

Great Addington Parish Council Risk Assessment 2024/2025

Overview

A Risk Assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable Great Addington Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. Great Addington Parish Council will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate risks, in so far as is practically and reasonably possible. This document has been produced to enable Great Addington Parish Council to assess the risks it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

Rating A = Satisfactory, Rating B = Review Proposed, Rating X = Unsatisfactory

Next review date: February 2025

	Risks Identified	Management/Control	Rating	Review/Assess	Action by
Financial 1	Inadequate records Financial Irregularities	The Parish Council uses Financial Regulations which set out the requirements based on Model Regulations from NALC. Appointment of NCALC Internal Audit Service	A	Existing procedure adequate. Review January 2025	Clerk Council
2	Lack of commitment by Councillors to the budgetary process	Full council receives detailed budget estimates. Precept determined on basis of the budget set. Expenditure against budget is reported at each full council meeting, and reviewed after each quarter.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
3	Failure to ensure that consideration of budgetary process is begun early enough to submit precept	Start consideration of budgetary process at least 3 months prior to submission date of Precept. Checks by Clerk/RFO and Councillors as part of internal control procedure.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
4	Inadequate internal controls with regard to monitoring expenditure	Financial internal control checks are carried out every month by a councillor who is not a bank signatory to ensure effective financial management by Clerk/RFO.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
5	Reserves too high/low	Practitioners Guide (and the GAPC Reserves Policy) advises reserve balance must not exceed the precept but should be sufficient to allow the Council	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council

		to operate if the expected precept is not received.			
6	Illegal activity or payments	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at Council meetings, as per the Financial Regulations.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
7	Fraud by Employees/ Councillors	Ensure level of Fidelity Insurance is adequate and review annually. Payments authorised by two councillors.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
8	Cash handling	Cash may be received and should be paid into the current account. No petty cash is kept irrespective of the amount.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
9	VAT – requirements of HMRC not met	VAT is reclaimed yearly as a minimum.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
Business Continuity 1	Incapacity/Absence of Clerk/ Resignation of Clerk	A councillor will be designated to temporarily act as Clerk in an emergency. (The councillor cannot receive remuneration for clerical duties.)	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council
2	Loss or damage to Council records through theft/fire/ damage. Inability to access records	Minutes and Agendas are held on the Council's website. Paper copies are held by Clerk until they are transferred to County Archive. Data is backed up on cloud storage. Copies of policies and other records are also on the website and can be downloaded. Passwords available to the Chairman and the councillor designated to act as temporary Clerk in an emergency. A quarterly check of record storage is carried out as part of internal control.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
3	Security of data (IT systems and support)	Any confidential documents are securely destroyed. The Council laptop is password protected and has security protection through Microsoft Shield.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council

		Council is registered with the Information Commissioner.			
4	Failure to retain or secure the necessary number of members for the Council	Clerk to maintain an up-to-date Councillor Attendance Register. The Council has a policy for casual vacancies.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
5	Election costs	The Council maintains an election fund to meet any election costs. If this is insufficient at any point in time, the shortfall will be met from the general reserve.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
Legal 1	Freedom of Information	The Council has adopted the model scheme produced by the Office of the Information Commissioner. Assistance to be sought from Monitoring Officer or NCALC as required	A	Action any FOI requests in accordance with policy	Clerk
2	Governing Policies not up to date	There is a rolling policy review schedule and policies are referred to Council for review as and when necessary.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
3	Failure to ensure that all employees are paid in accordance with Council regulations and are adequately monitored. Failure to comply with Inland Revenue and HMRC regulations	A Contract of Employment and Job Description is agreed for the Clerk. Clerk runs payroll using the HMRC Basic Tools. Ensure employee regulations are available and understood by the Clerk. No additional payment to the Clerk without Council approval.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council Internal auditor Internal control
4	Conflict of interest Members Register of Interests	Councillors are required to declare where they have an interest in any item of business and this is recorded in the Minutes. Completed Register of Interests forms are submitted to the Monitoring Officer at NNC and periodically reviewed. Any change in a Councillors Register of	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Councillors

		Interest must be declared. Code of Conduct has been adopted.			
5	GDPR and/or data protection breach	The Council is registered with the ICO and pays a data protection fee. NCalc are the nominated data processor for the Council. GDPR Security Compliance Checklist is completed by each new Councillor, and another checklist is completed when a Councillor resigns.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Councillors
Governance & Management 1	Lack of knowledge of regulations and legislation	Ensure that a Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place and are reviewed annually. Highlight essential parts and provide training where relevant. Attend training courses. Membership of NALC	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Councillors
2	Action by the Parish Council outside its powers laid down by Parliament	Clerk to monitor relevant legislation and report to Council. Advice sought from other bodies where required.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
3	Lack of commitment to regulations and procedures	Council and Clerk to review Council's meeting and operational procedures annually.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Chairman
4	Notice of meeting	The meeting Agenda is placed on village noticeboard and on the Council's website giving the required notice of each meeting. Councillors to receive summons electronically.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
5	Accurate and legal Minutes	Minutes are presented to next council meeting for approval. Minutes are produced for all meetings. Draft Minutes are posted on the website.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
6	Written communication to third parties	All formal written communication/emails should be directed through the Clerk, or agreed at PC meetings and copied to the	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council

		Clerk. May be signed by the Chairman or Vice Chairman when necessary.			
7	Council Engagement by Members in the operation and activities of the Parish Council	Take every opportunity to publicise the role of the Parish Council through the website. Effective use of village noticeboard. Use key issues to raise the profile of the Parish Council and to test parishioners' views. Councillors contact details are available on the website.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
8	Impact of Public spending cuts	All Councillors to be made aware that priorities must be set on the basis of the financial capacity of the Parish Council to deliver. Attend training when appropriate.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council
9	Lack of engagement by Councillors and Residents on major items of public interest	Ensure publicity through village noticeboards, leaflets and website.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
10	Lack of knowledge by Councillors on their role, responsibility and accountability	All councillors to receive an electronic copy of the Good Councillor Guide, the Code of Conduct and the Standing Orders upon becoming a member of the council. Councillors to attend relevant training courses.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
11	Inadequate insurance cover for members and Clerk	Review Risk Assessment by including on Agenda of Parish Council meetings at least annually. Ensure a Risk Assessment is carried out for all new assets and appropriate insurance cover implemented.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
12	Failure to identify, value and maintain all assets of the Parish Council, and ensure that asset and investment registers are complete	Record and maintain a record of all assets for which the Parish Council is responsible and include in the year end accounts. Arrange for annual review of valuations and arrange for professional valuation where appropriate.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk

13	Adoption and implementation of appropriate Government legislation	Clerk to have appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at Parish Council meetings. Clerk to attend training and conferences and to read sector publications to keep up to date.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
Assets and property 1	Loss or damage to Assets Risk/damage to third party	An Asset Register is maintained for asset control. An annual review of any assets will be undertaken for insurance purposes. Regular risk checks of Council property. Repairs undertaken by competent contractor. Public liability insurance is in place.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
2	Poor maintenance of assets or amenities	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.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
3	Employment of Contractors	Ensure that all contractors hold sufficient public liability insurance and health and safety certificates. Contractors to be issued with Councils requirements.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
4	Adequacy of meeting locations Health & Safety COVID 19	Parish Council meetings are held in The Memorial Hall, which is a venue considered to have all the appropriate facilities for the Clerk, Councillors and the general public.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council