**CHITTLEHAMPTON**

**PARISH COUNCIL**

**Risk Assessment, Risk Management & Internal Control Policy**

Adopted Date: 11th September 2024

Reviewed:

Next Review due: September 2025

**Financial Risk Assessment**

The Parish Council has looked at the financial risks that it must deal with and resolved to adopt the following policy.

1. **Handling Cash**

The Parish Council does not manage cash on a daily basis. The only regular income is precept, bank interest and annual VAT return. All of these are paid directly into the Parish Council's bank account. Cash received for play area donations are recorded, receipted, and paid into the bank at the earliest opportunity and within five working days.

The Parish Council has insurance to a maximum of £1,000 for cash in transit, although petty cash is not held normally.

1. **Employers’ liability**

The Parish Council employs one employee: clerk/RFO. Its insurance policy provides employers liability cover.

1. **Public liability**

The Parish Council has public liability cover to £10 million under its policy with Hiscox. The selection of insurer is reviewed annually based on comparable and sufficient cover.

1. **Fidelity guarantee**

The Parish Council has fidelity guarantee cover to £150,000, see also point three.

1. **Contracts and tendering**

The Parish Council has financial regulations in place for contracts of seeking three quotes which is a mandatory default position. (See standing orders and financial regulations).

1. **Banking arrangements**

There are three signatories on the banking mandate (3 Councillors and the Clerk). Two councillor signatures are required by the bank and in law. Cheques are only signed at meetings of the Parish Council. The Clerk/RFO and Chair also has access to telephone banking. They are the only people registered to use this service.

The Parish Council uses the BACS system to make payments, the measure in place to minimise risks in this process is a password to log on to the banking system, each user has their own specific login details. The banking systems allows three attempts after which the login is disabled.

1. **Bank reconciliation**

The Parish Council receives a quarterly budget against spend statement, including bank balances, and there are quarterly independent checks of bank statements to reconcile with balances reported.

1. **Cash book records**

The Parish Council uses Scribe Accounting software and Excel spreadsheets to manage its financial records including the cashbook.

1. **Internal audit**

The Parish Council has appointed an independent internal auditor. An audit is conducted once a year in June.

1. **Internal control**

The Parish Council has established a system of internal control where the Clerk reports verbally at each meeting. All payments are supported by an invoice or summary of the reasons for a payment. All invoices and payment requests are initialled by the Chair and Vicechair (or another councillor in the Vicechairs absence) of the meeting at which authority to make payment is given. An Internal Control Checklist is completed and reviewed quarterly between the Clerk, Chair and one other Parish Councillor.

1. **PAYE and Workplace Pensions Compliance**

The council receives evidence of PAYE payments to HMRC via print outs of the payslip.

Financial Risk Assessment adopted/reviewed at a meeting of Chittlehampton Parish Council held on

11th September 2024.

Chair ……………………………… Clerk/RFO …………………………….

**TREETON PARISH COUNCIL – RISK ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT DOCUMENT 2024/25**

* + Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of the activities of the Parish Council to enable potential risks to be identified.
  + The Parish Council, based on the recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks identified.
  + This document has been produced to enable Treeton Parish Council to assess the risks inherent to its activities and satisfy itself that it has taken all reasonable steps to minimise them.

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| **AREA** | **IDENTIFIED RISK** | **LEVEL**  **OF**  **RISK** |  | **CONTROLS** | **ACTION REQUIRED** | |
| **FINANCIAL** |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Precept | Adequacy of precept in order for Council to carry out Statutory duties. | L | •  •  • | Annual budget produced.  Council receives quarterly budget report.  Quarterly information and budget monitoring allow Council to estimate standing costs and costs of projects for the subsequent years. | * No action required. * Existing procedure adequate. | |
| Financial Records | Inadequate records leading to financial irregularities. | L | • | Financial Regulations sets out requirement for production of records at meetings. | * No action required. * Existing procedure   Adequate. | |
| Bank and banking | Inadequate checks/ bank mistakes. | L | • | Financial Regulations set out setting out banking requirements and controls in place for electronic banking.  Quarterly bank reconciliation statement | * No action required. * Existing procedure adequate. | |
| Reporting and Auditing | Communication of information. | L | • | Quarterly checks by Councillors in PC meetings | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| Wages and associated costs | Salaries paid incorrectly.    Incorrect HMRC NI and  PAYE payments. | L | •    • | Salary payments included in quarterly financial update and checked by two councillors.  Reviewed quarterly by two councillors. | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| Best Value Accountability | Work awarded incorrectly.      Overspend on services. | L | •  • | Parish Council procedure (as per Financial Regulations) to seek three quotes for all work estimated to cost over £500.  For major projects, competitive tendering process would be initiated (as per Financial  Regulations) | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| VAT | Unclaimed VAT refunds. | L | • | Refunds from HMRC for reclaimed VAT noted in quarterly financial report.  VAT incurred displayed in cash book. | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |

