

Old Marston Parish Council

Risk assessment and management

Introduction

Risk management is a process where risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element in Old Marston Parish Council's framework of governance, alongside standards of conduct, service delivery arrangements and community engagement, structures and processes.

The Parish Council is aware that some risk may never be fully eliminated. This document puts in place a strategy that provides a structured, systemic and focused approach to risk management.

Reviewed : 6th March 2023

Next Review Date: 2024

Area of risk	Risks identified	Low/Medium or High	Management / Control of risk	Comments – review/ assess / revise
MANAGEMENT				
Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to unexpected event.	L	All files and recent records are kept at the Clerk's home. The clerk backs up electronic files regularly. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed, the Chairman is aware of all issues and gets copies of all correspondence.	Existing procedures adequate. Members have responsibility to update register.
Meeting location	Adequacy Health and Safety	L	Meetings are held in either the Mortimer Hall or the Roy Garner Pavilion. The respective organisations maintain these to a safe standard for all users. Any Social Distancing guidelines are adhered to when setting up.	Acceptable
Virtual Meetings	Adequacy Health & Safety			

			When deemed necessary by the Council, and permitted by law, some meetings may be held virtually. It is for the individual attendee to assess their location to ensure adequate ventilation, lighting and distancing.	
Council Papers	Loss through theft, fire, damage	L	Historic papers are archived at the Oxfordshire Records Office. Current papers are held in a locked metal cabinet at the Clerk's house. Electronic copies of all agendas and minutes are stored on memory stick as well as on Council website.	Damage or theft is unlikely so provision adequate.
Council records - electronic	Loss through theft, damage, fire, corruption of computer	M	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on a memory stick held by the Clerk and by the webmaster on the Council website.	Acceptable
FINANCE				
Precept	Adequacy of precept Request not submitted to Oxford City Council in time. Amount not received from Oxford City Council.	M L H	Budgets prepared to determine amount required. Budget includes current year actual costs plus projected costings for following year. The precept is an agenda item for full Council prior to any deadline given by the Oxford City Council. The Clerk confirms requirements to the Oxford City Council prior to the deadline. The Oxford City Council notifies the Parish Council the date when the precept will be paid into the bank account. The Clerk checks the instalment is paid correctly.	Acceptable

Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	H L L M	Reviewing the risk assessment annually helps to identify needs. Policy covers employers & employees Liabilities, Public Liability and Fidelity Guarantee as well as other potential losses.	Acceptable
Banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss of Cash	L L L	Financial Regulations set out requirements. Payments need two Councillors authorising. Bank statements are reconciled monthly. Cash & cheques are banked as soon as practical. All cash is kept in a locked safe.	Acceptable
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has 1 petty cash float. All transactions relating to this are fully receipted and recorded. These are reported to full council on a monthly basis and checked on a quarterly basis by the Internal Reviewer.	Acceptable
Financial controls and records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities Work awarded incorrectly	L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. Monthly reconciliation prepared by RFO. The Internal Auditor performs an interim audit and an End of Year audit. All expenditure and income are reported at each full council meeting and a budget v expenditure report presented to the full council on a quarterly basis. All CiL/s137 income/payments are recorded separately at the time of approval. Procedures for tenders and seeking quotations are set out in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Other than items covered under 'Delegated Powers' decisions are brought to full Council before proceeding with orders.	Acceptable

