Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document has been produced to enable Fringford Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

Items in yellow have been added by the Clerk for consideration.

| **FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Risk(s) identified** | **H/M/L** | **Management/control of Risk** | **Review/Assess/Revise** |
| Precept | Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties | L | To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget update information.  At the precept meeting Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. 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, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from Cherwell District Council. The figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing.  The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Budget Provision and Reserves | Insufficient available funds | M | A full budget needs to be submitted prior to the Precept request. This should include funds placed in reserve for future projects and a contingency fund agreed at a meeting of the council, and three months’ running costs | Existing procedure adequate |
| Financial Records | Inadequate records | L | The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements. | Existing procedure adequate |
|  | Financial irregularities | L | Internal controls implemented so a Councillor has responsibility for checking all accounts. | Review the Financial regulations when necessary  Appoint a Councillor annually with Internal Control responsibility |
| Bank and banking | Inadequate checks | L | The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Bank mistakes | L | Monthly reconciliation by the Clerk. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Cheque mistakes | L | Cheques to be written by the Clerk following inspection of the invoices and signed by two Councillors on production of the Payment Schedule agreed at the PC Meeting. Cheque, cheque counterfoil, invoice and schedule to be signed or initialled | Existing procedure adequate |
| Credit references | L | The Bank performs credit references on cheque signatories | Existing procedure adequate |
| Reporting and auditing | Information communication | L | Financial information is a regular agenda item (Finance Report) and discussed/reviewed and approved at each meeting. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Grants | Receipt of grant | L | Grants are applied for, and accepted if offered, only after a decision taken at a meeting of the Council after full consideration of any conditions attached. | Review financial regulations to ensure they cover this topic |
| Charges-rents receivable | Payment of rents | L | The Parish Council receives the peppercorn rent from the Village Hall Committee which is invoiced annually in April by the Clerk. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Grants and support payable | Power to pay  Authorisation of Council to pay | L | All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Best value accountability | Work awarded Incorrectly | L | Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major work competitive tenders would be sought. If problems encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council. | Existing procedure adequate |
|  | Overspend on services | M | Procedure in Financial Regulations adequate |
| Salaries and assoc. costs | Salary paid incorrectly | L | Salary paid monthly by cheque. Salary reviewed annually using NALC guidelines | Existing procedures adequate |
|  | Unpaid Tax to Inland Revenue | L | Any tax is calculated using the HMRC RTI Tools software and is submitted to HMRC monthly. Payment is made monthly by cheque. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Employees | Fraud by staff | L | Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance adhered to with regards to fraud. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Health and safety | L | All employees (currently the Clerk) to be provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles. | Monitor health and safety requirements and insurance annually |
| Clerk resignation / sickness | L | Councillors may act in a temporary capacity at nil pay. Contingency required for advertising, sickness cover etc | Include contingency in budget for future years |
| VAT | Reclaiming/charging | L | The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. The Reclaim is undertaken at least once a year, or more if a large project is under way, with the date of the reclaim entered in the Finance Spreadsheet. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Annual Return |  |  |  |  |
| Submit within time limits | L | External Audit Annual Return completed and signed by the Council, submitted to internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent to External Auditor within time frame. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Public Inspection of Documents | L | By appointment only, at the Village Hall. The Public are welcome to inspect PC documents – which are held in accordance with the Council’s agreed Document Retention Policy. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Legal Powers | Illegal activity or payments | L | All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at full Council Meetings, including reference to the power used under the Finance section of agenda and Finance report monthly. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Minutes/agendas/  Notices  Statutory Documents | Accuracy and legality | L | Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements including publishing on the Parish Council section of the Village website (Fringford.info).  Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Standing Orders | L | Adopted in January 2015 and reviewed in November 2017. |  |
| Financial Regulations | L | Adopted in November 2016 and reviewed as appropriate. |  |
|  | Business conduct | L | Agenda displayed (including on the village website) according to legal requirements.  Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair | Members adhere to Code of Conduct |
| Councillors | Losing a Councillor | L | When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow which leads to either a by-election or a co-option process. The more usual is a co-option which starts with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applicants and co-option vote at a Council meeting. | Existing procedures adequate including a separate Councillor Vacancy Policy |
|  | Losing more than five Councillors to make the Council inquorate |  | If there are more than five vacancies at any one time, the Council becomes inquorate and the District Council will take over the running of the Council (at the Village’s expense). | Procedures of Cherwell District Council are adequate. |
| Election Costs | Risk of an election cost | L | Risk is higher in an election year, but there has never been an election in the village in living memory. The Council holds a contingency reserve to a current maximum of £1,600 in case of an election. | Existing procedure is adequate for the four yearly elections but reserves may be insufficient in the unlikely event of a by-election |
| Members’ interests and Code of Conduct | Conflict of interests | L | Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Code of Conduct | L | Code issued by CDC, adopted June 2012 and issued to each Councillor on election to office | Existing procedures adequate |
| Register of members’ interests | M | Register of members’ interests forms reviewed regularly. | Members take responsibility to update register with an annual reminder from the Clerk |
| Insurance | Adequacy | L | An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements. Employers and Employee liabilities a necessity and within policies. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Fidelity checks in place in accordance with Insurance Policy. | Existing procedure adequate.  Insurance reviewed annually, based on competitive quotations. |
| Cost | L |
| Compliance | L |
| Fidelity Guarantee included in Insurance Cover | M |
| Data protection | Policy provision | L | The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioner.  A Data Protection policy has been adopted (June 2017)  A monitoring scheme has been developed and is reported annually | Ensure annual renewal of registration  Policy needs to be reviewed to ensure compliance with new GDPR  Monitoring needs to be reviewed to ensure compliance with new GDPR |
| GDPR | M | The council is required to appoint a Data Protection Officer. Currently there is discussion as to whether this can be the Clerk. The Council needs to identify and resource this appointment. if the Clerk cannot fulfil this role.  Clerk receiving training to assist the Council. | Further review after implementation date of 25th May 2018 |
| Freedom of Information | Policy | L | The Council has a Model Publication scheme in place. To date there has been one request under FOI in the past three years. | Monitor any requests made under FOI |
|  | Provision | M | The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours’ work. The Parish Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours. |  |

