



HOPTON AND COTON PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT MARCH 2024

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable Hopton and Coton Parish Council to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices.

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

The following plan was followed to undertake the Risk Assessment for Hopton and Coton Parish Council:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed- Subject
- Identify what the risk may be associated to the subject
- Categorise the risk- High / Medium / Low
- Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings
- Review, assess and revise if required

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	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.	L	All files and recent records are kept at the Clerk’s home. The Clerk makes regular back-ups of files to two removable hard drives. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed the Chair to contact the SPCA for advice.	Existing procedures adequate.
Precept	Adequacy of precept. Requirements not submitted to SBC. An amount not received by SBC.	L	The Council reviews the Precept requirement annually at the January meeting and reviews the presented budget update information, including actual position and projected position to year end and estimated figures for the next financial year. With this information, the Council agrees the precept amount to be requested from SBC. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to SBC. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received for the Precept.	Existing procedure adequate.

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	Loss of Concurrent Funding from SBC.		The Council needs also to have adequate reserves to deal with an emergency.	
Financial records	Inadequate records. Financial irregularities.	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out requirements and expectations. The Council appoints an independent internal auditor to review processes each year.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks. Bank mistakes. Loss. Charges.	M	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. Councillor has electronic access view Council Bank statements etc.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the banking arrangement and ensure all payments are dual authorised by two named Councillors on the mandate. Monitor the bank statements monthly.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty.	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. The Council's insurance policy has a Fidelity Guarantee. Finance is a standing item on Council agenda including reports and access to bank statements. A councillor has electronic access, view Council Bank statements etc.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary. Ensure Fidelity Insurance is adequate.

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Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed. Incorrect invoicing. Unpaid invoices.	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. At each Council meeting, a schedule of payments with supporting documents is approved. Unpaid invoices to the Council are pursued, and progress reported to Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly. Overspend on services.	L	As per Financial Regulations, normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract, the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender and report to the Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations regularly.
Salary Payments	Salary paid incorrectly. Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to HMRC.	L	The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees at Council meetings and ensures a contract of employment is in place for all appointments. Salary calculations are supplied by an external payroll provider for monthly salary payments net of deductions and the liability owed to HMRC. Salary rates are assessed annually by the Council and based on agreed NALC rates.	Existing system generally adequate.
Clerk/Other workers (voluntary/casual)	Loss of Clerk / Employees	L	A contingency arrangement in place with the neighbouring parish council to cover an unexpected loss of clerk, support is also available from SPCA. The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role. The Clerk is provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake the role.	Existing procedure adequate. Monitor working conditions, training and support.

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			Membership of the SPCA.	Need to consider the position of the caretaker service. The Council has an Employment Committee, meeting with employees on a regular basis.
Election costs	Risk of an election cost.	L	The risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having an election as this is a legal requirement of a democratic process. Sufficient reserves in place to cover this.	Existing procedure adequate.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging.	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual return	Submit within time limits.	L	Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within the time limit.	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments.	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council Meetings.	All activities and payments recorded and minuted.
Council records - paper	Loss through: theft fire damage	L	The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provide adequately. Deeds/leases copied and deposited at a solicitor.

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Council records - electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage Corruption of computer	M	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the computer at the Clerk's home. Backups of the files are taken at regular intervals onto the two external hard drives.	Existing procedure adequate. The hard drive copy file should be kept by a nominated Council member at a separate address.
Insurance	Adequacy. Cost. Compliance. Fidelity Guarantee.	L	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance provision annually.
Agency Advice	Risk of not having up to date information.	L	Continue with memberships of NALC and SPCA.	Adequate measures in place.
Data Protection	Policy. Provision.	L	The Council is registered with the ICO and pays an annual fee. The Council is registered with SCC DPO to ensure they are compliant.	Adequate measures in place.
Town and Country Planning	Councillors are not properly consulted on planning applications.	L	Planning applications are dealt with at meetings if deadlines allow, otherwise, applications are communicated by email with clear deadlines for response. Controversial applications are dealt with at special meetings.	Adequate measures in place.

ASSETS

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
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Parish Hall	Loss or Damage. Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property.	M	An asset register is kept up to date, and insurance is held at the appropriate level.	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance requirements annually.
Playground Equipment	Serious injury could be incurred if the play equipment is in a poor condition or if there is a hazard e.g. broken glass, in the vicinity. There could be a loss in the use of play equipment in case of emergency repairs.	M	Continue with regular maintenance and safety checks by the caretaker on a monthly basis and report to the Clerk. A professional company (e.g. Wicksteed Leisure) should carry out a ROSPA inspection annually.	Maintenance and safety checks should be brought up to date and maintained and a ROSPA carried out annually.
Noticeboards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties.	L	The Council has five notice boards sited around the Parish, three located at Hopton, one located at St Mary's Gate and one located at Redrow. There is, insurance cover, and inspected regularly by the Caretaker and Councillors, any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council.	Existing procedure adequate.

LIABILITY

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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 minuted.	Existing procedure adequate.
Minutes/Agendas/ Notices/Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct.	L	Minutes and agenda are produced with the prescribed method by the Clerk 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 Council meetings managed by the Chair.	Existing procedure adequate. Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Conduct at Meetings	Meetings are not conducted legitimately.	L	Ensure that all ordinary council meetings are conducted legitimately. Where members disagree with the advice of the Clerk, such disagreement is recorded.	Existing procedures adequate.
Public Liability	Risk of third party, property or individuals.	M	Insurance is in place.	Existing procedures adequate.
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with employment law.	L	Undertake adequate training and seek advice from SPCA	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal Liability	Proper and timely reporting via Minutes. Proper document control.	L	Council always receives and approves Minutes of monthly meetings. Retention of documents policy in place.	Existing procedures adequate.

COUNCILLORS' PROPRIETY

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Members interests	Conflict of interest. Register of Members' interests.	M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interests at the start of the meeting. Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing procedure adequate. Members to take responsibility to update their Register.
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