

Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council

Risk Assessment – December 2023

Area: Finance

Details	Present Control	Improvement Required
Payment of an unauthorised cheque or unauthorised bank transfer by online banking.	All payments are supported by an invoice or authorised record. All payments are minuted. Dual signatories required for cheques and online banking. Invoice and cheque stub initialled by signatories at time of signing. Council is mindful of NALC's guidance over repealed Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, in that Councils must not relinquish the 'two-member signatures' control over cheques and other orders for payment until they have put in place safe and efficient arrangements.	None.
Incorrect salary paid.	Time sheet recorded by Clerk. Signatories verify hours and rate paid to Contract of Employment. Time sheet authorised by signatories at time of signing. Payroll outsourced.	None.
Incorrect expenses/mileage paid.	Receipts for expenses presented at time of cheque signing. Mileage record authorised by signatories at time of signing.	None.
No power to pay or no evidence of agreement of Council to make payments.	Council authorisation to pay is minuted with the power used.	None.
Conditions of donations not adhered to.	Any conditions are minuted and reviewed regularly by a designated Councillor.	None.
VAT analysis incorrect.	All purchases are listed in the cash book with a separate VAT column. VAT detailed on invoice. Reviewed annually by internal auditor.	None.
VAT not reclaimed within time limits.	VAT reclaim diarised bi-annually and minuted when completed.	Not completed – Clerk permission to attend VAT training in January.
Budget errors and/or reserves inadequate.	Annual budget prepared in support of precept application. Approved by Council and minuted. Actual spend against budget reported quarterly to Council.	None.
Effectiveness of internal audit/auditor.	Full audit plan and scope of audit provided by auditor and approved by Council.	None.
Errors and/or fraud in financial records.	Accounts are subject to an annual internal audit. Accounts are available for Councillors and parishioners to inspect. Fidelity Guarantee value appropriately set and reviewed annually by Council and minuted. Quarterly bank reconciliations are reported quarterly to Councillors and signed by a non-signatory Councillor.	None.
Precept inadequate.	Annual budget prepared in support of precept application. Approved by Council and minuted.	None.

Other income not banked.	SCC and ESC grants and precept paid by bank transfer. Other grants received by cheque. Receipt of all income minuted. There is no petty cash or float. Regular reconciliation of bank statements to cash book. Financial Regulations are reviewed annually by Council and minuted.	None.
Best value not obtained.	Three quotes are sought for maintenance contracts, good and services. Quotes considered by Council and decision minuted.	None.
Insurance cover inadequate	Insurance cover reviewed annually by Council to ensure all known risks and assets are adequately covered. This review is minuted.	None.
Overspending or failure to maintain adequate reserves.	Council has approved that it will maintain general reserves of half the annual precept. The Council and the RFO seeks to protect these reserves through judicious management of expenditure and fund raising.	None.

Area: Health & Safety

Details	Present Control	Improvements
Danger to Clerk from being a lone worker.	Members of public must make an appointment to visit Clerk and a Councillor must be present. If not possible, meeting must be in a public place.	None.
Danger to Contractors/Volunteers when using Council owned equipment.	Personal accident and public liability insurance cover in place. Regular inspection and servicing of equipment. Equipment used by competent and named operators only. Clothing, footwear and protective goggles appropriate to the task are used. Tools are used for their intended purpose only.	Condition of equipment to be reviewed regularly and results documented.
Danger to the Public from Council owned assets.	Personal accident and public liability insurance cover in place. Regular inspection and maintenance of assets. Annual inspection of play areas equipment by RoSPA qualified inspector. Regular inspection of play areas by a competent person and any defects/dangers reported to Council. Council review of inspection reports minuted. Equipment securely stored in locked sheds.	Regular inspection of trees by competent person. Condition of all assets to be reviewed regularly and results documented. Appoint tree warden?
Damage to third party property from Council owned assets.	Public liability insurance cover in place. Regular inspection of assets. Asset register reviewed annually.	Regular inspection of trees by competent person. Condition of assets to be reviewed regularly and results documented.

Area: Business Continuity

Details	Present Control	Improvements
Loss or long-term incapacity of Clerk.	Training and support provided. Annual appraisal and salary review. Cover can be provided voluntarily by Councillors. SALC can arrange locum cover.	None.

Holiday cover for Clerk.	Two weeks' notice must be given for holidays of more than five days' duration. Acceptable holiday periods agreed in advance with Chair. Councillors can provide cover.	None.
Incompetence of Clerk.	Support provided by Councillors and SALC. Clerk has attended training courses delivered by SALC.	Clerk to continue with training courses where necessary.
Loss or long-term incapacity of Councillors.	If not enough for quorum, District Councillors will be temporary replacements. Vacancies can be filled by co-option.	Succession planning.
Lack of input and support from Councillors.	The importance of their shared role and responsibilities recognised. Involvement ensured by regularly attending effective Council meetings. Designated Councillors have responsibility for specific areas of the village and representation on village groups.	None.
Ineffective handling of complaints against individual Councillors or Council as a whole.	Complaints procedure adopted.	None.
Incompetence of Councillors.	Councillors have been issued with an up-to-date 'The Good Councillors' Guide' issued by NALC. Councillors have attended tailored training delivered by SALC.	None.

Area: Records Management

Risk	Present Control	Improvements Required
Loss or damage to paper records.	Records are covered by insurance and can be recreated. Records are stored in a metal filing cabinet.	Old and important records to be stored at Suffolk Records Office. Signed minutes to be scanned and stored on laptop.
Loss or damage to electronic records.	The Council's laptop computer is synchronised to the Clerk's desktop PC with Cloud storage.	Back up of electronic records to Google Cloud and a second external device.
Financial records are inadequate or irregular.	Model Financial Regulations adopted. Annual internal and external audits conducted. Financial Position reported monthly to Council. Statement of Internal Controls reported annually to Council.	None.
Minutes inaccurate or not comprehensive.	Minutes reviewed and approved at next Ordinary meeting.	None.
Inadequate records	Competent and trained Clerk.	None.
Records and/or website do not meet legal requirements.	Regular review of legal requirements by Clerk. Clerk receives regular training by SALC. Regular legal updates received from SALC.	None.

Personal information held is not safe and secure or processed fairly and lawfully.	Council registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office and complies with the eight principles of the Data Protection Act. Clerk attended Data Protection and Freedom Of Information training course delivered by SALC. Council has adopted a Privacy Notice, a Subject Access Request Policy and Procedure, a Data Retention Policy, a Personal Data Breach Policy and a Freedom of Information Policy and has conducted a Personal Data Audit.	
Multiple Freedom of Information requests are received.	Model Publication Scheme approved by Council. Table of charges for responding to requests agreed by Council. Details of records available to the public and where to obtain them published on the village website. If the estimated cost of complying with a request exceeds £450 the Council can refuse on the grounds of excessive cost. The Council does not have to comply with 'vexatious requests' or 'repeated requests' if it has recently responded to an identical or substantially similar request from the same person.	None.

Area: Council Members

Risk	Present Control	Improvements Required
Members have a potential conflict of interests.	Declaration of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests is a standard agenda item at all meetings. At the outset of the meeting, all members are required to formally declare and register any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in respect of any matters under discussion. Dispensations under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 are applied for by submitting a form to the Clerk prior to the meeting and are considered by Council.	None.
Members fail to comply with the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct.	Council formally adopted the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 in May 2022. Members are reminded to refresh themselves of its requirements annually. Any breaches of the Code of Conduct are reported to the District Council's Monitoring Officer. All Councillors have completed and submitted the District Council's Register of Interests Form.	None.

Approved at Full Council on 13th December 2023.