

BENENDEN PARISH COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment. 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 MANAGEMENT				
SUBJECT	RISK IDENTIFIED	H/M/L	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ASSESSMENT/REVISE
Councillors	Losing Councillors or having more than 6 vacancies at any one time	L	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow. This either leads to a bye-election or into a co-option process. An election is out of the Parish Council’s control. The co-option process begins with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applicants and co-option vote at a Council meeting then appointment. If there are more than 6 vacancies at any one time on the Council it becomes inquorate. The legal process of the Borough Council appointing members takes place	Existing procedures are adequate
Business Continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	There is a business continuity plan in place	Review plan when necessary
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to TWBC in time Amount not received by BPC	L L L	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information and the precept is an agenda item at full Council. At the Precept meeting, the Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to end the year and indicative figures or costings 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, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from TWBC. This figure is	Existing procedure adequate

			submitted by the Clerk in writing to TWBC. Precept should be considered by Council before the deadline - deadline should be ascertained from TWBC asap. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (approx April/May time).	
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial Irregularities	L L	The financial position is reported monthly by the Clerk. The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review of Financial Regulations takes place annually
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss of signatories	L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, payments and reconciliation of accounts. The bank does make occasional errors in processing payments which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts once a month, these are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction. Monitor the bank statements monthly. Council would choose replacements but the bank takes time to implement changes, this mostly happens after an AGM/election.	Existing procedures are adequate
Cash Loss	Loss through theft or Dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Cash/cheques received are banked within 7 banking days. There is no petty cash or float. This is audited by the Internal Auditor annually	Existing procedures are adequate
Litigation	Potential risk of legal action against the Council	M	Public liability insurance covers general personal injury claims where the Council is found to be at fault, but not spurious or frivolous claims - these cannot be insured against	Insurance is adequate for requirements
Reporting and Auditing	Information communication Compliance	L L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly and presented to Council, discussed and approved at the meeting. This statement includes, bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank. Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee The Council has appointed an Internal Auditor to ensure compliance	Existing procedures adequate
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Cheque payable incorrect Unpaid invoices	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. At each Council meeting the list of invoices awaiting approval is distributed to Councillors, and considered. Two Councillors are nominated to check each invoice against the payment and associated paperwork and initials the invoices. Council approves the list of requests for payment. Unpaid invoices to the Council are pursued ,where possible, payment is obtained in advance.	Existing procedures adequate
Grants and support	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	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 S137 rules if required
Grants	Receipt of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not receive any regular grants. One off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required.
Charges Rental payment	Payments of charges, leases, rentals	L	The Parish Council does not lease or rent any land	Existing procedures adequate
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L	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	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations

			would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council. This is covered in the Financial Regulations.	
Salary 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	L	The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees through a Committee. The Clerks salary is increased annually in line with the SLCC/NALC recommendations. Tax & NI are completed by payroll provider and paid by the Clerk after Council approval. The Clerk has a contract of employment and job description. Salaries are paid in arrears, but if a meeting is cancelled or moved then payments could be late or missed.	Existing appointment system adequate. Existing payment system is adequate. Annual review of Clerk takes place on 1 st April
Employees	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff Actions undertaken by staff	L L L	Reference to the Continuity Plan should be made in case of loss of key personnel. The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role. The Council has a policy in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Membership of the SLCC. Health & safety policy reviewed annually
Health and Safety Policy	Policy Provision	M		
Election Costs	Risk of an Election Cost	L/M	Risk is higher in an election year. When an election is due the Clerk ascertains if there are any costs from the Borough 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	Existing procedure adequate
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Parish Council does not charge VAT. It is entitled to reclaim VAT paid on goods and services and reclaims are made during the year.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online and to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame by the Parish Council's payroll provider.	Existing procedure 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, including a reference to the power used.	Existing procedure adequate
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices/ Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality business conduct	L	Minutes and agenda 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 is managed by the Chair.	Existing procedure adequate
Members Interests	Conflict of Interest Register of Members Interest	L M	The declaring of interests by members at a meeting should be an obvious process to remind Councillor of their duty and should remain on the agenda. Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing procedure adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register and to declare any interests, prejudicial or personal, at meetings
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance	L L L	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for.	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance provision annually.

Data protection	Policy Provision	L	The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency.	Registered with ICO Renewed annually
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L M	The Council has a Model Publication scheme in place. 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 15 hours but the application also has the right to re-submit the request broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee	
PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
SUBJECT	RISK IDENTIFIED	H/M/L	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ ASSESSMENT/REVISE
Assets	Loss or Damage risk/damage of third party(ies)/property	L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions	Existing procedure adequate
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets of amenities Loss of income or performance	L L	All assets owned/managed by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned/authorise in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually.	Existing procedures adequate
Notice Boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety	L L	The Parish Council has three notice boards sited in the Parish. They are inspected by the Clerk and any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Keys held by the Clerk	
Meeting location	Adequacy Health and Safety	L L	The Parish Council holds it meetings in locations across the whole parish. The Council ensures that insurance is provided by the hirer.	Existing locations adequate
Council records – paper	Loss through theft, fire, damage	L/M	The Parish Council records are stored in the Parish Office. Records include historical correspondence, minutes books and copies, leases for land or property, records such as personnel, insurance salaries etc.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate. Consideration given to historic records being taken to the County Archive for storage
Council records – electronic	Loss through theft, damage, corruption, corruption of computer, hacking	L/M	The Parish Council's electronic records are held remotely on a Cloud facility. Antivirus and firewall software installed.	Current back up on the Cloud facility.
PANDEMIC				
SUBJECT	RISK IDENTIFIED	H/M/L	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ ASSESSMENT/REVISE
Revenue	Loss of income	L	The Parish Council has no income generating public facilities. Precept – reduced taxbase.	Existing financial procedures adequate
Spread of disease	Risk to Parish Councillors, employees, members of the public	L	Government guidance observed.	Existing procedures adequate

Reviewed November 2021