

Weston Parish Council

Risk Assessment

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| Presented to Council on 4 th November 2015 under Agenda point 151108 and approved | Minute 279 |
| Presented for review on 11 th May 2016 under Agenda Point 160508 c) and approved with no amendments Review to be twice a year in April and October | Minute 306 |
| Not presented for review in October 2016 | |
| Presented for review on 5 th April 2017 under Agenda Point 17040 and approved with amendments: Section 1 Parish Councillors, Losing a Councillor: Action required on building reserves to be removed as this is in place within budget discussions Section 1 Paper Records, Loss through damage: Action required on fire proof safes to be removed as agreed not an option due to cost. Section 1 Meeting Location, Availability: All Saints as alternative not suitable due to layout. Council would be required to hire space outside of the village Section 3 Property & Assets, Maintenance: Action required on repairs to bench and bins to be removed as completed Section 5 DPI, Members Interests: Action required to be removed as this is now in place Section 6 Engagement, Social Media: Action required to be removed as policies in place with annual review | Minute 331 |
| Presented for review in October 2017 No amendments to be made | Minute 350 |
| Presented for review in February 2018 Section 3 Property & Assets: Section relating to the parish burial ground to be removed as the land sale to Weston All Saint's PCC has been completed Review of requirements under GDPR to be completed and inserted where necessary in advance of a further review in June 2018 | Minute 359 |
| Presented for review in June 2018 and approved with amendments Section 1 Council Records – Electronic Section 1 Data Protection Section 2 Bank and Banking, Reporting and Auditing, Salaries and Associated Costs, Annual Returns Section 3 Parish Burial Ground Section 4 Manual Handling | Minute 373 |
| Presented for review in June 2019 with amendments Section 1 Parish Records (Paper) – removal of reference to property title deeds Section 4 Parish Clock (Volunteer Time Keeper) – insertion of clause | Min 190608 |
| Presented for review in June 2023 with amendments Section 2 Financial Risks- Update regarding Online Backing Payments Section 2 Financial Risks- Removal of section Councillors Expenses Section 4 Employees- Update to include Lengthsmen | |

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a systematic process for identifying and evaluating events (i.e., possible risks and opportunities) that could affect the achievement of the Parish Council's objectives. Such events can be identified in the external environment (e.g. changes in regulatory landscape) and within the Parish Council's internal environment (e.g., people, resources and infrastructure). The Council believes that undertaking a risk assessment on a regular basis forms the foundation for an effective risk management program. This assessment was carried out on 26th October 2015 and **approved by the Parish Council on 4th November 2015 Reference 151108**. It will next be reviewed in May 2016 and at least annually thereafter

Assessment Measures

In undertaking this assessment, the Council has assessed risks taking into consideration the likelihood and impact of such risks in relation to specific Council objectives.

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| Likelihood (L) | 1 | Unlikely | The risk is seen as unlikely to occur within the time scales contemplated by the Council. |
| | 2 | Likely | The risk is seen as likely to occur within the time scales contemplated by the Council. |
| | 3 | Certain / imminent | The risk is expected to occur within the time scales contemplated by the Council. |
| Impact (I) | 1 | Negligible or minor | The risk will not substantively impede the achievement of the Council's objective. |
| | 2 | Moderate | The risk will cause some elements of the Council's objective to be delayed or not be achieved. Adverse impact in this category would also cover minor injuries to individuals. |
| | 3 | Critical or severe | The risk will cause the objective to not be achieved, causing damage to the Council's reputation. Adverse impact in this category would also cover severe injuries to individuals. |

Key: “RFO” is the Responsible Financial Officer. “Council” is Weston Parish Council. “Principal Authority” is Newark & Sherwood District Council.

Section 1: Organisation Continuity & Management

| Subject | Risk Identified | L | I | Management of Risk | Action Required |
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| Business continuity | Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance. | 1 | 2 | In the short term, if the Clerk is unable to attend a parish council meeting, the records held by the Clerk are brought by one of the councillors who stands in for the clerk and takes minutes. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed for a long period the Chairman to contact the Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils for advice. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Parish Councillors | Losing a councillor or having more than four vacancies at any one time | 1 | 3 | When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow which can result in the vacancy being filled through the co-option process or, if requested, through an election. If there are more than four vacancies at any one time on the Council it becomes inquorate. The legal process of the appointing members takes place including temporary members. If necessary, temporary members can be provided by the Principal Authority, who have a responsibility to ensure that the business of the parish continues in cases such as these. | Existing procedures adequate. Existing procedure of building up financial reserves to cover the potential election costs adequate. |
| Precept | Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory and other duties | 1 | 3 | To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives a financial update. At the precept meeting Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information the Council maps out the required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from the Principal Authority. The figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to the Principal Authority. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received. | The Clerk to notify the Council of any legislative or other changes to the current precept process. |
| Legal powers | Non-compliance with the Acts of Parliament, County and District Council requirements and adopted Parish Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, and other adopted policies and procedures | 1 | 3 | Knowledge – ensure that all Councillors have access to copies of relative Acts, Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Highlight essential parts and provide training where possible. Standing Orders - ensure that Standing Orders are produced, understood by councillors and reviewed at least once per year. Ensure that the Council powers are highlighted or extracted into effective summary. Regular reference to appropriate regulations in agenda items. Delegation of responsibilities to individual councillors. Ensure appropriate publications held and that Clerk has good knowledge of regulations. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory documents | Accuracy and legality of minutes. | 1 | 2 | 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. Minutes and agenda are | Existing procedure adequate. |