Freedom of Information Act	Policy provision	L	The Council has adopted the model publication scheme. So far there has been no FOI requests. However, if a substantial request arrives it may require many hours of work. The Council is able to request a fee to cover the extra hours needed.	Monitor and report any impacts made under the Freedom of Information Act.
Salaries and Assoc. costs Clerk	Loss of Clerk Fraud Actions undertaken Salary paid incorrectly	M L L L	Appraisals are conducted on an annual basis between the Staff and Staffing & Standards Committee. Any recommendations from this processed are reported to the full Council for actioning where necessary. A contingency fund should be established to enable training for the Clerk qualification in the event of the Clerk resigning. The requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance must be adhered to. Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice. Payroll services are outsourced.	Include in financial statement when setting the precept Membership of SLCC/OALC Monitor working conditions
Election costs	Risk of election costs	M	Risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise risk of having a contested election. A contingency fund should be established to meet the costs.	Include in financial statement when setting precept in an election year.
VAT	Re-claiming/ charging	L	The Council has financial regulations which set out the requirements These records are also checked twice a year by the Internal Auditor. All VAT incurred is recorded separately in the accounting system. VAT is only reclaimed where HMRC rules permit.	Existing procedures adequate

Annual return	Submitted within time limits	L	A draft of the Annual return is completed and sent to the Internal Auditor for verification of data and his report. Once returned the final version is completed, signed by Council and sent on to the External Auditor within time limit.	Existing procedures adequate
ASSETS				
Street furniture and playground furniture	Damage to play equipment and benches.	L	An asset register is kept and reviewed annually. Insurance cover is also reviewed to ensure adequate cover. Regular checks are made on all assets by the Clerk or Chairman of the respective Committee. All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All expenditure on repairs is authorised by full Council.	Acceptable
	Potential contamination of play equipment.	M	When deemed necessary by the Council, and instructed to by Government, the play equipment areas will be shut. Notices will be visibly erected at all locations and red & white tape wrapped around all equipment. After such events all play equipment will be cleaned with the recommended solutions.	
Cemetery	Inadequate procedures leading to errors affecting Council's reputation and upset relatives.	L	An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks are made on all assets by the Clerk, Chairman of the respective Committee. Procedures should be always adhered to.	Acceptable
	Memorial Safety	L	A Memorial Safety Test is carried out every 5 years by the Clerk. A record of all finding is	

			kept, and any work needed doing brought to the Council's attention.	
Allotments		L	An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. The day to day management of the allotments is leased to the Old Marston Mill Lane Allotment Association (OMMLAA) so, although this does not take any legal obligations from the Parish Council, any checks are done by OMMLAA representatives.	Acceptable
Pavilion		L	An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. . The day to day management of the pavilion is leased to Marston Saints Football Club, so, although this does not take any legal obligations from the Parish Council, any checks are done by Marston Saints Football Club representatives.	Acceptable
LIABILITY				
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council and to be resolved and clearly stated in minute	Existing procedures adequate
	Working parties taking decisions	L	Ensure established with clear terms of reference	Monitor on a monthly basis
Minutes/ agendas/ statutory documents	Accuracy and legality. Noncompliance with statutory requirements.	L L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next appropriate meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements.	Existing procedures adequate Undertake adequate training

	Illegal conduct	L	Business conducted at Council meetings managed by the Chairman in accordance with Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.	Members to adhere to Code of Conduct
Public Liability	Risk to third party property or individuals	M	Insurance is in place. Risk assessment of any individual event undertaken	Acceptable
Employer liability	Noncompliance with employment law	L	Undertake adequate training and seek advice from OALC.	Acceptable
Legal liability	Legality of activities	M	Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice if necessary	
	Proper and timely reporting via minutes	L	Council always receives and approves minutes at monthly meetings	
	Proper document control	M	Retention of document policy in place	
COUNCILLORS PROPRIETY				
Members interests	Conflict of interest	M	Members have a duty to declare any interests.	In May a copy of the Code of Conduct is sent to all councillor. Councillors are responsible in updating the register.
	Pecuniary Interests	L	Declarations of pecuniary interest by members at meetings.	
	Register of members interest	L	Register of members interests form maintained by Oxford City Council.	
Personal Details	Accidental release of personal details	M	Data security awareness needed at all times. Password protection on laptop. Personnel files kept as hard copy only and in locked cabinet. All financial information stored on memory stick and hard copy are kept in locked secure cabinet. The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Data is only held and distributed in accordance with ICO rules.	Need to ensure GDPR compliant.