

HOCKWOLD CUM WILTON PARISH COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY & RISK REGISTER

CURRENT REVIEW DATE	NEXT REVIEW DATE
September 2025	July 2026

Parish Council Risk Management Policy & Risk Register

What is Risk Management?

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect the council's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully implement its strategies and services. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, assessed and controlled. It is a key element of the council's governance framework. This policy has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and to satisfy itself that it has adequate arrangements in place to minimise them. The Council recognises that some risks can never be totally eliminated, however, it has put in place a strategy that provides a structured and systematic approach to minimising risks that may affect the council.

Risk assessment is a systematic examination of the parish council's services & activities, assets, workforce and external environmental factors that enables the council to identify all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the council should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, as far as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This risk register exists 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 hazard or activity to be reviewed.
- Identify what risks may exist or arise.
- Evaluate and describe the management and control of the risks and record findings.
- Review, assess and revise if required.

The council has broken down the risks it faces into three categories – Financial, Operational Management and Physical Equipment or Assets. Each of these categories is considered in detail over the following pages; the risks are identified and described together with an evaluation of their significance to the organisation (High, Medium or Low) and arrangements are described for how the council proposes to manage or control the risk to what it considers to be a satisfactory level.

FINANCIAL				
Topic	Risk	H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business Continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	Loss of Clerk or Loss of Council papers / electronic records All Council documents are stored in the Cloud AND external storage device A sealed copy of all major accounts and passcodes to be held by the Chairman, in their absence it will be held by the Vice-Chairman	Appropriate back-up arrangements in place. Review plan when necessary.
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to District Council Amount not received by District Council	L L L	The Council regularly receives budget update information through the year to check the adequacy of the precept which is fixed by full Council. At the Budget/Precept meeting the Council receives a budget update report, including actual and projected year-end indicative figures provided by the Clerk. Once the Council has formally agreed the level of precept required the clerk requests this amount from the District Council. The Clerk informs Council when precept income is received.	Existing procedures adequate General Reserves built up to maintain general duties for six months.
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has adopted Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for reporting financial information to the council. This includes procedures that are designed to prevent fraud and irregularities.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations at least every two years or as required.
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The Clerk reconciles the bank accounts on a regular basis to ensure transactions are correctly reflected in the financial information presented to the council monthly. Detailed reconciliation figures are presented quarterly to the Council.	Existing procedures adequate. Review Financial Regulations every two years or as required. Review bank signatory list after an election. Reconcile accounts and bank statements regularly and present quarterly to Council.

Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for the handling of cash. No petty cash or cash float is held by any staff.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Reporting and Auditing	Provision of monitoring information.	L	A budget monitoring statement is produced bi annually and reported to the Council. The statement includes, bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank statements.	Existing reporting procedures are adequate.
	Compliance	L	Quarterly Financial checks including all accounts, invoices, receipts and records.	Council annually to appoint an Internal Auditor & A councillor does quarterly Financial checks
Direct costs	Goods billed but not supplied	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the underlying requirements.	Existing procedures adequate.
Orders and invoices	Incorrect invoicing	L	The Council is provided with details of payments and receipts for the month at every council meeting for consideration and approval.	Review the Financial Regulations regularly.
Debts	Loss of stock	L	The Council carries minimal stocks, which are checked and monitored regularly by the Clerk.	
	Unpaid invoices	L	Unpaid invoices are pursued by the Clerk and action taken via small claims court if necessary.	
Grants payable	Is there a power to pay? Is authorisation properly recorded?	L	All such expenditure is considered by Council for approval and minuted accordingly. If payment is made using the S137 power, this is recorded specifically.	Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors record S137 payments when required.
Grants - receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not routinely receive any regular grants. One off grants would be dealt with within the specifically defined terms and conditions and would be itemised explicitly in the accounts presented to the Council.	Receipt of one-off grants would be recorded through the council meeting minutes and financial management systems for approval.
Charges – rentals payable	Payments of charges, leases, rentals	L	The Parish Council does not currently lease any property or equipment from a third party.	N/A.
Charges – rentals receivable	Receipt of rental	L	These are recorded through the routine financial reporting to the council.	Existing procedure adequate. Review agreement and fees as required.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT				
Topic	Risk	H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Value for Money Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	Financial Regulations specify the procedures for procuring goods and services. If problems are encountered with a contract or a service, the Clerk would investigate, check the relevant circumstances and report to Council.	Existing procedures, contained within Financial Regulations, are adequate.
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue	L L L	The Parish Council authorises the appointment level of remuneration of all employees. Rates of pay are linked to national terms and conditions. Norfolk ALC payroll is employed to do all payroll and HMRC payroll calculations are used. Payslips are generated automatically by Norfolk ALC. Tax and NI is calculated by Norfolk ALC using the HMRC calculations. All staff have a contract of employment and job description.	Existing systems include adequate controls.
Employees	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff Actions undertaken by staff Health & Safety	L L L L	The Councillors will convene emergency meetings to agree interim arrangements if key personnel are absent without notice. The council carries Fidelity Guarantee insurance with regard to fraud or staff actions. The Clerk is provided with access to relevant training, reference books and legal advice required to undertake the role. Operational staff are provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles, i.e. protective clothing and training. Annual appraisal interviews are carried out.	Existing procedure adequate. Retain membership of the NALC. Monitor working conditions, safety requirements and Insurance regularly. Existing procedures adequate.
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	L	No allowances are paid to Parish Councillors	No procedure required

