

East Budleigh & Bickton Parish Council

Risk Assessment



Reviewed March 2023

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document has been produced to enable East Budleigh & Bicton Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management/control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties	M	To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget update information monthly. At the precept meeting Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of 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 East Devon District Council. The figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received.	Existing procedure adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities / fraud / litigation	M M	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Suitable record keeping to ensure adherence to ‘Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015’.	Review Financial Regulations annually. Review electronic controls.

Bank and banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements.	Existing procedure adequate
	Online Banking security	L	Online payments are preferred for efficiency and cost saving reasons, but bank accounts must be secure from virus / hacking / malware and general illegal access.	Ensure compliance with electronic controls set down in F. Regs and Social Media & Website policy
	Bank mistakes	L	Monthly reconciliation	

Reporting and auditing	Information communication	L	Financial information is a regular agenda item (Finance Report) and discussed/reviewed and approved at each meeting. Publications in accordance with 'Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015'.	Existing procedures adequate.
Grants	Receipt of grant. Missing grant opportunities	L	Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. Seek grant opportunities to maximise income, where appropriate.	Procedure would be formed, if required
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval and is minuted and listed accordingly.	Existing procedure adequate.
Best value accountability	Work awarded Incorrectly. Overspend on services.	L M	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major work competitive tenders would be sought. If problems encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council. Produce clear, accurate and comprehensive specification of work requirements to minimise risk of overspend.	Existing procedure adequate. Include consideration when reviewing Financial regulations.

Council operation	Insufficient Councillor resource to fulfil obligations or planned workload or, in the worst case, to meet quorum requirements	H	Advertise and market Council purpose, value to parish, activities and vacancies. Understand what barriers might exist. Is this a wider national issue and the need to empower more the democratic level of governance nearest the local community? Consider how structure and logistics could be more appealing or flexible within the statutory and regulatory constraints set down.	Ongoing monitoring of resource levels
Employees	Health and safety	L	All employees to be provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles. All activities are risk assessed before commencing. Relevant training made available as required.	Existing procedures adequate. Monitor health and safety requirements, including DSE and insurance annually. Contingency arrangements are in place.
	Adequate skill set	L		
	Long term absence of Clerk or vacancy	M	Particularly as a result of a significant shift to electronic administration in early 2020, there is a need for electronic management and controls to be documented, including file location and access together with contingency arrangements.	
VAT	Reclaiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedures adequate
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is completed and submitted online within the prescribed time frame by the Clerk. AGAR completed and signed by the Council, submitted to internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent to External Auditor within time frame.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Compliance	M	AGAR and other annual reports published in accordance with 'Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015'.	Financial Regulations and Standing Orders fully comply.

Governance	Illegal activity or payments (Operating Ultra Vires)	M	All activity and payments within the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations to be resolved at full Council Meetings, including reference to the power used under the Finance section of agenda and Finance report monthly. Expenditure beyond the stated powers must comply with S. 137 of the Local Gov't Act 1972 and be within the budget available.	Existing procedures adequate but due for review in 2020.
	Risk of litigation or claim or reputational damage	M	Adherence to Statute, 'Proper Practice', 'Best Practice' and the Council's Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regs, Risk Register, Data Protection / FOI and other documented policies. Chair provides good leadership and Members act responsibly and as a team. All Members adequately trained.	The General Power of Competence to extend the range of expenditure, is not applicable to the Council currently. Review annually.
Minutes/agendas/ Notices Statutory Documents`	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manor by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Electronic versions to be used as far as possible to reduce paper. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.
Members interests	Conflict of interests	L	Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Register of members interests	L	Register of members interests forms reviewed regularly.	Members take responsibility to update register.
Insurance	Adequacy	L	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements. Employers and Employee liabilities a necessity and within policies. Ensure compliance measures are in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Insurance reviewed annually.
	Cost	L		
	Compliance	L		

