Hunston Parish Council Risk Assessment

Notes

"The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council."

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable Hunston 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	Risk Level	Chance	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business Continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance.	M	L	There is no management plan presently for loss or long term incapacity of the Clerk, loss or theft of records, full or majority replacement of the Council at an election or other such instances. So although the risk of these things happening is low, having no plan may leave the Council in a difficult position.	The Deputy Clerk can assist if the Clerk is incapacitated. Electronic records stored on Office 365 (sharepoint/Onedrive/Teams). Staff to electronically back up both laptops monthly, onto a separate hard drive to be kept in the safe.
Precept	Adequacy of precept requirements not submitted to CDC.	L	L	To determine the amount of precept required the Parish Council receives updated budget information at each meeting. The Precept is on the Agenda at the January meeting. At the November meeting the Council receives the Budget report which includes the actual position and projected position to the year end and indicative figures of costings from the Clerk. The Council uses this information along with details of all potential income streams to agree a precept for the forthcoming financial year. The Clerk makes the request in writing (or by email) to Chichester District Council and informs the Council when the two instalments of the precept are received.	Reviewed current controls and considered them to be adequate.

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FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level	Probability	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that clearly set out the requirements for the keeping of records	Financial Regulations were updated in July 2024
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L	L L L L	The Council has Financial regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and the reconciliation of accounts. The Parish Council has one bank account. Cheques require two signatures, there are three nominated Councillors as signatories (any two to sign). The Clerk holds the chequebook and writes the cheques. The Bank has not yet made any errors in processing cheques.	Council now uses online banking with the dual signing authority. Checks to be done on the invoices and bank statements Bi-monthly
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Records & receipts kept.
Reporting and auditing	Information communication	L	L	The Clerk provides Councillors with a financial statement for each Council meeting. This statement includes a bank reconciliation, budget update, details of payments and receipts for approval.	Reviewed – considered that this system was appropriate to be continued.
Grants and donations	Power to pay Authorisation of the Council to pay	L	L	All such expenditure is required to go through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed according to the powers used to authorize the expenditure. Most payments made using General Power of Competence.	Reviewed – minutes checked
Grants or donations receivable	Receipts of Grants	L	L	One off grants may be received and these may come with their own terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Reviewed. Cheques banked and copies of the submission are kept with the financial records.
Charges & rentals payable	Payment of charges, leases or rentals	L	L	The Parish Council now owns the playing field. A loan was taken out to purchase the field. Invoices for the loan amounts payable are entered into the normal payment system for authorization or ratification. Payment is made by direct debit and the approval for this has been duly authorised and minuted.	Reviewed. Minutes checked. Loan payments for purchase of playing field are duly authorised at a Parish Council meeting.
Best Value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	L L	Procedures for the allocation of work are set down clearly in the Financial Regulations. These require the Council to obtain 3 quotes for work where the costs exceed £1,000 and 3 tenders where the work is likely to exceed £10,000. All quotations and tenders would be subject to the approval of the Parish Council.	Reviewed. Quotations kept on file.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

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Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level	Probability	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI Contributions to the Inland Revenue	L L L	L L L	The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees and salary rates are assessed annually and adjusted effective from the 1 April. A schedule of Tax and NI payments are produced each quarter for approval at Council meetings. Tax and NI payments are calculated on payroll program which is updated annually. The Clerk & Assistant Clerk have a written contract of employment and job description that details the required number of hours work.	Reviewed. System accepted as appropriate. Clerk uses Brightpay for all salary calculations.
Employees	Loss of the Clerk Fraud by the Clerk Actions undertaken by staff Health & Safety	M L L L	L L L L	As good practice the Council should implement a Continuity Plan to ensure it can continue to operate in the event of the loss of the Clerk. The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.	The Deputy Clerk is new but is a fully qualified Clerk. Clerk has attended online training courses and several networking sessions this year to date.
Election costs	Risk of an Election cost	L/M	L	Risk is higher in an election year. The Parish Council has set up provisional budget to be set aside each year until the next election to spread the cost.	Elections occurred 2023
VAT	Reclamation of VAT	L	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	VAT claimed annually.
Annual Return	Submission is within the time limits	L	L	The Clerk advises the Council each year the deadline for the submission of the Annual Return to the external auditor. The Annual Return is set as an Agenda item and reviewed by the Parish Council each year.	Reviewed. Scheduled for May meeting in 2025 to comply with regulations.
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	L	All activities and payments within the powers of the Parish Council should be resolved and minuted,	Reviewed. Minutes checked. Payment schedules are put online.
Minutes / Agendas Notices / Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	L	L	Minutes and Agendas are produced by the Clerk in the prescribed method and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.Minutes and Agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Parish Council meetings is managed by the Chair.	Reviewed. All current procedures considered adequate.
FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT					
Subject	**Risk(s) Identified**	**Risk**	**Probability**	**Management/Control of Risk**	**Review/Assess/Revise**