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| | | | | displayed according to the legal requirements. | |
| | Council business not appropriately conducted. | 1 | 3 | Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair, but can be conducted by the vice-chair in the case of absence. | Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct. |
| Council records - paper | Loss through: theft fire damage | 1 | 2 | The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. | Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate given Council resources. |
| Council records - electronic | Loss through: Theft, fire, damage corruption of computer | 1 | 2 | The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Council owned laptop computer. Back-ups of all files are taken at regular intervals to an external hard drive. | Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate given Council resources. Current location for storage of hard drive deemed secure. |
| Meeting location | Adequacy | 1 | 2 | The Parish Council Meetings are held at the Village Hall, which provides acceptable facilities. | Existing location and arrangements are adequate. |
| | Availability | 1 | 2 | The Clerk will book through the Village Hall Booking Secretary all monthly meetings and extraordinary meetings required. Key provided by the bookings secretary and returned as required. | Council to consider alternative locations outside of the village as part of its continuity plans |
| | Health & Safety | 1 | 2 | The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Councillors, Clerk and Public who attend from Health & Safety and comfort aspects. | |
| Freedom of Information Act | Non-compliance with the Acts of Parliament. | 1 | 3 | The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. The Council is able to request a fee for any information requested to cover the cost of consumables and the Clerk's time. | Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the FOI Act. |
| Data protection | Non-compliance with the Acts of Parliament | 1 | 3 | The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency and has appropriate procedures to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and subsequent legislation and regulations including the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. | Ensure annual renewal of registration. Ensure required policies in place and reviewed on a regular basis to comply with current legislation |
| | Data Security Breach | 1 | 2 | The Council has drafted a plan and appropriate procedures to respond to a security breach. | Response Plan adopted June 2018 |

Section 2: Financial Risks

| Subject | Risk Identified | L | I | Management of Risk | Action Required |
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| Financial Records | Inadequate records maintained giving rise to financial irregularities. | 1 | 3 | The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements | Existing procedures adequate. Financial Regulations to be reviewed annually |
| Bank and Online banking | Inadequate checks | 1 | 3 | The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking reconciliation of accounts. The RFO to monitor and reconcile bank statements quarterly and take any appropriate action in the event of discovering any errors made by the bank. Any financial losses should be reported by the RFO to the Council. The Council maintains four authorised signatories, which is two more than required, due to the time required to make amendments and to avoid delays in issuing Online Bank Payments | Existing procedures adequate. |
| | Bank mistakes / losses | 1 | 3 | | Financial Regulations to be reviewed annually |
| | Loss of signatories | 1 | 3 | | Annual independent audit to be carried out |
| Cash / Loss | Loss through theft or dishonesty | 1 | 3 | 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 procedures adequate. Financial Regulations to be reviewed annually |
| Reporting and auditing | Information communication | 1 | 1 | A monitoring statement is produced regularly and presented to Council by the RFO, discussed and approved at the Parish Council meeting. This statement includes, bank reconciliation and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank. | Existing procedures adequate. Annual independent audit to be carried out |
| | Compliance | 1 | 3 | Financial records are independently audited annually and this report and any recommended actions are presented to the Council. Internal auditor is supplied with the relevant documents to audit accounts and complete the Annual Return. | |
| Best value Accountability | Work awarded incorrectly | 1 | 2 | Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work (over £500) required to be undertaken or for goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the RFO would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council. This is covered in the Financial Regulations. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| | Overspend on services | 1 | 2 | | |
| Insurance | Adequacy | 1 | 2 | An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| | Cost | 1 | 1 | | |
| | Non-compliance with Fidelity Guarantee requirements. | 1 | 3 | The Council maintains insurance to cover public liability, employer's liability, fidelity guarantee, libel and slander, and personal accident. | The Council should consider if it would be appropriate to insure for legal advice and expenses |

