

## RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Nature of risk	Risk(s) Identified	Probability	Severity of impact	Risk rating	Control measures
<p><i>Probability/Severity of impact: L=Low M=Medium H=High</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Risk rating values: 1 = lowest, 9 = highest</i></span></p>					
<b>Councillors</b>	Acting illegally, criminally, improperly, without authority, breach of confidentiality, inappropriate behaviour	L	L-H	2	Councillors understand and receive training on the Code of Conduct Register of Interests need to be documented Declaration of personal and/or prejudicial interests Councillors understand and receive a copy of Standing Orders Officers advise if any proposed action would not be legal
	Insufficient councillors to operate council due to unforeseen circumstances e.g. mass resignation, barred due to prejudicial interests, any other reasons	L	H	2	Seek advice/dispensation from EFDC Monitoring Officer in a timely manner. Officers maintain day-to-day activities <i>through delegation</i> . We have 22 Town Councillors.
	Failure to complete/maintain/ update their Register of Interests/Gifts Failure to declare interests	L-M	M	3	Ensure all members are aware of their responsibilities, Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting or when a conflict becomes apparent during a meeting. Training/information/guidance Maintain Registers/inform EFDC Monitoring Officer Register of Members interests to be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as necessary.
	Disorder/slanderous statements in public meetings	L	M	2	Effective chairing of meetings Standing Orders

					Code of Conduct Insurance (but does not cover all instances)
	Insufficient notice given of meetings	L	M	2	Meetings are programmed and notices sent out in good time Meeting can be re-called if necessary
	Improper claims for allowances/expenses	L	L	2	Formal scheme for payment Comprehensive claim form Multiple checks of the payment schedule by staff and councillors Obtain receipts Procedures for payment
	Engagement by members in the operation and activities of the Town Council	M	H	4	Committees set priorities for matters within their control and review regularly. Attendance at Committee meetings is monitored.
	Impact of public spending cuts	M	H	5	Ensure Council has sufficient general reserves should precept be capped and funding from sources becomes unavailable.
	Lack of knowledge by Councillors on their role, responsibility and accountability	M	H	5	Councillors to participate on the training widely available from Council Wise / EALC / NALC. Staff to issue any new Councillors with the code of conduct, standing orders and financial regulations.
	Poor use of funds and not in accordance with residents wishes	M	H	5	Ensure transparency when spending public money. Ensure website is up to date with financial assistance scheme spending, AGAR and payments over £500.00. If FOI is requested on spending deal with this in accordance with FOI policy. Residents encouraged to attend meetings. Manage any negativity on social media

<b>Corporate/ Strategic</b>	Legal action against the council Councillor or employee commits an offence against a member of the public for which the council is liable	L	L-H	2	Take all measures possible to protect council from legal action Seek legal advice Insurance against liability Legal expenses insurance
	Health and Safety (all council activities, councillors, officers, members of public etc)	M	L-H	4	Health and Safety Policy Health and Safety Risk Assessments High level of health and safety awareness training Councillors and staff to attend training where necessary Regular inspections Preventative action Proactive maintenance Swift response to identified hazards Insurance: Public Liability, Personal Injury, Employer's
	Adverse public comment on council activities	M	M	4	Respond to major factual inaccuracies
	Lack of engagement / knowledge of residents' concerns and views	L	M	4	Display notices accordingly. Update website, provide regular newsletters and operate accessible council offices
	Users of council premises/facilities – unsuitable use, damage etc	M	M	4	Users and proposed use are checked Policies on acceptable use Conditions of hire, damage deposits Material damage insurance
	Poor relationship with principal authorities	M	M-H	5	Maintain good lines of communication Attend meetings particularly if there is a local interest
	Projects fail leaving significant contingent liabilities	L	M-H	3	Project management, monitor projects Build-in checks to reduce the possibility of failure Mitigate the effects of failure Be aware of potential risk factors when commencing new projects, acquiring new properties, responsibilities, etc.

	Lack of forward planning/council lacks sense of direction	M	M	4	Committees set priorities for matters under their control and carry out mid-year review of these and when new items are proposed.
<b>Corporate/ Strategic cont'd</b>	Major disaster locally affecting the work of the council	L	L-H	2	Business continuity plan React as appropriate at the time
	Failure to respond to consultations	M	M	4	Topic assessed for relevance, deadlines Put to meeting if possible or invite comments from members and ratify officer response. Acceptance that it is not always possible/desirable to respond to all consultations
<b>Meetings</b>	Failure to meet statutory requirements e.g. public access, notice and agendas, quorum, public minutes	L	M	2	Knowledge of requirements Agendas and minutes are produced in line with all legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next meeting unless there is a resolution to defer. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements. Ensure they are met Training Ensure cover staff are available Advice from other agencies if necessary
	Standing Orders do not meet council/statutory requirements	L	M-H	3	Regular review of Standing Orders Revision if necessary to comply with legislation Business conducted at council meetings should be managed by the Chairman according to Standing Orders