| **PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Risk(s) identified** | **H/M/L** | **Management/control of Risk** | **Review/Assess/Revise** |
| Assets | Loss or damage | L | An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision. | Existing procedures adequate |
|  | Risk/damage to third party (ies) property | L |  | Review adequacy of insurance cover |
| Maintenance | Poor performance of assets or amenities | L | All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. Assets are insured. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Notice Board | Risk of damage | L | The Parish Council currently has two notice boards (one for Parish Council business, one public) and are insured. The Clerk checks them when posting notices. | Existing procedures adequate |
| Street Furniture | Risk of damage | L | The Parish Council is responsible for a bus shelter, 3 timber seats and 5 dog bins. No formalised programme of inspections is carried out, but all reports of damage or faults are reported to the council and / or dealt with. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Playground | Risk of Damage | L | The Parish Council is responsible for the playground. An annual ROSPA inspection is undertaken and regular local checks made | Existing procedure adequate |
|  | Health and Safety | M |  |  |
| Meeting locations | Adequacy | L | The Parish Council meeting is held in a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and the general public. | Existing procedures adequate |
|  | Health and Safety | M |  |  |
| Council records – paper | Loss through:  Theft  Fire  Damage | L  M  L | Recent Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. A retention policy is in place, and documents no longer required are securely destroyed. Historical records (minutes, ??? etc) required to be kept indefinitely are stored ………… | Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate. |
| Council records – electronic | Loss through:  Theft, fire damage | L | The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Clerk’s computer held with the Clerk at her home. a physical backup is taken weekly. | Existing procedures considered adequate |
| or corruption of computer | M | Security software installed and updated continuously. Software updates applied | Existing procedures considered adequate |
|  |  |  |
| Council Website | Hacking | M | Backups should be taken regularly and patches / updates applied. This is done by the Parish Council web site supplier. | Existing procedures considered adequate |

Adopted at a meeting on 24 April 2017