

SEIGHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Risk Assessment 2024/25

Previous Review Date: June 2023

Resolved by Council on: 24 June 2024

Next Review Date: June 2025

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 Seighford 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	Area of Risk	H / M / L	Management / Control of Risk	Review / Assess / Revise	Responsibility
1. Insurance	a. General adequacy	L	The insurance arrangements are reviewed fully on a three-year basis with interim annual checking. Review of risk and adequacy of cover (loss / damage, public liability, consequential loss and fidelity guarantee) should be conducted annually. Full review of renewal costs every three years – next 2022	Check limits annually and review full policy every three years	Clerk and Councillors
	b. Cost	L			
	c. Compliance	L			
	d. Public Liability (statutory)	L	Insurance at £10,000,000		Clerk and Councillors
	e. Employers Liability (statutory)	L	Insurance at £10,000,000		Clerk and Councillors
	f. Money	L	No cash held		Clerk and Councillors

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT					
Subject	Area of Risk	H / M / L	Management / Control of Risk	Review / Assess / Revise	Responsibility
	g. Fidelity Guarantee	M	Insurance at £150,000		Clerk and Councillors
	h. Property	L	General Contents: £1,207 Street Furniture: £51,938 Play Equipment: £71,536		Clerk and Councillors
	i. Libel and Slander	L	Insurance at £500,000 (excess greater – 10% of claim or £1,000 whichever is lower)	Consider an Excess Reserve	Clerk and Councillors
	j. Personal Accident	L	Insurance at £100,000 (capital sum), £500 (weekly sum)		Clerk and Councillors
	k. Excess	L	General reserves adequate in case of claim		Clerk and Councillors
2. Precept	a. Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its statutory duties	L	To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget update information. 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 Stafford Borough Council. The figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing.	Review starting in November with budget process. Confirm precept requirement in January	Clerk and Councillors

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3. Budget Provision and Reserves	b. Insufficient available funds	L	A full budget needs to be submitted prior to the Precept request. This should include funds placed in reserve for future projects, a contingency fund and at least three months' running costs	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Councillors
4. Best Value Accountability	c. Work awarded incorrectly	L	Normal Parish Council practise would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work undertaken. For major work competitive tenders must be sought. If problems encountered with a contract, the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	Procedure in Financial Regulations	Clerk and Councillors
	d. Overspend on services	M		Procedure in Financial Regulations	Clerk and Councillors
5. Contracts and contractors	a. Maintenance contractors	M	Standing orders for award of contracts and capital expenditure. Initial contracts awarded for 12 months. Subject to satisfactory performance, subsequent contracts are for three years.	Report on performance and review when appropriate	Clerk and Councillors
6. Payroll and Salary	a. HMRC RTI Information – submit within time limits	L	The Clerk's salary is handled by an external company. Clerk is responsible for timely payment of quarterly PAYE	Current procedure adequate	Clerk / Councillor responsible for Internal Control
	b. HMRC End of Year Submission / P60 – submit within time limits	L	The Clerk's salary is handled by an external company.	Current procedure adequate	Clerk / Councillor responsible for Internal Control

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	c. Salary paid incorrectly	L	Salary agreed and paid at monthly PC Meeting. Councillors who sign cheques to sign salary sheet.		Councillor cheque signatories
	d. Unpaid tax to HMRC	L	Payments are monitored using the reports from DM Payroll Services		Clerk / Councillor responsible for Internal Control
7. Employees	a. Fraud by staff	L	Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance adhered to with regards to fraud.	Existing procedures adequate	Clerk and Councillors
	b. Health and safety	L	All employees (currently the Clerk) to be provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their role.	Monitor health and safety requirements and insurance annually	Clerk and Councillors
	c. Clerk resignation / sickness	L	Councillors may act in a temporary capacity at nil pay. Contingency required for advertising, sickness cover etc Key person Insurance cover for locum cost in the event the Clerk is off sick and this will cover additional costs of the locum up to £2500, max £250 weekly.	Review contingency in budget annually Council require procedures for access to files/passwords and reporting of illness	Clerk and Councillors
8. Bank and Banking	a. Inadequate checks		The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements	Financial Regulations to be reviewed annually	Clerk
	b. Bank mistakes		Monthly reconciliation – presented at bi-monthly meetings	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk
	c. Cheque mistakes		Cheques to be written by the Clerk following inspection of the invoices and signed by two Councillors on	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and cheque signatories

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			production of the Payment Schedule agreed at the PC Meeting. Cheque and cheque counterfoil to be signed or initialled		
	d. Credit references		The Bank performs credit references on cheque signatories	Existing procedure adequate	Bank
	e. Non-performance / delivery of third parties		Avoid pre-payments wherever possible. Vet suppliers thoroughly	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Councillors
9. Financial reporting	a. Information communication		Financial information is a regular agenda item (Finance Report) and discussed / reviewed and approved at each meeting		Clerk and Councillors
10.	b. Annual accounts	L	Accounts to be closed at Council Year End 31 March and final Statement submitted to April / May Parish Council meeting for scrutiny and agreement. Clerk / RFO and Chairman to sign off.	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Councillors
11. Financial Records	a. Inadequate records	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Councillors
	b. Financial irregularities	L	The Council should have a Councillor responsible for Internal Control who inspects the finance records regularly. Any irregularities should be identified on inspection.	Recommend appointing a Councillor responsible for Internal Financial Control	Councillors
12. Grants	a. Receipt of grant	L	Grants are applied for as required, in the event of an unsuccessful grant a re-evaluation of the project would be carried out	Review annually	Clerk

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	b. Payment of Grants and Power to pay using S137		Ensure that the donation is acceptable to pay under S137 or General Power of Competence. All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuting and listing accordingly if a payment is made using S137 power of expenditure	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Councillors
13. VAT	a. Reclaiming	L	The Council will make at least one reclaim using the 126 form annually after the close of the year end provided the reclaim is for more than one calendar month and is over £100. The order must have been placed by the Council, the invoice made out to the Council and the payment made from Council funds.	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk
	b. Charging	L	The Council is not currently registered for VAT	Existing procedure adequate	
14. Audit	a. Annual Return - complete and publish within time limits	L	External Audit Annual Return completed and signed by the Internal Auditor and then completed and signed by the Chairman and Clerk / RFO before 30 June and published on the website. If the PC payments and receipts fall below £25,000 the PC may agree that there is no need for a Limited Assurance Review and that		Clerk and Chairman

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			<p>Exemption is acceptable; the Certificate of Exemption must be completed and sent to the External Auditor by 30 June. All paperwork must still be completed and published whether or not it is sent to the External Auditor.</p> <p>The PC may still have a Limited Assurance Review and the paperwork must be completed and sent to the External Auditor and published on the website in the usual way.</p>		
	b. Public inspection of documents	L	By appointment only, at a convenient public place. For the safety of the Clerk, the public are welcome to inspect documents, but with a Councillor present.	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Councillors
	c. Internal Audit	L	Appoint an independent Internal Auditor	Existing procedure adequate	Councillors (with advice from Clerk)
	d. Review of Effectiveness of Audit	L	The Council must review its requirements of the internal Audit including scope, independence, competence, relationships and planning following the completion of the Internal Audit.	Existing procedure adequate	Council
15. Legal Powers	a. Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at full Council Meetings,	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Councillors

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			including reference to the power used under the Finance section of Agenda and Finance Report.		
16. Minutes / agenda / Notices and Statutory Documents	a. Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements including publishing on the Agenda and Minutes section of the Parish Council website www.seighford-pc.co.uk Minutes are circulated in advance of the meeting, approved and signed at the next full Council meeting.	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk
	b. Standing Orders	L	Re-adopted in May 2022	Reviewed each May	Council
	c. Financial Regulations	L	Re-adopted in May 2022	Reviewed each May	Council
	d. Business conduct	L	Agenda displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chairman	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk and Chairman
17. Council Records	a. Paper	L	Loss through, fire, theft, damage. The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondences, minutes, insurance, bank records.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate.	Clerk and Council

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	a. Electronic	M	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on a laptop held with the Clerk at her home. The data is constantly backed up to One Drive in the Cloud and a physical backup is taken regularly. Antivirus software to be kept up-to-date	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk
18. Data Protection	a. Policy provision		The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioner	Existing procedure adequate	
	b. Data Protection Officer		Is not currently necessary	Review when systems have settled down	
	c. GDPR		Policies for Data Protection, Document Retention, Freedom of Information, Disclosure Log and Privacy Notice have been adopted and published	Review annually	Council
19. Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations	a. Policy	L	The Council has a model publication scheme in place. To date there have been no requests under FOI or EIR	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk
	b. Provision		The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours work.		Clerk / Council
20. Councillors	a. Losing a Councillor	L	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow which leads to either a by-election or a co-option process. The more usual is a co-option which starts with an advert,		Clerk / Council

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			acceptance of applications, consideration of applicants and co-option vote at a Council meeting. The Council tries to draw members from around the Parish to make sure each area is represented.		
	b. Losing more than six Councillors to make the Council inquorate	M	If there are more than six vacancies at any one time, the Council becomes inquorate and the District Council will take over the running of the Council (at the Village's expense).	Procedures of Stafford Borough Council are adequate	
21. Election Costs	a. Risk of an election cost	L	Risk is higher in an election year. In the event of a contested election costs of approx. £3,500 per ward would be required. This amount is advised by SBC Elections Team.	Council to consider provision of reserves to cover at least 1 ward contested election.	Council
22. Members' Interests and Code of Conduct	a. Conflict of interests	L	Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings. Legally Councillors need only declare 'pecuniary interests', but many choose to declare other interests and withdraw from discussion if necessary. All interests are recorded.	Existing procedure adequate	
	b. Code of Conduct	L	Code issued by SBC and adopted in September 2012. It is issued to each Councillor on election to Office	Existing procedure adequate	

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	c. Register of members' interests	M	Councillors must complete a form on election which must be sent to SBC for publication on their website. Councillors are responsible for ensuring that their own register of members interests is kept up to date.	Review Annually	Councillors
23. Council Meetings	a. Recording of meetings	M	Members of the public are requested to inform the Chairman if they wish to record the meeting. The Parish Council will also make a recording if necessary		Chairman

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS					
Assets					
Subject	Location	H / M / L	Management / Control of Risk	Review / Assess / Revise	Responsibility
24. Bus shelters	i. Derrington ii. Great Bridgeford – Eccl Road x 2 ii. Great Bridgeford – Newport Road x1	M	Physical condition monitored. Any reports of damage to be included on next agenda Security not possible		Clerk Councillors
25. Benches	i. Derrington ii. Great Bridgeford iii. Eccl Road, Great Bridgeford	M	All secured by bolts, screws etc. Regular monitoring, annual maintenance and repair or replacement as required using personnel deemed qualified by the Council.	Existing procedure adequate	Councillors

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	iv. Newport Road, Great Bridgeford benches v. Derrington Playing Field – 2 picnic benches vi. Great Bridgeford Playing Field 2 picnic benches 2 benches		Any reports of damage to be included on the next agenda. Annual inspection conducted each June and reported to Council		
26. Noticeboards & signs	i. Derrington ii. Seighford Signs x 10 iii. Great Bridgeford x 5 iv. Derrington x 2 v. Seighford x 2 vi. Doxey x1	L	Regular monitoring when Clerk posts notices, annual maintenance and repair or replacement as required using personnel deemed qualified by the Council. Any reports of damage to be included on next agenda		
27. Planters	i. Great Bridgeford x 10		All secured by bolts, screws etc. Regular monitoring, maintenance and repair or replacement as required using personnel deemed qualified by the Council. Any reports of damage to be included on the next agenda.		

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28. Speed Signs	3 Speed Indicator Signs in Great Bridgeford		Physical condition monitored and maintenance as required.		
29. Playground Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Great Bridgeford ii. Derrington 		<p>Quarterly Inspections carried out by a qualified contractor.</p> <p>Repairs and maintenance carried out by the Council as advised.</p> <p>Any reports of damage to be included on next agenda</p>		
30. Telephone Box	Derrington		<p>Physical condition monitored.</p> <p>Any reports of damage to be included on next agenda</p> <p>Security not possible</p>		
31. Maintenance of land and assets	Village-wide: As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M M M 	<p>Take copies of all contractors' Public Liability Certificates or obtain written confirmation of cover</p> <p>Ensure terms of all new undertakings include indemnity of the Council by the Contractor</p> <p>Schedule review of contracts including responsibility and performance</p>	Existing procedure adequate	Clerk