

# Ibstone Parish Council

## Parish Council Risk Assessment

The council is expected to carry out an annual assessment of risks it may face. 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. It is the key element of the framework of governance together with community focus; structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements. (Audit Commission – Worth the Risks: Improving Risk Management in Local Government (2002:5))

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. The Council is aware that although some risks can never be eliminated fully, it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk.

The list is not exhaustive and Council may wish to consider other risks not identified.

The table below shows general risks that the Parish Council could consider:

Subject – Identifies the subject

Risks Identified – Identifies what the risk may be

Risk Score – Identifies the level of risk

Management/ Risk Control – Evaluates the management and control of the risk and records findings

Review Date / Responsibilities – Reviews, assesses and revises procedures if required

This document was originally approved by the Parish Council at the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021, and reviewed with slight amendments made in September 2023.

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<b>FINANCIAL</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>Risk Score H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review Date / Reassessment</b>
Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	All files and recent records are kept at the Clerk's home. The clerk makes a weekly backup of files. In the event of the clerk being indisposed the Chairman to contact BMKALC for cover.	Review when necessary
Meeting location	Adequacy Health and Safety	L	Meetings are held at Ibstone C of E School or The Chilterns Fox pub in the Breakfast Room. The key collection is arranged by the Clerk with the Head Teacher. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed, the Chairman will contact the Head Teacher for the keys. The pub is open during meeting times. Both premises and facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and any Public who attend from a health and safety and comfort aspect	Adequate Risk Control In Place
Council Records	Loss through theft, fire , damage	L	Current papers will be held in a locked metal cabinet at the clerk's home. Archived papers are held in the County archives in Aylesbury or stored by the Clerk as appropriate.	Damage or theft unlikely, so provision adequate.
Council Records electronic	Loss through, fire, damage, corruption of computer.	M	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on a USB stick. Back-up files are made at regular intervals on an external hard drive, which is securely stored.	Existing procedure adequate

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Precept	Adequacy of precept	M	Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept. The Parish Council receives regular detailed budget information and the budget is set at a meeting no later than January.	Existing procedure adequate
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L M	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers Liability, Public Liability and Fidelity Guarantee are a statutory requirement	Existing procedure adequate Review provision and compliance annually
Banking	Inadequate checks	L	The council has financial regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques, BACS payments and reconciliation of accounts.	Existing procedure adequate Review financial regulations as necessary.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty.	L	The Parish Council has no petty cash or float. Clerk is reimbursed for petty cash expenses upon receipt and by BACS payment.	Existing procedure adequate
Financial control and records	Inadequate checks	L	Regular reconciliation prepared by RFO and checked by a member of the Parish Council. Two signatories on cheques and for BACS payments. Internal and external audit. Any financial obligation must be resolved and clearly minuted before any commitment. All payments must be resolved and clearly minuted. Any s137 payments must be recorded at time of approval	Existing procedure adequate
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L M	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. The clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this	Monitor and report any impacts made under Freedom of Information Act.

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			may require many hours of additional work. The Council is able to decline a request if the work will take a disproportionate amount of time. However the request can be resubmitted, broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee	
GDPR	Non compliance	L	Procedures and policies are in place.	Monitor and keep procedures updated.
Clerk	Loss of Clerk	M	A contingency fund should be established to fund long term illness or sudden resignation of the clerk. The requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance must be adhered to Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice	Include in financial statement when setting precept Membership of SLCC maintained Monitor working conditions
	Fraud	L		
	Actions undertaken	L		
Election costs	Risk of election costs	M	Risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures, which can be adopted to minimise risk of having a contested election. A contingency fund should be established to meet the costs.	Include in financial statement when setting precept
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The council has financial regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedures adequate
Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)	Not submitted within time limits	L	Annual return is completed, submitted to the Internal Auditor for completion and signing, agreed and signed by the Council. An Exemption certificate is sent on to the External Auditor within time limit as the Council has no gross income/expenditure exceeding £25,000	Existing procedures adequate
Website	Not legally compliant with Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile	M	Annually to decide if the Council complies with the disproportionate burden assessment for the Council	Review and asses annually.

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	Applications) (No 2) accessibility Regulation 2018			
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
Street furniture and playground equipment	Damage to play equipment and benches etc.	L	An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks are made on all Equipment. Annual RoSPA check on play equipment, with weekly checks made by councillors. The defibrillator is checked monthly. Records are kept by the clerk.	Existing procedures adequate
<b>LIABILITY</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/control of risk</b>	<b>Review/Asses/Revise</b>
Legal powers	Illegal activities or payments	L	All activities and payments are made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted.	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes/Agendas/Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality Non-compliance with statutory requirements	L L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements Minutes are approved and signed at next meeting Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the chairman	Existing procedures adequate Undertake adequate training Members to adhere to Code of Conduct
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	M	Insurance is in place. Risk assessment of any individual event undertaken	Existing procedure adequate

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Employer Liability	Non-compliance with employment law	M	Undertake adequate training and seek advice from BMKALC and BC.	Existing procedures adequate
Legal Liability	Legality of activities Proper and timely reporting via Minutes Proper document control	M L L	Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice if necessary Council always receives and approves minutes at bi-monthly meetings Retention of document policy in place	Existing procedures adequate Existing procedures adequate Existing procedures adequate
Covid-19	Disruption of parish council business	L	Clerk already works from home. Meetings to be held remotely as long as permitted by legislation. Risk assessment in place for face to face meetings.	Covid restrictions now removed.
<b>COUNCILLORS PROPRIETY</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
Members interests	Conflict of interest  Register of Members Interests	M  L	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting Register of Members Interests form to be reviewed at least on an annual basis	Existing procedures adequate Members to take responsibility to update their register