

WOOLASTON PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. With effect from June 2024, this document will become a working document to enable the Council to continually assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

The Council will review all risks monthly at Parish Council meetings (except August and January) and annotate actions.

Subject	Risk Assessment / Risks Identified	Level of Risk H M L	Management/Control of Risk	Review / assess / revise
MANAGEMENT				
Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	If Council are unable to meet in person to conduct business, a Business Continuity Motion is set up to enable Clerk, Chairman & Vice Chairman to make decisions on behalf of the council. All files and recent records (paper and electronic) are kept at the Clerk's home. The Clerk makes regular backups of electronic files to an external hard drive (retained by the Chairman). If the Clerk is indisposed, the Chairman to contact Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC) for advice.	Review when necessary. Ensure procedures below are undertaken.
Clerk	Loss of Clerk Fraud Actions undertaken	M L L	In the event of the Clerk resigning or being indisposed, the Council will enlist the support of GAPTC until a replacement has been appointed at the same time advertising for a new Clerk The requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance must be adhered to. Internal procedures in place. Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice.	Maintain membership of GAPTC Clerk to produce 'Chairman's Box' to include log in details and passwords to be used to enable access to laptop, online accounts etc if Clerk indisposed.
Meeting Locations	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	Council meeting is held in a venue (Woolaston Memorial Hall (WMH)) considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and the general public. WMH Committee has its own risk assessment and procedures	Existing procedures adequate
Council Records – Paper	Loss through: Theft Fire Damage	L L	The Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondences, minutes, insurance, and bank records. The house has three smoke alarms and general domestic fire prevention precautions are taken. Older historical records retained at Gloucestershire archives	Damage from theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate. Existing procedures adequate

Council Records – Electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer	M	The Council electronic records are stored on the Council laptop held with the Clerk at her home. Back-ups of electronic data is made at monthly intervals to an external hard drive which is stored with the Chairman.	Suggest enable Electronic records to be automatically replicated to Cloud storage by the Clerk
Parish Council Web Site	Out of date	M	The Clerk is responsible for maintaining the website, and to ensure content is updated following each meeting. New Website (Apr 2024) provided by Parish Online who ensure that it meets legal requirements, including accessibility statement	Existing procedures adequate. Parish Online maintains site. Clerk to review monthly during first year (2024/2025) to ensure it meets requirements, and annually thereafter. Last review 30 Jun 2025
	Hacked by third party	M		
	A proportion of the public unable to access all aspects of website due to lack of reasonable adjustments	H		
	Report of PC to Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO)	H		

FINANCIAL				
Precept (To fund activities undertaken by the council for the benefit of the community)	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties or being unable to meet expectations of electorate	L	Council receives quarterly budget update information and reviews the budget update / actual position / projected position to the end of year and projects required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings. The total is resolved to be the precept amount requested from FoDDC in January by the Clerk in writing. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received (by BACS) approx. April and October	Existing procedures considered adequate
	Requirements not submitted to (Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC))	L		
	Amount not Received by FoDDC	L		
Financial Records	Inadequate records	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements. Financial records updated and presented monthly and balanced quarterly, six monthly and annually. A councillor is nominated to carry out quarterly Internal Control checks.	Existing procedure adequate. Financial regulations reviewed & adopted Jun 2025
	Financial irregularities	L		
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks Incur bank charges Fraudulent Practices Bank's mistakes	M L L L	Financial Regulations set out banking requirements. Two signatories per cheque, Clerk cannot sign cheques. Online banking – Clerk creates the payment which requires an additional signatory to authorise. A councillor carries out quarterly independent internal controls to check bank reconciliation. Monthly reconciliation carried out by Clerk to check and note errors - forwarded with Agenda and approved at PC meeting.	Existing procedure adequate. Procedure reviewed at PC meeting 12 Jun 2025
Theft of Cash	Loss through dishonesty	L	No petty cash held, any cash /cheques collected is banked by the Clerk and included in the reconciliation procedure. The council's insurance has a Fidelity Guarantee	Existing procedure adequate.
Reporting and Auditing	Information communication	L	Financial information is a regular agenda item and discussed/reviewed and approved at each meeting.	

