

WESTMESTON PARISH COUNCIL

RISK ASSESSMENT

March 2024

FINANCIAL				
Risk Identified	H/M/L	Controls	Adequate Y/N	Comment
Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements.	M	No payment authorised without verification of invoice. Review of quarterly bank account reconciliations. Independent annual review of financial records and compliance with risk assessment by internal auditor.	Y	All cheques are signed by two members as authorised signatories. Each payment is approved at a full council meeting and recorded in the Minutes. Quarterly bank account reconciliation and budget update reported to full council meeting. Checked at internal auditor annual review.
Ensuring that all requirements for payment of salaries are met under employment law and Inland Revenue regulations.	L	Council is registered as an employer with HMRC for PAYE and National Insurance. Council is registered with the Pensions Regulator.	Y	Checked at internal auditor annual review.
Ensuring the adequacy of the annual precept with sound budgeting arrangements.	L	Reviewed regularly by council.	Y	Forecasts for income and expenditure for current year produced quarterly.
Ensuring the proper use of funds granted to local community bodies under specific powers or under section 137.	L	Review of accounts and benefit to residents discussed at time of application. Separately recorded accounts maintained. Authorisation of payments recorded in minutes.	Y	Checked at Internal audit.

Compliance with Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).	L	AGAR is completed by the Council and the Internal Auditor. It is then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within the time limit. Clerk prepares a timetable for submission.	Y	Existing procedures adequate.
Ensuring that all business activities are within legal powers applicable to local councils.	L	Advice taken on all issues that are not clear (ESALC and NALC).	Y	Review the Financial Regulations each year. Monitor changes in legislation.
INSURANCE				
Risk Identified	H/M/L	Controls	Adequate Y/N	Comment
Protection of physical assets.	M	Regular visual inspections. Insurance cover in place. Asset Register maintained.	Y	Regular visual inspections. Members of the council live close to the assets and pass them on an almost daily basis. Training on correct use of defibrillator was provided by the British Red Cross. Cover reviewed annually.
Risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a consequence of the council providing services or amenities to the public. (Public liability)	L	Insurance cover in place.	Y	Cover reviewed annually.
Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership. (Public liability)	L	Insurance cover in place.	Y	Cover reviewed annually.
Compliance with employer, employee and councillor liability.	L	Insurance cover in place.	Y	Cover reviewed annually.
GOVERNANCE				
Risk Identified	H/M/L	Controls	Adequate Y/N	Comment
Proper, timely issuing and accurate recording of council business in agendas and minutes.	L	All draft agendas and minutes checked by the Chairman. Agendas published on website and notice board to meet	Y	All minutes approved by council as a true record.

		deadlines. Draft minutes published on website.		
Compliance with Freedom of Information and data protection legislation.	L	The council has a Document Retention Scheme in place. The council is registered with the ICO.	Y	Published on website. Regularly reviewed.
Proper document control	L	Statutory requirements observed. All computer files backed up regularly and stored in cloud.	Y	Hard copy records stored at Parish Hall and Clerk's home. Electronic records on council laptop.
Register of members' interests and gifts and hospitality in place, complete, accurate and up to date.	L	Onus on individual members to notify clerk that changes have occurred.	Y	Reminder on each agenda.
Protection and management of ownerless Registered Common Land in the parish which are ownerless.	L	Advice obtained from NALC solicitor and council insurers and placed in appropriate files.	Y	Risk assessment carried out by Members indicates that no risk, other than that normally associated with walking in the countryside, exists in these areas of Common Land.
Publication of information on council website.	L	Site content is controlled only by the council, with two named councillors having access re: placing and withdrawing content.	Y	The site will be monitored regularly by full council.
STAFF				
Risk Identified	H/M/L	Controls	Adequate Y/N	Comment
Clerk's working environment.	L	The Clerk works an average of five hours per week for the Council at home. On occasion, the Clerk visits the Parish Hall where the council rents storage space for a filing cabinet. The hall is generally in use at such times and the Clerk is accompanied when the hall is opened for meetings. Should a member of the public wish to meet the Clerk this would be arranged in the Parish Hall with at least one councillor present.	Y	Home working facilities are considered safe and general working conditions are good.

COUNCIL MEETINGS				
Risk Identified	H/M/L	Controls	Adequate Y/N	Comment
Safety at council meetings.	L	Council meetings are held in Westmeston Parish Hall. The Parish Hall Trust undertakes health and safety assessments and risk assessments for its use.	Y	The Council undertook Covid19 risk assessments specifically for council meetings.

As agreed at Parish Council meeting 12/03/2024.