	Meeting location	L	M	2	Meetings are held at Buckingham Court in the Chamber.  All the premises and facilities are considered to be satisfactory from a health and safety, accessibility and comfort aspect for the Clerk, Councillors and any Public who attend.
<b>Precept</b>	Adequacy of precept	L	H	3	Careful consideration of budgets at all stages. Ensure each committee monitors their budget information and spend. Ensure detailed budgets are prepared in late Autumn. Figure of precept recommended by RGS Committee in November. Figure determined by Council meeting in January
	Precept claims not submitted	L	H	3	Town Clerk ensures claim is submitted to EFDC within legal time limits
	Precept not paid	L	H	3	Note the estimated date of submission and officers check bank statements to ensure payment received and follow up with EFDC
<b>Finance</b>	Fraudulent use of council funds (officers or members)	L	H	3	Financial Regulations covering all council financial activities Tight controls on financial transactions Internal audit checks Additional councillor checks on finance Fidelity Guarantee insurance - level reviewed annually
	Insurance adequacy, cost, compliance, fidelity Guarantee	L	H	4	Annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers Liability, Public Liability and

					Fidelity Guarantee are a statutory requirement.
	Insufficient funds for council's desired activities	L	M	2	Budgeting process accounts for future cost of existing commitments and desired growth items. Budgets cover a 3-year forecast and increases in line with inflation. Budgets are set on a prudent basis Compliance with reserves policy to ensure adequate levels of reserves are maintained to deal with unforeseen items of reasonable cost
	Committees overspend budgets	L	M	2	Income and expenditure are monitored and regular reports made to spending committees. With agreement of Council, virement of funds agreed where appropriate
	Fees and charges for council facilities set too low	L	M	2	Annual review of fees and charges in line with inflation for most services.
	Unexpected financial liability arises	L	M-H	3	Maintain adequate general reserves
	Council overspends and goes into deficit	L	H	2	Monitoring of funds Corrective measures Ensure regular review of general reserves
	Amount of money in general reserves departs from (above or below) level specified in Financial Regulations	M	L	2	Review general reserves annually when setting the amount of the precept. Monitor the balance sheet for breakdown of general reserves and ear-marked reserves
	Excessive/insufficient earmarked reserves	L	L	1	Report amounts in earmarked reserves annually with end-of-year reports to spending committees

					Maintain earmarked reserves for anticipated projects or requirements Consider earmarked reserves when setting budgets
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<b>Finance cont'd</b>	Expenditure made outside legal power (including grants)	L	H	3	Officers identify if any proposed expenditure would not be legal Legal powers are identified for each grant's application and expenditure item
	Insufficient Councillors available for approving BACS payments	L	H	2	Ensure adequate numbers of Councillors are approved signatories and confirm availability
	Proper accounting records not maintained	L	H	3	RFO appointed, responsible for records Financial Regulations Documented procedures Internal audit and checks
	Poor security of investments	L	H	3	Investment policy Training Monitoring guidance from Audit Commission, CIPFA & FSA
	Low returns on investments	M-H	M	5	Budget preparation Investment policy Prudent reserves policy to ensure services maintained Continual review of investment placing and interest rates
	Inadequate financial checks	M-H	H	5	The Council has financial regulations which set out the requirements for electronic banking, cheques and internal audit. The Council has also implemented a financial check carried out by one councillor each quarter. Members of the RGS committee also check the bank reconciliations at each meeting from the previous month

	Cash – loss through theft or dishonesty	L	M	4	<p>Monthly reconciliation prepared by RFO and checked by the Chairman of the Parish Council. Two signatories on cheques and online authorisation</p> <p>Internal and external audits undertaken.</p> <p>Any financial obligation must be resolved and clearly minuted before any commitment. This usually takes place at Finance and Asset Committee meetings. All payments must be detailed in the Financial Reports presented to Committees and Full Council. The Clerk has delegated authority to pay invoices up to £1,000 prior to meeting approval.</p> <p>The Chairman countersigns all invoices for payment prior to online authorization.</p> <p>The Council no longer use LGAs137 as they have adopted the General Power of Competence.</p>
	Election costs – Risk of election cost	M	H	5	<p>Risk in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise risk of having a contested election. Council has an EMR fund which is added to each year to cover the cost of a by-election.</p>
	Reclaiming and charging VAT	L	M	3	<p>The Council has financial regulations which set out the requirements. VAT is recovered quarterly. RBS Omega will not allow submission without the VAT number.</p>