Election costs	Financial risk to the council of an election.	L	Risk is higher in an election year. An earmarked financial reserve is held to cater for an election if this becomes necessary.	Existing procedure adequate
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the required processes and an accounting software programme which calculates & records VAT input and output.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Audit Return	Submit within time limits.	L	Annual Audit Return is completed and approved by the Council, documents subject to internal audit prior to being forwarded to the External Auditor within required time limit.	Existing procedures adequate
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Council	All powers appropriately considered and minuted.

Minutes/Agendas/Notices Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed form by the Clerk and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are accessible to the public in compliance with the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings is managed lawfully by the Chair in accordance with Standing Orders and with the advice and guidance of a qualified clerk.	Existing procedure adequate. Guidance/training is available to the Chair
	Business conduct	L		Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Members interests	Conflict of interest	L	The declaration of interests by members at meetings is a standing item to remind Councillors of their duty. Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors. The Council has adopted a dispensation procedure.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Register of Members interests	M		Members take responsibility to update the Register.
Insurance	Adequacy	L	An review is undertaken regularly of all insurance arrangements.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Cost	L	Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity.	Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance.
	Compliance	L	Ensure compliance measures are in place.	
	Fidelity Guarantee	M	Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.	
Data protection	Policy	L	The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner and the fee is paid by annual direct debit.	Ensure annual review of registration

Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L M	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. Ensure the Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this may require many hours of additional work. (The Council is able to request a fee if the work will take more than guidelines allow)	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the F of I Act.
PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
Topic	Risk	H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third parties/property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance purposes.	Existing procedure adequate.
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of income or performance Risk to third parties	L L L	All assets owned by the Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned/authorised in accordance with the procedures agreed by the Council. Where necessary annual maintenance plans are put in place, e.g. computer & CCTV equipment. All assets are insured and reviewed annually. The asset register is reviewed through the annual audit process.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure timely inspections carried out.
Notice boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	Parish Council has 1 notice board. All locations have insurance cover and are inspected regularly by the Clerk who commissions any essential repairs/maintenance.	Existing procedure adequate.
Street furniture	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	The Parish Council is responsible for a bus shelters and benches around the village. All locations have insurance cover and are inspected regularly by with any essential repairs/maintenance arranged by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate.
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Parish Council Meetings are held at the Village Hall. The premises and facilities are considered to be adequate for those who attend from both a Health and Safety, DDA and comfort perspective.	Existing locations adequate.

Council records – paper	Loss through: – theft – fire – damage	L M L	The Parish Council's current records are stored at the clerk's home address, external drive backup and on the council laptop. A copy is also stored on the cloud. Historic records (historical minute books and copies, leases for land or property) are stored with Norfolk County Council Archives. A sealed copy of all major accounts and passcodes to be held by the Chairman, in their absence it will be held by the Vice-Chairman.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate.
Council records - electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage corruption of computer	LM	The Parish Council's electronic records are password controlled and stored on the Council's laptop computer. Files are back-up to an external drive and on the cloud.	Computer records are backed up Monthly on external drive and daily on the cloud.

July 2025