Harlestone Parish Council - Financial & Management Risk Assessment

Updated: Sep.2022 Review: Sep.2023

The resposibility for Risk Assessment falls to the Executive Officer, however the Council must ensure that the EO is supported and agree with the controls.

The aim of this Harlestone Manor Parish Council risk assessment is to provide a systematic general examination of business activities and operations including working conditions that will enable the council to identify any and all potential risks inherent in those activities and operations.

Based on a recorded assessment, the council should then take all necessary steps to eliminate or, where this is not possible reduce the risks, insofar as is reasonably practicable to do so.

This document will enable the council to access the financial, management and other business risks that it faces and to satisfy itself and others that it has taken adequate steps to control them. The following plan was followed:

- Identify the activities and operations to be reviewed.
- Identify the hazards and determine the nature of the risks they present, Who is at risk, from what and how?
- Eliminate risks where possible and implement appropriate risk control strategies to manage the residual risks, record all findings.
- Record all findings, regularly monitor and review as necessary.

Category	Risk		Control Measure	Comments/Notes
Business Continuity	1	Risk of the council not being able to continue it's business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	Clerk works from home. Short term absence of the Clerk is covered by a local parish Clerk. Loss or long term incapacity of the Clerk would be covered by an appointed Locum	Existing procedure adequate
Business Continuity	2	Precept and/or other income not received	Council carries a cash reserve, minimum half the precept and maximum of a full year precept	Existing procedure adequate, currently the reserves are circa 80% of the precept

Category	Risk		Control Measure	Comments/Notes
Business Continuity	3	Loss of documents and/or data	Clerk works from home. Significant documents eg titles and leases should be scanned. Electronic data is held on at least two devices, for example a memory stick, laptop, desktop, external hard drive	Existing procedure adequate, back-up is done each calendar month to: Blue Manor Passport
Business Continuity	4	Meeting venue not available	By agreement with the Harlestone Village Institute, the council meet in the small room as per the meeting schedule. As a contingency the council plan to meet at the Northampton Golf Club.	Existing procedure adequate

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Financial	1	Theft or loss of money through incorrect payment(s) being made	Financial Regs and Internal Controls Procedures in place. The council use a cheque book. Petty Cash is set to zero. All financial receipts , invoices and schedules are available at each HMPC meeting. The RFO loads the Unity Bank payments and two councillors must authorise the payments. QFAR spreadsheet updated monthly. Fidelity Guarantee in place.	An annual review confirms that all procedures are working and minuted. The target is to have no Petty Cash. Fidelity Guarantee is £150,000
Financial	2	Theft or loss of or damage to assets	Covered by a BHIB comprehensive insurance policy.	All assets on the register are covered. Level of insurance cover reviewed annually.
Financial	3	Insolvency of insurance company	Cover effected with a major insurance company via a scheme with a specialist broker for Parish Council Business.	Annual agreement with: BHIB

Category	Risk		Control Measure	Comments/Notes
Financial	**4**	Not receiving sufficient or all expected income	Budget review and forward financial planning minuted and transparent. Precept demand submitted before the deadline. Internal controls, councillors check monthly, the RFO to perform a bank reconciliation monthly. Ensuring that grants have been applied for and that VAT has been reclaimed.	Financial Regulations require the budget and precept to be finalised at the January HMPC meeting.
Financial	**5**	Authorisation of payments to clients with verification of the genuine bank details	Each month the EO will load the payments onto the Unity Bank platform. Once loaded the EO will print off the list of beneficiaries. At the next council meeting the Chairman or representative will do a random check to verify the bank details.	The list of beneficiaries sheet to be initialled by the checker as proof of the verification being done. Signed sheets to be kept for audit purposes.

Category	Risk		Control Measure	Comments/Notes
Legal and Reputational	1	Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership. Damage to third party property or individuals	Covered by Public Liability Insurance. Low risk street furniture in public areas should receive a monthly inspection. Play equipment inspected annually by a registered play inspector. Street lights serviced and maintained by a third party.	Public Liability Cover is £10million. Level of insurance cover is reviewed annually in March. The Employee Life Cover Insurance is currently £10m
Legal and Reputational	2	Personal accident to members, volunteers and staff. Assault to staff	Where the council undertakes activities and has assets that pose a risk to staff, councillors, volunteers or third parties, there is a formal health and safety risk assessment in place. Clerk works from home, no cash to be handled. Clerk covered by personal accident and employers liability insurance.	Risk assessments prepared before activities/events. Staff working from home, to be reviewed annually as part of this document.
Legal and Reputational	3	Inappropriate use of powers, breaking the law	CiLCA qualified Clerk with GPoC extension is being trained. Membership of Northants CALC and Clerk's membership to the SLCC and ALCC provides access to current and up to date advice when necessary. Councillors attend initial briefing and formal training on being elected.	Clerk currently studying for the CiLCA qualification in 2021 and is supported by the Council