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| Salaries and associated costs | Salary paid incorrectly | 1 | 2 | The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees at Council meetings. Salary rates are assessed annually by the Council and applied on 1st April each year. The Clerk keeps a record of hours worked and has a contract of employment and job description. Salary is paid by BACs Monthly for a set number of hours and reported to the Council. The Tax and NI contributions due where appropriate are reported to the Council and signed off quarterly. | Existing appointment and payment system are adequate. Darby Accountants used for Clerk and Other Council Employees Salary / Accounting Requirements All submissions to HMRC to be carried out to meet required deadlines. |
| | Wrong hours paid Wrong rate paid Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue. | 1 | 2 | | |
| VAT | Council not recovering VAT paid on supplies | 1 | 1 | The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. | Existing procedure adequate |
| Annual Returns (Local Council Financial and Employer's) | Failure to meet Inland Revenue reporting requirements. | 2 | 3 | Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online and to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame by the RFO. | Existing procedure adequate Existing procedure adequate in view of new regulations from 2017. |
| | Failure to comply with legal requirements. | 1 | 3 | Local Council Financial Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing within time limit. | |
| Overheads and direct expenses. | Goods not supplied but billed. | 1 | 1 | The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. At each Council meeting details of any invoices awaiting approval are distributed to Councillors by the RFO, and considered. Council approves the requests for payment. The Council has minimal stocks. | Existing procedure adequate |
| | Incorrect invoicing. | 1 | 1 | | |
| | Online Bank incorrectly. | 1 | 2 | | |
| Grants and other support payments | Council authority to make grants correctly. | 1 | 2 | All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, recorded in the minutes and is listed accordingly in the Council's year-end accounts if a payment is made using the s137 power of expenditure. | Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors to request a copy of s137 rules if required. |

Section 3: Property & Assets

| Subject | Risk Identified | L | I | Management of Risk | Action Required |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| Assets | Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) /property | 1 | 1 | An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, and maintenance provisions. | Existing procedures adequate. Insurance reviewed annually in May |
| Maintenance | Poor performance of assets or amenities | 2 | 1 | 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. Damage or faults to Council owned parish clock, seating, dog bins, or council notice boards are reported to Council and/or dealt with in line with agreed Council procedures. | Existing procedures adequate |
| | Risk to third parties | 2 | 2 | Prompt renewal of contract with local District Council in line with agreed Council procedures, for regular emptying of dog waste bins to ensure continuity of service. Insurance reviewed annually in May | |
| Community Defibrillator & former telephone box | Non-operational or missing equipment. Damage to equipment, cabinet or telephone box. | 1 | 3 | Weekly and monthly operational checks are carried out and data submitted to Webnos governance system. Damage or non-operational equipment reported immediately and action taken to rectify any issues in accordance with agreed procedures. Annual maintenance checks carried out by approved third party supplier (currently CHT). | Existing procedures adequate. |
| | Risk of injury to potential recipient or user of the equipment. | 1 | 3 | Regular checks to ensure that instruction leaflet remains within the defibrillator cabinet at all times. The Council, in co-operation with the Village Hall committee to provide regular training and awareness sessions to members of the public. | |
| Libel and Slander | Legality of activities | 1 | 3 | Covered by Parish Council insurance policy | Existing procedures adequate. |

Section 4: Employees – Clerk / Lengthman / Other workers (voluntary/casual)

| Subject | Risk Identified | L | I | Management of Risk | Action Required |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| Clerk / Lengthman Other workers (voluntary/casual) | Ability of the Clerk to discharge their duties to the Council. | 1 | 2 | The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role. Council maintains membership of the Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils and the Society for Local Council Clerks and is able to obtain advice from these bodies. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| | Prevention of fraud by employees. | 1 | 2 | The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. | |
| | Health & Safety. | 2 | 2 | Employed Council Workers & Councillors undertaking voluntary work on behalf of the Council to be provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake the role, including protective clothing and training if appropriate. | |
| | Lone working | 2 | 2 | Possibility of accident or illness or some other difficulty when working alone makes it essential to have means to summon help | Council Workers / Volunteers advised to make another person aware of their Planned Work and Location. Always carry a mobile phone. |
| Display screen equipment (DSE) | Employees working intensively at computers without adequate breaks risk posture problems and pain, discomfort or injuries, from overuse, improper use or from poorly designed work environments. | 1 | 2 | Currently the Council does not have any employees who are regularly required to use DSE for continuous periods of an hour or more. | No further action required unless work arrangements for the Parish Clerk were to change. |
| Manual Handling | Council employees or Councillors may suffer injury if they try to lift objects that are too heavy or awkward. | 2 | 2 | Council employees, Councillors and/or volunteers for the Council are not routinely required to undertake manual handling activities. Where such activities occur an individual should fully assess the situation in a competent manner and only undertake the activity if content to proceed at their own risk. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Parish Clock (Volunteer Time Keeper) | Lone working | 2 | 2 | Possibility of accident or illness or some other difficulty when working alone makes it essential to have means to summon help | Volunteers advised to make another person aware of when intending to access the parish |

