



Hordle Parish Council Risk Assessment and Management Policy

Approved: 21st May 2024

“The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council.”

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 a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus structures and processes standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements.

Risk Policy Statement

Hordle Parish Council hereafter referred to as HPC recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its Councillors, assets, liabilities and the community against potential losses to minimise uncertainty in achieving its goals and objectives and to maximise its opportunities. HPC is aware that some risks can never be eliminated fully and we have tried to ensure we have a strategy that provides a structured systematic and focused approach to managing risk.

Approach to Risk Management

HPC’s approach to risk management is that it should try to identify and manage risks in the most cost effective manner within overall resources available. Each risk identified by HPC is recorded here. The impact is assessed; control measures we feel to be appropriate are put in place together with the frequency with which the risk should be reviewed. In addition, Risk Assessments are carried out for bespoke events and situations. We require Risk Assessments for large or significant events taking place on Parish Council property. The Council also has a complementary Health and Safety, Home and Lone Working Policy.

Responsibility for Risk Management

HPC recognises that it is the responsibility of all Councillors and the Clerk as an employee to have regard for risk in carrying out their duties. If uncontrolled, risk can result in a drain on resources that could better be directed to front line service provision and to the meeting of HPC’s objectives and community needs. This policy has the full support of HPC which recognises that any reduction in the risk of injury, illness, loss or damage benefits the whole community. From recent experience, we already know that Council responsibility cannot be taken lightly and areas like succession planning are critical. The co-operation and commitment of all members of HPC and Clerk as an employee is required to ensure that council resources are not wasted as a result of uncontrolled risk. HPC is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is adhered to.

This Policy and Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually.

1. Financial				
Area	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management - control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to NFDC Amount not received by HPC	L	To determine the precept amount. The Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to end of year against budget and indicative figures of costs and income for the next year obtained by the Clerk. 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 and agrees the total budget. The amount between income and expenditure is the value that needs to be met and the Council makes a resolution as to the amount of precept to request. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to NFDC. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (April & September).	Existing procedure adequate.

Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. Clerk reconciles the bank accounts once a month when the statement arrive, any errors are dealt with immediately. The Clerk reviews the banking arrangements regularly and the Council checks bank reconciliation against bank statements monthly. FSCSC covers deposits to £85k. When bank accounts exceed this amount there is an automatic transfer of funds to an additional account.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list when necessary, especially after an Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and an election.
Financial controls & records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L	The Council has Financial Regulations. Financial transactions are recorded by the Clerk monthly and presented in a payment schedule to the Council for approval. Financial reports presented to council on a quarterly basis. An independent accountant checks the records on a quarterly/ half annual basis ensuring compliance with VAT, tax and NI conditions and accuracy of accounts as part of the internal audit process. Year-end accounts are drawn up by the accountant and submitted along with the annual return. The Finance, Audit & Compliance Committee meets 3 times a year to oversee all financial management, financial and operational risks, internal and external audit, policy and transactional matters as laid out in the agreed Financial Regulations of the Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Electronic banking	Prevention of fraud and theft	M / H	The Clerk enters payments onto the electronic banking system as per the monthly payment schedule. This is done by way of an electronic device with pin number. The Clerk can make payments and authorise up to the value of £1000. The authorisation of higher value payments is undertaken at full council and signed by the Chair. The Clerk makes all payments and advises the council with monthly bank reconciliations. Antivirus software on the Clerk's computer.	Regular reporting of financial transactions reduces the risk of theft and fraud.
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Cheque payable incorrect Loss of stock Unpaid invoices	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. At monthly Council meetings the list of invoices awaiting approval is distributed to Councillors, considered and approves the list of requests for payment. The Chair checks all payments over £1000 against invoices. The Council has minimal stocks, these are checked and monitored by the Clerk/Groundsman. Unpaid invoices are pursued and where possible, payment is obtained in advance.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Grants and support - payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, is minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the Sec137 power of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate.
Assets	Loss or damage of property	L	The Parish Council holds an asset register of all property held over a value of £500 along with an inventory list of lesser value property. This register is reviewed annually by Council. Items are covered by insurance where individual items are in excess of £250 (except where insurance is required to meet other legal requirements, such as street furniture). All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained and records of inspections and maintenance are kept including playpark which are inspected monthly by the Groundsman after receiving training and RoSPA annually.	Existing procedure adequate.
Grants receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One-off grants may come with terms and conditions to be satisfied. All monies received are entered and payments made against the project.	T & Cs would need to be followed if imposed.
Charges - rentals receivable	Receipt of rental Insurance implication	L / M	Rental of the recreation grounds and facilities - The Clerk issues terms and conditions of usage to regular hirers and a booking form to others. The Parish Council copy is held by the Clerk. Invoices are raised on a monthly basis or payment received in advance. The payment is received and banked. The Parish Council is notified accordingly. Insurance is requested of all users with regular users required to provide a copy to the Parish Council each year. All Parish Council property is covered by Public Liability insurance.	Existing procedure adequate. Review agreement and fees annually. Ensure payment and copy of insurance document received
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L / M	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. 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.