	Compliance	M	A Budget Monitoring Statement (BMS) is produced quarterly for consideration at full council meeting	BMS prepared for consideration as at 30 Jun 2025
Grants Outgoing	Mis-recording of the Payment of grants Grant applications to Council incorrectly and inconsistently assessed Transparency	L L L	Grant requests / forms submitted in accordance with procedure and reviewed and agreed (or not) and minuted at Council meetings. All expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly. If a payment was made using S137 powers, it would be recorded as such. PC adopted GPC	11 Jun 2024 Council does not currently award grants, therefore, does not have a grant awarding policy.
Grants (Incoming)	Risk of loss of grant / wrong amount paid	L	Financial regulations set how grants should be received. All receipts are reported to the council at the next meeting. Any one-off grants awarded would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied. Receipts on behalf of other groups recorded as such in council accounts	Existing procedure adequate
Procurement / Best Value Accountability	Failure to achieve value for money or purchase items/services not fit for purpose Work awarded Incorrectly Overspend on services	M L L M	Normal Council practice is to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major work competitive tenders would be sought in accordance with Financial regulations.. If problems are encountered with a contract, the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	Existing procedure adequate
Salaries and expenses	Payment error Risk of financial penalty if HMRC PAYE obligations not met Payroll Error (Breach of employment or tax laws)	L L M	Salary rates follow the National Joint Council (NJC) national pay scale and are assessed annually by the council and applied on 1 April each year. Monthly salary payslip lists expenses and is reviewed and signed by Chairman at PC meeting. HMRC / PAYE software (Basic Tools) used for payment and tax records. Tax is paid monthly to HMRC. Salary is paid monthly by direct payment to Clerk's bank account, authorised by a bank signatory	Existing procedure adequate. Council reviews Clerk's pay, expenses and pension provision quarterly as part of internal controls (30 Jun, 30 Sep, 31 Dec, 31 Mar)
VAT	Reclaiming/charging Eligible VAT payments not recovered	L L	Requirements set out in Financial Regulations. Clerk records VAT on purchases separately and retains VAT receipts, VAT reclaimed annually and reported to Council. Clerk ensures invoices include VAT registration number.	Existing procedures adequate VAT claimed Apr 25.
Election	Election / Co-option process not carried out legally Risk of an election costs undercutting provision of statutory services	M M	Clerk produces an internal procedure using guidelines from FODDC and GAPTC; Acceptance of Office forms to be submitted to FODDC and a copy retained by the Clerk. Council provides earmarked reserves set aside for election costs	Existing procedure adequate

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Audit)	Missed deadlines, lack of legal compliance	L	Clerk ensures accurate and timely record keeping is maintained and financial procedures are strictly adhered to; All accounting records and procedures reviewed annually by an external competent & independent person (Internal Auditor). Annual return completed by Clerk, approved by Council and signed by Chairman, and sent to External Auditor within time frame	Existing procedures adequate AGAR for 2024/2025 submitted. Internal Audit completed Apr 25 by GAPTC
	Unable to satisfy requirements to submit within time limits to government appointed auditor	L		

LIABILITY				
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Council to be resolved and clearly minuted at full Council . Clerk to clarify legal position, seeking legal advice where necessary. Council has General Power of Competency (Dec 2023) All Working Groups established are provided with clear terms of reference	Existing procedures considered adequate
	Working parties taking decisions	L		
Minutes and agendas Notices Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed and dated at the next Council meeting by the Chairman. Agenda and minutes displayed on website and notice board according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings is managed by the Chairman.	Existing procedures adequate Ensure Members undertake adequate training to adhere to Code of Conduct
	Record of decisions agreed, and actions taken are lost	L		
	Business Conduct	L		
Insurance (Public Liability)	Risk to third party, property or individual.	L	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements. Employers and employee liabilities is a necessity and within policies. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Fidelity checks in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Insurance provision reviewed annually. Insurance company contacted June 2025 to check cover for trees and Tyre Rope Swing
	Adequacy	L		
	Cost	L		
	Compliance	M		
	Fidelity Guarantee	L		
Data protection	Privacy breach or sensitive data stored with no reason	L	The Council is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and renews annually, prompted by a renewal notice.	Ensure annual renewal of registration (last renewed May 2025)
	Inadequate provision in accordance with General Data Protection Register (GDPR) 2018	L	The council adheres to its Data Protection and Privacy Policy	Review periodically to ensure ongoing compliance
Freedom of Information	Lack of transparency	L	The Council will fulfil its legal obligation to react to requests. FOI requests are processed by the Clerk; receipt of information is confirmed by signature of the requester. Council is aware that receipt of a substantial request could create additional hours work and can request a fee to supplement the extra hours.	Monitor any requests made under FOI; information made available in accordance with FOI Act 2000
	Extra cost through administrative time taken in the event of a FOI request	M		
	Non-compliance with Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000	L		

			Separate council email addresses protect councillors in the event of FOI request. If using personal email, personal laptop may need to be handed over	Councillors provided with gov.uk council email address Apr 2024
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.
PHYSICAL AREAS, EQUIPMENT AND ASSETS				
Assets – street furniture, Bus shelters	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party property Failure to account for assets – their condition or whereabouts could lead to additional costs / insurance implications	L L L	Annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision. All assets owned by the 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 Council. Assets are insured. Bus shelter inspected and cleared of vegetation (Nov 24)	Existing procedures adequate Assets reviewed at Annual Meeting 12 Jun 2025. Chairman & Vice chairman will conduct a visual check of assets. Loose brick at top rear right hand side, noted for repair Nov 2024
Open spaces, public areas (Grass Keep, Community Orchard, Grass verges) Tyre/Rope Swing (not erected by Parish Council)	Damage or Injury to member of public Trips & Falls Fall resulting in injury to member of public	M	Areas kept clean of weeds and moss and other vegetation. Litter picker employed to maintain public areas. Monitored by councillors Contractor employed to maintain grassed areas Warning notice displayed on site of Tyre on rope swing – “Use at own risk – if sign removed the swing will be taken down”	Existing procedures adequate Sign removed by member of public Jun 24. Note added Facebook to explain insurance requirement. A replacement sign was erected Mar 2025. Insurance company contacted to check whether covered – Jun 2025
Notice board	Risk/damage / injury to third parties Roadside safety when reading	L	One noticeboard – sited away from road and oncoming traffic. Inspected monthly by the Clerk. Any repairs or maintenance requirements are brought to the attention of the Council.	Existing procedures adequate
Trees	Injury to member of public from falling trees or overhanging branches	M	Full Arborists Inspection Tree Report survey to be obtained and actioned every 3 years in line with British Standard 3998: 2010 and records maintained Consultant to be Arboriculture Association approved	Tree inspection carried out July 2023 (report retained by clerk). Tree work required has been highlighted and is ongoing. Lime tree removed Jun 2024. Council continues to provide earmarked reserves and set aside to withstand ongoing and unexpected expenditure.
Closed Churchyard and Cemetery	Damage or injury to third party due to Health & Safety risks	M	Cemetery Rules in place and reviewed annually	Existing procedures adequate