Hunston Parish Council Risk Assessment

		Level			
Members Interests	Conflict of Interest Register of Members Interests	L M	L L	Councillors are reminded on each Agenda of the requirement to declare any interest in matters being discussed. Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Reviewed. Members reminded annually to confirm their register of interests have not changed.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Fidelity Guarantee	L L M	L L L	An annual review is undertaken (before policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employee and Employer Liability Insurance is a necessity and are included in the cost. Fidelity checks are in place.	Undertaken by Clerk. References for both members of staff are on file.
Data Protection	Policy Provision	H	L	The Council is currently registered with the Data Protection Agency.	Reviewed – Data Protection registration done annually.
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L/M	L	The Council has adopted as required the new Model Publication Scheme. The Council should be aware that if a substantial request is made this may require additional hours work for the Clerk. The Council has set a schedule of charges and is able to charge a fee for time where this exceeds 15 hours.	New Model publication scheme adopted in December 2008. Published on website.

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS

Hunston Parish Council Risk Assessment

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level	Probability	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party property or individuals	L L	L L	An annual review of assets is taken in conjunction of the review of insurance.	Clerk keeps copy of Assets Register – included in audit process.
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of income or performance Risk/damage to third parties	L L L	L M 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 set procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually. All public amenity land is inspected regularly by Parish Employees or Councillors.	Playing field, MUSA and playground to be checked – New online monitoring schedule being used.
Notice boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Roadside safety	L L	L L	The Parish Council has five notice boards. The Bus Shelter notice boards are available for use by local community groups. The free standing notice board and village hall notice board are for Parish Council use only. All notice boards have insurance cover and are inspected regularly by the Clerk and any maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council.	Checked bi-monthly by the Clerk.
Street furniture	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	L	The Parish Council is responsible for 1 Millennium sign, 3 bus shelters, 22 street lights and 6 wooden seats. All items have insurance cover. No formalised programme of inspection is undertaken, any faults are reported to the Parish Council and dealt with. The 4 bus shelters are cleaned and inspected weekly and any faults reported to the Clerk.	Reviewed. Process considered adequate.
Council records (paper)	Loss through: theft fire damage	 L M L	 L L L	The Parish Council records are stored in the Annexe. Records include historical correspondence, minute books, copies of leases, personnel records, insurance, salaries etc. All records are kept in a filing cabinet (not fireproof). Older more historical records may be sent to the West Sussex County Records Office for archiving.	Reviewed. Original Deeds etc kept with Solicitor. Filing cabinets kept locked when Staff not present.
Council records (Electronic)	Loss through: theft fire damage	 L L L	 L L L	The electronic records of the Parish Council are stored on the Cloud. All staff and Councillors are using Office 365. Staff to back up laptops on a weekly basis. Both laptops have insurance cover.	Reviewed, considered adequate.

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Play Area Equipment	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L/M	L	The Parish Council play equipment has insurance cover. The play area and equipment undergoes an annual inspection from a RoSPA inspector who provides the Council with a full risk management report. The play area and equipment to be inspected by the Staff on a regular basis.	Reviewed
Basketball Court	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L/M	L	The Basketball Court has now been refurbished and is now a Multi Use Sports Area (MUSA). Completion was November 2020.	Reviewed
Playing Field	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	L	The playing field is open to the public for use at all times. Local football teams use the field for training and matches. The grass cutting contractors monitor the state of the field and report any problems directly to the Clerk.	Reviewed. Procedure considered adequate.

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Car Park	Risk of trips on the surface.	L	L	The car park was resurfaced in early 2007 and is in good condition. Problems are reported and dealt with by the Village Hall Trustee	Reviewed.
Main Hall	Risk of injury to staff and the public using the hall.	L	L	All users of the hall have a contract with the Village Hall. All users are issued with information which sets out safety information and fire safety instructions. The premises are cleaned after every function, any defects will be identified at this time. Automatic fire detection system installed. Smoke alarms fitted at critical points. Emergency lighting and exits in place. Electrical testing of equipment and wiring to be undertaken annually and appropriate records kept. Gas appliances to be tested annually by Corgi Registered inspector.	Reviewed.

Signed: …… **Date:……**
Chair