					Checks to be conducted quarterly to ensure the correct level of VAT is being claimed
	Annual Return	M	H	4	Annual return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and sent to the external auditor within the time limit. RFO prepares a timetable for submission.
	Items purchased without carrying out the formal tendering process	M	H	4	Councillors to follow the financial regulations when conducting tenders. Ensure 3 quotes are obtained when any tender that exceeds amount set in financial regs
	Payments made without prior approval	M	H	5	Ensure payment lists are checked by RFO before being submitted to Councillors for approval. Councillors should then check each payment against the invoice to ensure no errors in accounting.
<b>Council offices and admin</b>	Total destruction, fire, break-in, flood Adverse action by third parties	M	H	5	Fire and security precautions Business Interruption and Buildings insurance
	Short term failure of supply of power, water, telephones, broadband, etc	M	M	4	Close office for duration of interruption if necessary. Staff encouraged to work at home.
	Council records	M	M	4	Papers both current and archived will be held in the Town Council offices. Keys to the offices are held by all staff members.
	Complete computer failure / loss of data	L	H	3	Modern equipment used – rolling programme of maintenance/replacement Daily back-ups kept on-and off-site Move to cloud-based system in due course Regularly review of maintenance contract
	Illegal (external) access to computers	M	H	5	Security systems in place

	Improper use by employees	L	M	2	Security systems Disciplinary rules and procedures IT acceptable use policy adopted by RGS 11.02.26
	Failure to respond to request made under Freedom of Information Act 2000	L	M	2	Maintenance of FOI Act Publication Scheme Procedure for dealing with requests Information Management Policy and procedures; good document control
	Infringement of Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations to be implemented on 25 May 2018.	L	M	2	Notification to Information Commissioner Procedures for dealing with information Training
	Breach of GDPR	M	H	4	Privacy policy published on the website. Data Protection audit undertaken and action taken where appropriate. Registration up to date with the ICO.
<b>Other council premises and facilities</b>	Destruction e.g. fire, flood, break-in etc Adverse action by third parties	M	H	5	Appropriate security and fire precautions Buildings insurance Business Interruption insurance
	Physical deterioration	M	M	4	Regular inspection and maintenance Improvements as required Adequate budgets for necessary work
<b>Physical Assets</b>	Council unaware of its assets	L	H	3	Maintenance of Asset Register; (minimum) annual review Ensure new purchases are recorded on the asset register
	Loss or damage	M	M	4	Protection measures where possible Annual and rolling programme of maintenance/improvements Insurance where appropriate Adequate funds for "self-insured" items Asset register kept up to date
	Over- or under-insurance or no insurance	L	M	2	Annual insurance review (see insurance file for details)

					Insurance adjusted in respect of acquisitions and disposals Insured with reputable company
	Loss of, damage to, abuse of civic regalia	L	M	2	Insurance Maintenance of items Instructions as to protocol, security etc
	Loss of legal documents e.g. property deeds	L	M-H	3	Kept in locked container in office Restricted access, lists of contents
<b>Employees</b>	All staff absent from office due to unforeseen circumstances (short term)	L	M	2	Maintain adequate staff cover Staff can work from home which was implemented following COVID
	All staff absent from office due to unforeseen circumstances (long term)	L	H	3	Respond as appropriate at the time  Staff can work from home which was implemented following COVID
	Long-term absence or death of key officer	L	M-H	3	Adequate staffing to allow cover by other officers of essential tasks; revision of task priorities Well documented procedures Employment of temporary staff Ensure at least one other staff member is CilCA qualified for cover if the Clerk is absent for a long period
	Staff establishment unsuitable for council requirements	M	M-H	5	Regular staffing review
	Staff acting outside council instructions/policies Incompetent staff	L	L-H	2	Supervision of work Standing Orders and Financial Regulations lay down certain requirements Training
	Non-compliance with legal requirements	L	L-H	2	Awareness of legislation (officers and members) Membership of relevant bodies for advice etc

					Training
	Legal action against council	L	M-H	3	Policies and procedures in place
	Resignation of staff members	M	M-H	3	Ensure adequate job descriptions are up to date to enable job adverts to be created and advertised quickly 2-3 months' notice to be implemented for more senior staff members Ensure plan in place for any existing staff to cover certain roles as appropriate
<b>All Risks</b>	More detailed level than included in this assessment. Risk Assessments are covered in detail for each Risk identified by the Council.	Various	Various		More detailed risk assessments carried out by officers and subject to regular reviews