Salaries and assoc. costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong hours paid Wrong rate paid False employee Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue	H	The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees through a recruitment process. Salary rates are agreed in contract and any amendment agreed by council and recorded in personnel files. Salary analysis and slips are produced by a payroll company and an office copy is kept. Each staff member has a contract of employment and job description.	Existing appointment and payment system is adequate.
Employees	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff Actions undertaken by staff Health & Safety Long term sickness	H	Staff should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to professional and legal advice required for undertaking the role. Appraisals are carried out annually. Financial Regulations and Standing orders are in place. HR policies are in place to ensure staff welfare. The Human Resources Committee ensures the council complies with the requirements of employment law and follows best practice in providing good working conditions for staff, including health and safety.	Existing procedure adequate. Membership of the SLCC& ALCC, NALC/HALC. Monitor working conditions, safety requirements and insurance regularly.
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	Risk is higher in an 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 as this is a democratic process and should not be stifled. An annual amount is budget in earmarked reserves with this in mind.	Existing procedure adequate.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. VAT returns are made quarterly.	Existing procedure adequate.
Annual return	Submit within time limits	L	Annual Return is completed by the Clerk, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing and signed by the Council and sent on to the External Auditor within time limit. Accounts are published as stated on auditor notices. HCC pension return is submitted annually by the Clerk.	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 Parish Council Meetings.	Existing procedures adequate.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L / M	A 3 year review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place including Public Liability and is renewed on an annual basis. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for. Cyber Insurance forms part of the package to mitigate cyber crime. Ensure compliance measures are in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance.

2. MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to unexpected circumstances	M	The Council's files are kept online by way of a remote cloud system. Necessary paper records are retained in accordance with the Council's Retention Policy as well as on the Council's Website. Regular back-ups of files are made automatically to an external hard drive. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed a locum will be arranged.	Existing procedures to be reviewed.
Employees	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff Unlawful action taken by staff Breach of Health and Safety	M L L M	Proactive management to ensure that employees are well motivated and respected. Contingency arrangements and funding in place to provide adequate cover in the event of employee absence. Policies are in place to address staff grievances. The Human Resources Committee undertakes annual appraisals. All appropriate employees of the council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance in accordance with the Financial Regulations. All employees are made aware of their responsibilities for health and safety through their contract, H&S policy and training as required. The Clerk will be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role. Regular contact with Chairman and members of the Personnel Committee	Existing procedure adequate. Chair of the Personnel Committee to maintain regular contact. Monitor working condition safety requirements and insurance regularly. Statutorily satisfactory Insurance policy. Training provided.
Legal powers	Illegal or unlawful activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council Meetings.	All activities and payments minuted.

Council records - paper	Loss through theft, fire or damage	L L L	The Councils everyday working files are kept online by way of a remote cloud system. Necessary paper records are retained in accordance with the Council's Retention Policy as well as on the Council's Website.	Existing procedure adequate.
Data protection GDPR	Non-compliance with GDPR. Policy provision.	L L M	Data Protection requirements stated in the Council's Standing Orders. Ensure that Employees and Councillors receive training. Retain NSC Information Governance service.	Existing procedure adequate. Provide training where necessary
Freedom of Information Act	Failure to recognise requests. Failure to comply adequately.	L L	NSC Information Governance Service assists with FOI requests.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act
Meeting location	Inadequate Breach of Health & Safety	L L	The Parish Council Meetings are held at Hordle Pavilion. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety and comfort aspects. The venue is insured and risk assessed.	Existing location adequate.

3. PHYSICAL RISK ASSESSMENT					
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action do you need to take?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
Slips and Trips	Staff, volunteers, councillors, contractors and visitors may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	Good general housekeeping. All areas well lit. No trailing leads or cables. Staff keep their work areas clear, eg no boxes left in walkways, deliveries stored immediately.	Continue to monitor	All	Ongoing
Manual Handling	Staff, contractors and volunteers may suffer injuries or back pain from handling heavy / bulky objects,	Trolleys provided to transport heavy or bulky items.	Remind staff that they should not try to lift objects that look or appear too awkward or heavy to handle.	All	Ongoing
Working at Height	Staff, Volunteers and Contractors. Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures.	Single story building. Steps provided. Ladder work to be undertaken only with a second person present. Appropriate equipment/contractor sourced for work at height	Working at height contracted out to an appropriate person	All	Ongoing
Display Screen Equipment (DSE)	Staff risk posture problems and pain, discomfort or injuries, eg to their hands/arms, from overuse or improper use or from poorly designed workstations or work environments. Headaches or sore eyes can also occur, eg if lighting is poor.	Lighting and temperature suitably controlled. Adjustable blinds at window to control natural light on screen. Staff aware to inform Clerk of any discomfort or concerns	Clerk to monitor to ensure staff continue to get breaks away from the computer.	Clerk	Ongoing
Electrical	Staff and contractors could get electrical shocks or burns from using faulty electrical equipment. Electrical faults can also lead to fires.	Electrical inspection reports PAT undertaken on equipment annually. Defective equipment taken out of use safely and promptly replaced.	Continue to monitor	Clerk	Ongoing

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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action do you need to take?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
Stress	All staff could be affected by factors such as confrontational situation, lack of job control, bullying, not knowing their role etc.	Staff aware of what their and others duties and responsibilities are. Staff can talk freely to the Clerk if they are feeling unwell or ill at ease about things at work.	Remind staff that they can speak confidentially (on a no-blame basis) if they are feeling unwell or ill at ease because of work.	Clerk	Ongoing
Lone Working	Staff could suffer injury or ill health	Staff advise where they are to visit when out of the office. Means of communication at all times (mobile phones). Refer to separate Lone Working policy.	Whereabouts of staff 'out of the office' to be monitored by office-based staff.	Clerk / all	Ongoing
Hazardous Substances	Usage may cause injury	Minimal chemical usage All containers clearly marked and carry information labels	Update training as required.	All	Ongoing