

# Cotton Parish Council Risk Assessment

## Purpose of the Document

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

- ✍ Identify the areas to be reviewed.
- ✍ Identify what the risk may be.
- ✍ Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings.
- ✍ Review, assess and revise if required.

## FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept	L	Sound budgeting to underlie the annual precept. The precept is an agenda item at the December Council meeting. At the precept meeting the Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to the end of the year. 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.	Existing procedure adequate
	Requirements not submitted to SCDC.	L	The precept is then set on the basis of the budget. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to Suffolk Coastal District Council.	
	Amount not received	L	The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (approx May and October).	
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Internal and External Audit.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks  Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L  L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. Cheques require two signatories and monthly accounts are presented at Council meetings.  The bank does make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts, these are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list when necessary, especially after an AGM and an election. Monitor the bank statements monthly.

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Reporting & auditing	Information communication	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly before each Council meeting, This statement includes, bank reconciliation (quarterly), budget update and a breakdown of receipts and payments.	Existing communication procedures adequate.
Direct costs	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Cheque incorrect	L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. At each Council meeting the Council approves the list of requests for payment.  Two signatories are required for cheques.	Existing procedure adequate Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate Parish Councillors require an S137 rules if required
Grants receivable	Receipt of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required.
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, three quotations for any substantial work required to be undertaken or for goods. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation / tender, research the problem and report to Council.	Existing procedure adequate Include when reviewing Financial Regulations.
Clerk	Fraud Actions Undertaken	L L	The requirements of insurance policies to be adhered to. Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice.	Existing procedure adequate Purchase revised book Membership of LRALC
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	Risk is higher in election year. When an election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the District Council for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election. A contingency fund should be established to meet the costs.	Existing procedures adequate. Include in financial statement when setting precept.
VAT	Reclaiming	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. VAT to be claimed annually if less than £100 or when required in the event of higher amounts. Clerk to monitor VAT on an ongoing basis.	Existing procedure adequate

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Annual return	Submit within time limits	L	Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent on to the external auditor within time limit.	Existing procedures adequate
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L M	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers Liability, Public Liability and Fidelity Guarantee are a statutory requirement.	Existing procedures adequate Review provision and compliance annually.
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	M M	The Council has adopted the model publication scheme for Local Councils. The Council is committed to populating this page with the required information over the next twelve months. There have been no requests for information to date but the Council is aware that requests may require additional hours of work, The Council is able to request a fee if the work will take more than 15 hours however the request can be re-submitted, broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act.

### PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedure adequate
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets. Risk to third parties.	L L	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned /authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually . All public amenity land is inspected regularly.	Existing procedure adequate Ensure inspections carried out.
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 correspondence, minute books and copies, leases for land, records such as insurance.	Damage (apart from fire) a theft is unlikely and so provision adequate.
Council records - electronic	Loss through: theft, fire, damage corruption of computer	L M	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Parish Council Clerk's laptop computer, at the Clerk's house. Back-ups of the files are taken at regular intervals.	Back-up of electronic files produced regularly.

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<b>LIABILITY</b>				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Parish Council Meetings.	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes/Agendas/Notices	Accuracy and legality Non-compliance with statutory requirements	L	Minutes and Agendas are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.	Existing procedures adequate Undertake adequate training. Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Statutory documents	Business Conduct	L	Minutes and Agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	
Members interests	Conflict of interest Register of members interests	M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting. Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed at least on an annual basis.	Existing procedures adequate Members take responsibility to update their Register.

The information above was agreed at the May 2, 2017 AGM of Cotton Parish Council and will be agreed annually as being a correct record.

**Signed  
Chairman**

**Dated**

**Clerk**

**Dated**