Adopted June 17th 2023 Reviewed 19th February 2024

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| Legal Powers | <p>Illegal activity or payments</p> <p>Committees and working groups exceeding delegated authority</p> | <p>L</p> <p>L</p> | <p>All activities and payments made within the powers of the parish council, resolved and clearly minuted.</p> <p>Clear referencing. Standing Orders are regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Committee terms of reference and delegated powers are reviewed annually.</p> | Review annually |
| Minutes, Agendas and standing documents | <p>Accuracy and legality</p> <p>Non-compliance with Statutory requirements</p> | L | <p>Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed off at the next meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements.</p> <p>Business conducted at the council is managed by the chairman with advice from the clerk</p> <p>Standing Orders & Financial Regulations based on NALC models</p> | Adequate procedures in place |
| Public liability | Risk to third party property or individuals | M | Insurance is in place, risk assessments to be undertaken | Written risk assessments are completed as required. |
| Employers Liability | Non-compliance with legal requirement | L | Insurance in place. | Adequate procedures in place |
| Legal Liability | Legality of activities | L | <p>Clerk has access to advice via networking and SLCC membership. The Clerk is a member of SLCC. The Clerk attends regular training and networking sessions for updates.</p> <p>Members of WSALC / NALC</p> | Maintain appropriate links with local council co-ordinating bodies. |

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| COUNCILLOR PROPRIETY | | | | |
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| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H/M/L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Code of Conduct | Noncompliance | M | Adopted code May 2019 | Review Annually. New Code adopted June 2021. Councillors to review annually |
| Members Interests | Conflict of interest Failure to register interests | M L | Agenda item on every meeting Councillors aware of duty and reminded regularly about requirements. Clerk willing to give informal advice. | Existing procedures adequate Review Annually |

| EMPLOYEES | | | | |
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| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H/M/L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Clerk | Lone Working Clerk lone works at home and on-site visits | L | Lone Working Policy and procedures to be drafted. | Lone Worker Policy to be reviewed annually |
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Fittleworth Parish Council

| ASSETS | | | | |
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| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H/M/L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Asset Register | Assets not recorded | L | An asset register is established and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. An annual inspection and review of Parish Council assets takes place. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Maintenance of assets | Poor maintenance leads to loss or injury Poor performance of assets or amenities. | L | All assets owned by Fittleworth Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs are actioned and authorised in accordance with the correct procedures | Existing procedures adequate |
| Financial Assets | Balances above £85,000 not covered by bank deposit protection scheme | M | Have bank accounts with multiple banks. Total deposit at any one bank below £85,000 limit | |
| LIST OF INDIVIDUAL ASSETS and REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES | | | | |
| Play areas | Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property | L L | An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Annual inspection carried out by registered play inspection company. Weekly visual checks are carried out by Councillors. | Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance requirements annually. |
| Noticeboards | Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety | L L | Fittleworth Parish Council has a notice board sited at the entrance to the Village Hall. The location has approval by relevant parties, have insurance cover, and are inspected each time notices are updated. Any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Street Furniture | Risk/damage/injury to third parties | L | Fittleworth Parish Council is responsible for various items (i.e. bins, seats, bus shelters, picnic benches etc) around the village. No formalised programme of inspections is carried out, all reports of damage or faults are reported to Council and/or dealt with. | Existing procedure adequate. |

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| Trees | Risk/damage/injury to third parties and tree wardens | L | Trees are regularly inspected for disease and/or damage. Tree warden respond to requests from residents for tree surgery and evaluate planning applications for trees with protection orders. | Risk Assessment for tree warden work to be carried out. |
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