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| **EMPLOYMENT ISSUES** | |  |  |  |
| Working hours | Over payment of wages for hours worked. | L | * Staffing Committee has responsibility for monitoring of hours worked for all employees. * Clerks’ salary presented at every quarterly financial report. | * No action required. * Existing procedure adequate. |
| Working conditions | Council non-compliant with contractual obligations; leading to discontented workforce. | M | * Regular reviews to be conducted by the Staffing Committee of staff performance and working relationship with the Council. | * Ensure all staff have access to telephone conversations & reviews etc. |
| Health and Safety | Injury to staff in the working environment. | M | * Provision for regular reviews of staff working procedures, risks involved and adequate direction on the safe use of any equipment required to undertake roles. * Extensive health and safety guidance provided to all staff. * Reviewed on a regular basis in conjunction with regular reviews of working practices and risk assessments. | * Ongoing reviews as necessary. |
| Fraud | Fraud by employees. | L | * Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee within insurance provision. * Regular checks and internal controls on financial activity. | * No action required. * Existing procedure adequate. |

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| **INSURANCE PROVISION** | |  |  | |  | |
| Adequacy | Insurance provision inadequate for the risk identified. | L | * Annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements | | * No action required. * Existing procedure   Adequate. | |
| Cost | Best value practice not undertaken. | L | * Cost of insurance provision and service provided by said provider reviewed annually. | | * No action required. * Existing procedure adequate. | |  |
| **FREEDOM OF**  **INFORMATION**  **PROVISION** | Non-compliance with  Freedom of Information  Act statutory requirements. | L | * Council has Model Publication scheme available on website and hard copy from the Clerk. * Freedom of Information Request Policy in line with statutory requirements. | | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **DATA PROTECTION** | Non-compliance with  Data Protection Act and GDPR statutory requirements for registration as data controller. | L | * Clerk/RFO and members undertaken training. * Council registered with ICO as a Data Controller. * Data/information audit complete and reviewed regularly. * Consents records. * Retention and disposal policy adopted. | | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **ANNUAL RETURN (HMRC)** | Submission within time  limits to avoid financial penalties. | L | * Employers Annual Return to HMRC completed and submitted online within the required time limit by Clerk/RFO | | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **ANNUAL RETURN (TO EXTERNAL AUDITORS)** | Submission within time limits to avoid financial penalties. | L | * Sent to internal auditor for completion and signing. * Presented to Council for approval and signing before being sent for External Audit. | | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **LEGAL POWERS** | Illegal activity and/or  Payments. | L |  | * All actions of the Parish Council noted in Minutes presented to all members. * Any action not within legal powers to be noted ‘against Clerk’s advice.’ * All resolutions for payment resolved at monthly meetings of Parish Council. | •  • | No action required.  Existing procedure adequate. |
| **STATUTORY**  **OBLIGATIONS**  **REGARDING**  **DOCUMENTS** | Accuracy and legality of notices, agendas, minutes. | L | * • * • * • * • | * Minutes produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to legal requirements. * Minutes are approved, signed, and dated at the next meeting of the Council. * Agendas and notices are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to legal requirements. * Agendas and notices are displayed according to legal requirements. | •  • | No action required.  Existing procedure adequate. |
| **MEMBERS**  **INTERESTS** | Non-registration of  Disclosable Pecuniary  interests leading to  criminal prosecution. | M | •  •  •  • | * Request for all members to declare any interests in business to be considered at all meetings. * Registration of interests by members on prescribed form. Responsibility of individual member to declare said interests. * Register of interest forms displayed on Parish Council website. | •  • | No action required.  Existing procedure adequate. |
| **ASSETS MAINTENANCE** | Loss or damage. Risk damage to third party. | L | * Annual review of assets undertaken for both insurance provision and external audit requirements. * Agenda item as required – assets considered by council when purchase or disposal is advised. | | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **ASSETS** | Poor performance of assets. | L | * All assets owned by Parish Council are regularly reviewed. * All repairs and relevant expenditure authorised in accordance with correct procedures of the Parish Council. * Significant assets insured. * Insurance provision reviewed annually. | | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **MEETING LOCATION** | Premises inadequate for needs of Council and inaccessible for members of the public. | L | * All meetings of Chittlehampton Parish Council are held in The Methodist School Rooms or Umberleigh Village Hall, which have adequate facilities for the hosting of meetings. Chittlehampton Village Hall can be used as an alternative. | | •  • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **COUNCIL RECORDS** | |  |  | |  |  |
| Paper Records | Loss of essential records through theft  and/or fire damage.  Council Minutes, leases  and historical  correspondence. | M | * Currently all historic and current council documents are housed with the clerk. * Deeds are also housed with the clerk. | | • | Action required; suitable storage needs to be arranged for historic documents that need archiving. |
|  | Current financial records. | L | * All current Parish Council financial records are stored securely at home of the clerk. | |  | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| Electronic Records | Loss through; theft, fire damage or corruption of computer. | L | * Parish Council electronic records are stored on laptop computer of Clerk/RFO. * Backups of electronic data are made at regular intervals on the cloud and google drive. | | • | No action required. Existing procedure adequate. |
| **TRANSITION TO NEW CLERK/RFO** | Impact on business continuity. | H | * Currently no handover programme in place. * Currently no induction programme in place * Staffing Committee present for assistance. | |  | Ongoing review. |

KEY LEVEL OF RISK: L: LOW M: MED H:HIGH

Date of Review: 2nd September 2024 Undertaken by Clerk to the Council

**Signed:………………………………………………………………**

**Position:……………………………………………………………..**

**Date:…………………………………………………………………..**