Data protection / Retention of data & records	Policy provision	L	The Parish Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency. Policies in place in accordance with statutory requirements and national standards.	Ensure annual renewal of registration.
Freedom of Information / Publication Scheme	Policy provision	L	A substantial FOI request could create many additional hours work. Minimise this work potential by publication online and use of Publication Scheme. Policies in place in accordance with statutory requirements and national standards. All persons associated with council business to have separate 'open' council email addresses.	Monitor any requests made under FOI. Review Publication Scheme and Chart procedure in 2020.
Coronavirus (Covid-19)	Inability for the Council to function.	H	Arrangements put in place to hold virtual meetings. Use electronic processes as far as is possible to do so.	Zoom product purchased, procedure in place for meetings.
	Compliance with Government Regulations and minimise the risk of virus spread.	H	Communicate information on website and parish magazine. Publish guidance from and liaise with external sources, particularly Government / NHS, DCC and EDDC. Obtain Grant funding as appropriate. Act as a central point for the local community's concerns and requests for assistance.	All co-ordinated through Clerk and Resilience Cllr, with volunteers identified and procedures in place. Risk assess each individual activity.
	Insurance cover	H	Liaise with Insurers to check cover and follow Generic Risk Assessment as issued by Insurers (BHIB) together with Government guidance.	Documents reviewed and applied to toilets / car park, rec, footpaths, risk assessments, physical proximity, hygiene generally etc

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS

Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision. Register / Inventory checked and updated. Assets inspected for Health & Safety checks.	Existing procedures adequate. Annual review
Maintenance/ Recreation Field / Car Park & Toilets	Poor performance of assets or amenities Claim against the council for damages	L M	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. Assets are insured. Public liability cover is in place and has been checked with the insurers. The Recreation Ground is regularly inspected by councillors and parishioners. Any complaints are reported to the Landlord and are dealt with by them or where possible, by the parish council. The car park and toilets are regularly inspected and any issues raised with the council.	Existing procedures adequate. Carry out annual risk assessment for car park / toilets and recreation ground.
Notice Boards	Risk of damage	L	No formal inspection procedures are in place but any reports of damage or faults are reported to the Parish Council and dealt with in accordance of the correct procedures of the Council.	Existing procedures adequate
Meeting locations	Adequacy Health & Safety	L L	The Parish Council meeting is held in a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and the general public. OHP facilities preferred allowing reduced paperwork. Virtual meetings to be held in exceptional situations (see Covid-19)	Existing procedures adequate
Council records – paper	Loss through: Theft Fire Damage	L M L	The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondences, minutes, insurance, bank records. The documents are stored in a lockable cabinet. Important documents to be	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate providing that appropriate

			held in a fire proof cabinet and / or online copy. Records Management policy in place.	copies of important documents are held.separately or online. Review Records Management policy in 2020.
Council records – electronic / website	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer or longer term absence of Clerk	L M	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Council laptop held with the Clerk at their home. Backups of electronic data are made at regular intervals. Full backup to be held off site or in the ‘cloud’. Adherence to full security standards as set down in Financial Regulations (virus, firewall, password / PIN control, electronic transactions etc)	Existing procedures considered adequate. Produce online records management policy and location / naming chart.
Flooding	Adequacy of control and prevention procedures	M	Nominated councillor appointed to lead and liaise with other local relevant parties (Environment Agency, Emergency Services, Emergency Planning, OVA, Devon Communities Resilience Forum (DCRF). Maximise grant opportunities (e.g. DCRF). Neighbourhood Plan inclusive of flood risk and control / prevention measures together with forward planning.	Review annually. P7 Chapter 8 trained person vacancy. Review Neighbourhood Plan.
Liaison with external bodies	Adequacy of engagement	L	Co-ordinate and liaise as appropriate with all relevant external bodies including (but not exclusively): HM Gov’t bodies, EDDC, DCC, Villages / Parishes Together, Devon Communities Resilience Forum, OVA, CDE, Emergency Services, EA and EBBPC local groups.	Review annually
Defibrillator	Operationally unfit for purpose	H	Insurance in place. Equipment regularly checked and maintained in full working order. Training provided.	Procedures established.

Events	Appropriate measures for local council organised events.	L	Risk assessment for each event, including Health & Safety risks. Appropriate insurance in place, including any contractor's insurance (when deployed).	Review any shortcomings following the event for future avoidance.
Footpaths	Injury when carrying out maintenance. Negligent reporting of risks to public.	L L	Insurance in place. Risk assessment for paths carried out particularly with regard to health and safety risks and any risk minimised, including reporting shortcomings to DCC and closure of path (by DCC) if required. Essential that all council equipment is properly maintained and regularly checked in accordance with all health and safety guidelines. All employees (volunteers) must have undertaken the required training and been provided with the correct safety and personal protection equipment.	P3 training in place and existing procedures adequate.

This risk management paper was considered by the Full Council in xxxxxxxx 2020 and will be reviewed annually.