

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT FOR WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Notes: Approved by Wootton Parish Council:

“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 enable the employer to identify potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment, the employer should take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks as far as practicable. Employees should be made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable Wootton Parish Council to assess the financial risks it faces and satisfy itself that adequate steps have been taken to minimise them. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed.
- Identify the potential risks.
- Evaluate the management and control of risks and record findings.
- Review, assess, and revise as required.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT RISKS

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Councillors	Loss of councillor membership or more than 8 vacancies at one time	L	Follow legal process for vacancies. Co-option or by-election procedures apply. If inquorate, WNC appoints members.	Existing procedures adequate.
Business Continuity	Inability to continue operations due to unexpected or tragic events	L	Clerk shares key information with Chairman. Documents stored digitally with secure access. Locum Clerk available via SLCC.	Review when necessary.
Precept	Insufficient precept, failure to submit to WNC on time, non-receipt of funds	L	Regular budget updates to Council. Precept calculated based on projections. Submission deadline tracked and adhered to. Clerk informs Council upon receipt.	Existing procedures adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records, financial irregularities	L	Financial Regulations in place. Records reviewed annually.	Review Financial Regulations annually.
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks, bank errors, loss of	L	Monthly reconciliations by Clerk. Errors reported to bank immediately. FSCS cover up to £85,000.	Monitor bank statements monthly.

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
	signatories, bank insolvency			Appoint new signatories as needed.
Cash Loss	Theft or dishonesty	L	Cash banked within 5 working days. Double dual verification of cash. Cash kept in safe. Adequate fidelity insurance.	Existing procedure adequate.
Credit Card	Loss of card, unauthorised use	L	Stored securely. Transactions reconciled monthly.	Existing procedure adequate.
Litigation	Legal action against Council	M	Public liability insurance covers general claims. Regular risk assessments carried out.	Insurance adequate but risk remains.
Reporting and Auditing	Non-compliance with reporting/auditing requirements	L	Monthly financial reports reviewed by Council. Internal audit annually.	Existing procedure adequate.
Direct Costs & Expenses	Incorrect invoicing, loss of stock, unpaid invoices	L	Regular invoice checks. Payment approvals at Council meetings. Internal control checks.	Existing procedure adequate.

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Grants (Payable & Receivable)	Power to pay, missing funds	L	Payments approved by Council and minuted. Grant conditions reviewed by Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate.
Charges Receivable	Non-receipt of income	L	Invoicing procedures in place for room hire, pitch fees and other services.	Fees reviewed annually.
Best Value & Accountability	Overspending, incorrect contract awards	M	Multiple quotations sought for major works. Competitive tendering for large contracts.	Review Financial Regulations annually.
Salaries & Payroll	Incorrect payments, non-compliance with HMRC	L	Payroll processed by external provider. Salaries paid via bank transfer. Events Manager trained to cover in Clerks absence.	Existing system adequate.
Employee Risks	Loss of key personnel, fraud, non-compliance with health & safety	L	Regular training, adherence to employment law. Fidelity Guarantee insurance.	Monitor working conditions, review insurance.
Election Costs	Unbudgeted election costs	L	Estimated costs obtained before election years. Budget allocated.	Existing budgeting procedure adequate.
VAT Compliance	Failure to reclaim VAT	L	Regular VAT claims submitted.	Existing procedure adequate.

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Annual Returns & Audits	Late or incorrect submissions	L	Internal and external audits completed on time.	Existing procedure adequate.
Legal Powers	Expenditure outside Council powers	L	Legal Powers checked by Clerk prior to purchase. All payments resolved in Council meetings.	Existing procedure adequate.
Minutes/Agendas/Notices	Accuracy and compliance	L	Clerk ensures legal compliance. Chair oversees meeting conduct.	Existing procedure adequate.
Members' Interests	Conflicts of interest, non-disclosure	L	Declarations at meetings. Members' Interest forms reviewed annually.	Members responsible for updates.
Insurance	Inadequate cover, non-compliance	L	Annual insurance review. Fidelity checks in place.	Review insurance annually.
Data Protection (GDPR)	Non-compliance with GDPR	L	Council registered with ICO. GDPR policies in place. Contract with Northants CALC for DPO services if required.	Existing procedures adequate.
Freedom of Information (FOI)	High workload due to FOI requests	M	Model Publication Scheme adopted. Fees charged if work exceeds 15 hours.	Monitor request impact.

PHYSICAL ASSETS RISKS

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets	Loss, damage, third-party claims	L	Annual asset review for insurance and maintenance.	Update asset register annually.
Maintenance	Poor performance, risk to public	L	Regular inspections and maintenance. Issues reported to Council.	Ensure inspections are carried out.
Notice Boards	Damage, safety hazards	L	Maintenance issues addressed promptly.	Existing procedure adequate.
Street Furniture	Damage, injury risk	L	Reported issues dealt with promptly.	Existing procedure adequate.
Council Records (Paper & Electronic)	Theft, fire, data corruption	L	Digital records backed up regularly.	Review backup systems periodically.