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| | | | | clock and to always carry a mobile phone. |
| Accessing the clock chamber by way of ladders within the clock tower | 2 | 2 | Possibility of slipping or falling | Sensible footwear to be worn |
| | 2 | 2 | Width of ladder rungs and limited space available | Any defects to be reported promptly |
| | 2 | 2 | Accessing the clock chamber and the clock requires a reasonable degree of fitness on the part of the person undertaking the duties | Volunteer should be in good health and inform the Council promptly of any health problems which occur. |
| Lighting in the clock chamber | 2 | 2 | Quality of natural light available which may be affected by the season and weather conditions. The electric light can only be switched on once the ladder to the clock platform has been climbed. | Only undertake the activity in good daylight. |
| | | | Failure of the lighting from any source whilst in the chamber. | Council to supply suitable form of lighting, e.g. head torch |
| Flooring in the clock chamber | 2 | 2 | Wooden floors may develop damage and rot. | Report any damage promptly |
| Working in the clock tower which houses bells | 1 | 2 | Potential for risk of damage to hearing | Do not enter the tower if bells are ringing. |
| Risk to health and safety due to presence of wildlife, e.g. pigeons | 2 | 2 | Breathing in pathogens from the pigeon droppings and dust | Report any occurrence of droppings and/or birds promptly. |
| | 2 | 2 | Waste material and or birds falling and causing injury | |

Section 5 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

| Subject | Risk Identified | L | I | Management of Risk | Action Required |
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| Members interests | Conflict of interest | 1 | 2 | Councillors have a duty to declare any interests at the start of any meeting. | Existing procedures of declaring interest at the start of a meeting adequate. |
| | Register of Members interests | 1 | 2 | Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed regularly by individual Councillors. Councillors to comply with disclosure requirements to the principal authority's monitoring officer. | Council Members to take responsibility to update their Register. |

Section 6: Liability

| Subject | Risk Identified | L | I | Management of Risk | Action Required |
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| Legal Powers | Illegal activity or payments | 1 | 2 | All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and recorded in the minutes. | Existing procedure adequate. |
| Public Liability | Risk to third party, property or individuals | 1 | 2 | Insurance is in place. Risk assessments regularly carried out to comply with requirements. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Employer Liability | Non-compliance with employment law | 1 | 2 | Undertake adequate training and seek advice from the Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils | Existing procedures adequate. |
| Legal Liability | Legality of activities | 1 | 2 | Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals received for council deliberation and to seek advice if necessary. | Existing procedures adequate. |
| | Proper and timely reporting via Minutes | 1 | 2 | Council always receives and approves Minutes at meetings. | |
| | Proper document control | 1 | 1 | Retention of document policy in place. | |
| Libel and Slander | Legality of activities | 1 | 2 | Covered by Parish Council insurance policy | Existing procedures adequate. |

Section 7: Engagement, Communication and Social Media

| Subject | Risk Identified | L | I | Management of Risk | Action Required |
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| Influence of other local authorities and government organisations to fulfil the requirements of the Parish. | Lack of effective lines of communication with residents or other organisations. | 2 | 2 | Note all communication lines which are essential or beneficial and make information available to all councillors. Establish contacts by name and where possible face-to-face. The Council takes every opportunity to publicise the role of the Parish Council. Effective use of notice boards, parish magazines, web page, social media and 'fliers'. Use key issues to raise profile of PC and to test parishioners' views. | Existing procedure adequate. |
| | Lack of preparation on subjects requiring influence. | 1 | 2 | Ensure that all councillors are aware of need for careful research and are guided as to where to obtain relevant information on issues under discussion. | |
| | Lack of confidence by Parish Councillors. | 1 | 2 | Experienced councillors to assist newcomers to establish essential contacts. Councillors to attend appropriate training offered by the Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils or other bodies. Delegate responsibility for specific contacts to individual councillors. | |
| Website & Social Media | Reputational Risk Libel and Slander Piracy and Infringement | 1 | 2 | The Council recognises that its website and social media platforms form part of its toolkit to meet the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and to connect with the residents of the Parish. Contributors to these platforms are required to apply the same standards of conduct online as are required offline, whether acting in an official or personal capacity. Contributors are required to verify the accuracy and sensitivity of what they are posting online. Copyright and other rights must be respected at all times. If required, advice on content should be sought from the Clerk in the first instance or the Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils. | Communications and Social Media policies in place and reviewed annually. Website located at www.westonparishnotts.org.uk Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WestonParishNotts |