

Bury Parish Council – Financial Risk Assessment

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk Identified	H/M/L	Management control of risks	Review / Assess / Revise
Councillors	Losing Councillor membership or having more than 3 vacancies at any one time	L L	When a vacancy arises, there is a legal process to follow. This either leads to a Bye-election or into a co-option process. An election is out of the Parish Council's control. The co-option process begins with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applicants and co-option vote at a Council meeting then appointment. If there are more than 3 vacancies at any one time on the Council it becomes inquorate. The legal process of Huntingdon District Council appointing members takes place.	Existing procedures adequate. Procedures of another body are adequate
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to HDC in time Amount not received by HDC.	L L L	Regular budget review by Full Council Precept should be considered by Council before the deadline - deadline should be ascertained from HDC asap. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (approx April/May and September time).	Existing procedure adequate
Reserves	Ensure adequate reserves.	L L	Consider when setting budget. Identify any allocated reserves and surplus funds to be earmarked as general reserves. Council to identify an acceptable amount of reserves required for emergency purposes. Recommended by Audit Commission to be equal to 3 months of the precept.	PC/RFO to advise Council of allocated and unallocated reserves at year end and when setting precepts. If possible build up a level of reserves to cover unforeseen costs and uninsured risks

Financial records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements	Existing procedure adequate. Review of Financial Regulations Annually.
Banks and Banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges Loss of signatories	L L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The Clerk reconciles the bank accounts on a quarterly basis when the statement arrives, any problems/irregularities are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction. Monitor the bank statements monthly. Council would choose replacements but the Bank takes time to implement changes, this mostly happens after an AGM/election. The Council does not carry out Internet Banking. This decision will be reviewed at AGM	Existing procedures adequate.
Internet Banking				
Cash / Loss	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Cash/cheques received are banked within 3 banking days. There is no petty cash or float. This is audited by the Internal Auditor annually.	Existing procedure adequate.
Litigation	Potential risk of legal action being taken against the Council	M	Public liability insurance covers general personal injury claims where the Council is found to be at fault, but not spurious or frivolous claims - these cannot be insured against.	Insurance is adequate for requirements but there is still risk of other claims.
Reporting and auditing	Information communication Compliance	L	A Clerk's report is produced monthly and presented to Council, discussed and approved at the meeting. This report includes, bank reconciliation and a break-	Existing procedure adequate.

			down of receipts and payments balanced against the bank.	
Bury Parish Council run activities	Risk of financial loss	L	Activities previously held, such as installation of the Outdoor gym, have been financed by grants/or income prior to events thus reducing the risk of financial loss to Bury Parish Council. If finance is not secured in advance there may be some financial risk which would need to be covered by the council's reserves.	Existing procedure adequate. Each activity needs to be assessed on an individual basis.
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 the S137 power of expenditure. Grant application form has been devised to keep up to date records of applications.	Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors request S137 rules ¹ if required.
Grants - receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	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, research the problem and report to Council. This is covered in the Financial Regulations.	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations Annually.

¹ Section 137 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 is a statutory power. It gives council's the power 'to incur expenditure for purposes not otherwise authorised.' It is only used when there is no other specific power available; it is a 'power of last resort', it must benefit some or all inhabitants, not an individual, nor can it be made retrospectively.

Salaries and assoc. costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong hours paid Wrong rate paid False employee Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue	L L L L	<p>The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees through all council meetings.</p> <p>Salary rates are assessed annually by Council. The Clerk's report details payments to the Inland Revenue (for Tax and NI). These are inspected at the Council meetings and signed off. The Tax and NI is worked out using an Inland Revenue computer programme updated annually. All Tax and NI payments are submitted in the Inland Revenue Annual Return.</p> <p>The Clerk has a contract of employment and job description.</p> <p>Salaries are calculated on the last day of the month using the real time HMRC online reporting tool, PAYE etc is taxed at source and online reports printed and kept on file. The Clerk is able to access the online system via a log in and view the PAYE statement and highlight any payments/refunds due (tax refunds). PAYE overpaid is refunded back to the employee by the employer and it is the employers responsibility to then claim any unused funds back from HMRC at the end of the financial year</p>	Existing appointment system adequate. A Confidential session, at a nominated PC meeting, needs to be held to carry out an annual review.
Employees	Loss of Clerk Fraud by Clerk Actions undertaken by clerk. Health and Safety	L L L	<p>Reference to a Continuity Plan should be made in case of loss of key personnel.</p> <p>The requirements of the insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud.</p> <p>The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.</p> <p>Health & Safety issues relating to the clerk are with regard to working at home and driving to/from Council meetings. The clerk's own car insurance covers travel to and from a place of</p>	Existing procedure ? Monitor working conditions, Safety requirements and insurance regularly.

			work.	
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	Negative	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors.	No procedure required.
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	H	Risk is higher in an election year. When a scheduled election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the District Council. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having elections, as this is a democratic process.	Council should consider saving each year to cover all costs
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. VAT is claimed twice yearly in September and March,	Existing procedure adequate
Employers Annual Return	Paying and accounting for NI and Tax of employees' salaries	L	Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate
Audit - Internal	Audit Completion within time limits	L	Internal auditor is appointed by the Council. Internal auditor is supplied with the relevant documents to audit and the form to complete and sign for the External Auditor.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Return	Completion/Submission 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 time limit.	Existing procedure 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, including a reference to the power used. As per the Financial Regulations prescribe.	Existing procedure adequate.
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	L L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements and best practice guidelines. Minutes are approved and signed at the following Council meeting.	Existing procedure adequate. Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct

			Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	
Members interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members interests	L M	Although not a requirement, the declaring of interests by members at a meeting should be an obvious process to remind Councillors of their duty and should remain on the agenda. Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing procedure adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for. Ensure compliance measures are in place.	Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Asset register to be updated Annually
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Risk to third parties	L 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 correct procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually.	Existing procedure adequate.
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Parish Council Meetings are held at Village Hall, Brookfield Way. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety, Disability Discrimination and comfort aspects	Existing location adequate.
Council records -	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage		Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerks computer.	Existing procedure adequate.

electronic data The Parish Website	corruption of computer / Web presence.		Back-ups of the files are taken at regular intervals and a copy given to the Chairman. Web files to be backed up periodically and hack attempts to be monitored.	
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Reviewed at meeting held on

Signed by: