

Westerfield Parish Council Risk Assessment March 2024

Purpose of the Document

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. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

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

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept	L	Sound budgeting to underlie the annual precept. The precept is an agenda item at the January 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 and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings.	Existing procedure adequate
	Requirements not submitted to SCDC.	L	The precept is then set on the basis of the budget. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to East Suffolk District Council.	
	Amount not received	L	The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (approx May and October).	
Financial Records	Inadequate records	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
	Financial irregularities	L	Internal, and External Audit (if not exempt).	
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. Online payments require dual-authorisation and cheques require two signatories. Accounts are presented at Council meetings.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list when necessary, especially after an AGM and an election. Monitor the bank statements monthly.
	Bank mistakes	L	The bank does make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts, these are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction.	
	Loss	L		
	Charges	L		

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Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Reporting & auditing	Information communication	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly before each Council meeting, This statement includes, bank reconciliation (quarterly), budget update and a breakdown of receipts and payments.	Existing communication procedures adequate.
Direct costs	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Online payments Cheque incorrect	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. At each Council meeting the Council approves the list of requests for payment. Dual authorisation is required for online payments. Two signatories are required for cheques.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors request an S137 rules if required.
Grants receivable	Receipt of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required.
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, three quotations for any substantial work required to be undertaken or for goods. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation / tender, research the problem and report to Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations.
Clerk	Fraud Actions Undertaken	L L	The requirements of insurance policies to be adhered to. Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice.	Existing procedure adequate. Purchase revised books. Membership of LRALC.
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	Risk is higher in election year. When an election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the District Council for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election. A contingency fund should be established to meet the costs.	Existing procedures adequate. Include in financial statement when setting precept.
VAT	Reclaiming	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. VAT to be claimed annually if less than £100 or when required in the event of higher amounts. Clerk to monitor VAT on an ongoing basis.	Existing procedures adequate.

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Freedom of Information Act	Policy	M	The Council has adopted the model publication scheme for Local Councils. The Council is committed to populating this page with the required information over the next twelve months. There have been no requests for information to date but the Council is aware that requests may require additional hours of work, The Council is able to request a fee if the work will take more than 15 hours however the request can be re-submitted, broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act.
	Provision	M		

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedure adequate.
		L		
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets. Risk to third parties.	L	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned /authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually . All public amenity land is inspected regularly.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure inspections carried out.
		L		
Council records - paper	Loss through: theft fire damage	L	Current and previous year Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk, and older records in the archive file in the Village Hall. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, leases for land, records such as insurance.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate.
		M		
		L		
Council records - electronic	Loss through: theft, fire, damage corruption of computer	L	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerk's computer, at the Clerk's house. Back-ups of the files are taken at regular intervals.	Back-up of electronic files produced regularly.
		M		

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LIABILITY				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Parish Council Meetings.	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Non-compliance with statutory requirements Business Conduct	L L L	Minutes and Agendas are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and Agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	Existing procedures adequate Undertake adequate training. Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Members interests	Conflict of interest Register of members interests	M M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting. Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed at least on an annual basis.	Existing procedures adequate Members take responsibility to update their Register.

The information above was agreed at the 11th April 2024 meeting of Westerfield Parish Council and will be agreed annually as being a correct record.

**Signed
Chairman**



Dated 11/4/24

Clerk



Dated 11/4/24