	<p>Possible injury from broken or damaged stoneware falling or broken glass ornaments Risk of incorrect interment, may lead to legal issues if plot already in use</p> <p>Potential injury from slips / falls / uneven ground</p> <p>Risk of headstones/memorials toppling over</p> <p>A tabletop tomb is coming apart in the churchyard (Nov 24)</p>		<p>Competent and experienced Funeral Directors employed to dig graves - liable for own risk assessment and health and safety measures. Burial plan updated after every interment. Notice board updated quarterly</p> <p>Reliable contractor employed to cut grass; they are liable for own risk assessment and health and safety measures</p> <p>All memorials installed by BRAMM registered stonemason Annual inspections (including "Topple test") are carried out by the Cemetery Working Group, reported to full council and action taken as necessary</p> <p>Working Group to monitor</p>	<p>Copy of contractor insurance certificate, risk assessment and method statement retained on file</p> <p><i>Inspection by P Blatchly Apr 2024. Unstable headstones are now secured and the cemetery levelled (Nov 2024)</i></p> <p><i>Reviewed Mar 2025 – more graves are unlevel. P Blatchly asked to carry out further assessment</i></p>
Christmas Tree & Christmas Lights	<p>Risk to the public & volunteers during installation Injury if hit by falling tree / Trip hazard if tree falls Electrocution during installation Danger from traffic / Car hitting Christmas tree Risk to public and volunteers whilst in situ: Injury if hit by falling lights, or tripping over supporting cables</p> <p>Lights distract drivers</p> <p>Injury if hit by falling lights (affixed to buildings)</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>Installed by tree provider who has experience of erecting trees People are nominated to ensure tree is slung correctly and to ensure public and volunteers are clear during installation.</p> <p>Power supply isolated until all lights are hung Tree is set away from road traffic on village green Lights are not installed higher than ladder height. At least two people are nominated to use the ladders. Ladder supported by nominated person. Installed above grass and not a solid surface Cables secured / hidden with cable mats across the road Lights used do not impair vision. Lights fixed and secured to building by responsible and competent person</p>	Existing procedures adequate.

COUNCILLORS' PROPRIETY				
Members' Interests	<p>Conflict of interests</p> <p>Register of members interests</p> <p>Opportunity for impropriety</p>	<p>M</p> <p>M</p> <p>M</p>	<p>Councillors have a duty for Declarations of interest by members at start of Council meetings or when it becomes apparent during the meeting. Register of member's interests' forms reviewed individually by councillors. Councillors to notify Clerk of any gifts/ hospitality received over £50</p>	<p>Existing procedures adequate.</p> <p>Members take responsibility to update their register, reviewed at annual meeting</p>
COUNCIL REPUTATION				

Councillors & Clerk Actions	Bringing the council into disrepute (Inappropriate behaviour not in accordance with Standing Orders or Code of Conduct)	M	Councillors understand and receive training on the Code of Conduct. A professional approach is undertaken on all Council matters. Code of conduct is approved and dictates councillor behaviour. Councillors given copy of standing orders and encouraged to identify training needs	Not all Councillors have received training. Councillors to identify training needs and register on training courses.
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Emergency Plan / Community Resilience				
Pandemic	Disruption to amenities, impact to local businesses Vulnerable residents unable to gain access to supplies or medication		Follow national guidelines	Resilience plan agreed (Oct 2024)
Flood (incl Surface water)	Property damage, loss of utilities, contamination & disease, Congestion, road closures, flooding to properties. Potential homelessness		Updated national information to be added to website / Facebook	
Sustained power outage	Disruption to amenities, impact to local businesses. Vulnerable residents unable to gain access to supplies or medication			
Severe weather (Storms, heavy snow, freezing conditions, heatwave, high winds)	Fallen trees, building or vehicle damage, public accidents, icy roads, Congestion if snow or storm damage, power outage, May impact the vulnerable (hypothermia) Gridlock traffic Residents unable to go to school/work Care services provision limited		Issue sandbags, open community buildings, identify volunteers to visit isolated & vulnerable	

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