

# **BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

## **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

**Adopted 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022**  
**Reviewed January 2023**

**Next review date March 2024**

## **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Barham Parish Council (the Council) is committed to identifying and managing risks, using the following procedures, and to ensure that risks are maintained at an acceptable level. Any action that is felt necessary will be taken up by the Council.

The Council will review risks at a minimum yearly, including any newly identified risks. The review will include identification of unacceptable levels of risk.

The approach to local council audit requires councils to provide an assessment of the ways in which business and other risks are managed in order that corporate governance arrangements are strengthened, stewardship of public funds are improved and assurance provided to taxpayers. The failure to manage risk effectively can be expensive in terms of litigation and reputation as well as an impediment to the achievement of the desired aims of the Council.

The Local Councils Governance and Accountability Guidance makes the following observations regarding risk management.

1. Risk management is not just about financial management; it is about setting objectives and achieving them in order to deliver high quality public services.
2. The new approach places emphasis on local councils strengthening their own corporate governance arrangements, improving the stewardship of public funds and providing assurances to taxpayers.

It goes on to state that members of the Parish Council are ultimately responsibly for risk management because risk threatens the achievement of objectives. The Council is well placed to undertake this as many features of risk management are already well established and are effectively part of the day to day operations undertaken on behalf of the Parish Council by the Chairperson and the Clerk. The Government's requirement for the

preparation of a formal document outlining a Council's assessment of its risk management process does afford the opportunity to adapt, improve and document existing processes. 2

Members of the Parish Council should, therefore:-

- a) Take steps to identify key risks facing the Council
- b) Evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place
- c) Decided upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Risk Assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace and business activities and environmental factors that will enable the Council to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or in its practices. Based on a recorded assessment the Council should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible, making sure that all members of the Council are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed
- Identify what the risk may be
- Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings
- Review, assess and revise if required
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This risk assessment is clearly one of value-judgement. Risk identification can be daunting as it can lead to a long list of potential threats with no sense of their relative importance. There is no 'right' answer in terms of evaluation of potential risk as one Council's view may vary from another's depending upon particular circumstances in each Parish.

The tables below are put forward for consideration by the Parish Council and are aimed to be a starting point for the development of a system of risk management by the Council

<b>HAZARD</b>	<b>RISK (H, M or L)</b>	<b>IMPACT (H, M OR L)</b>	<b>CONTROLS</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL ACTION</b>
Activities conflict with statutory objectives of the Council	L	L	Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct in place. All of which are reviewed yearly as a minimum	
Conflict of interest of Councillor	L	H	Declaration of Interests is on the agenda at every Parish Meeting and councillors are required to inform the Chairman accordingly. Register of Interest is updated annually. Councillor skills insufficient.	
Councillor skills insufficient	M	H	Councillors encouraged to attend courses for Parish Councillors via SALC and maintain an interest in continuing education, reporting back to full council where appropriate.	
Lack of adequate Data Protection	L	L	Parish Council registered with Data Protection Agency and yearly subscription paid.	
Loss of Council Records	L	H	Clerk to back up computer records regularly. Other Councillors to ensure adequate back up of their records. Paper records kept in safe, fire proof storage. Website information is backed up by the provider.	

Inadequate insurance	L	M	Annual review of Insurance cover to ensure that liability and fidelity insurance is adequate.	
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Contracts of employment not adequate	L	L	Regular reviews of Clerk and RFO's contracts with the guidance of SALC to ensure they are in line with current legislation	
Lack of adequate maintenance of assets	L	L	All assets owned by the PC are regularly inspected and maintained. All assets are insured.	
Unsafe play equipment at the Kirby Rise play area, uneven surface etc.	L	H	Monthly inspections by a Parish Councillor. Annual inspection made by ROSPA accredited inspector. Areas of concern raised in the report are actioned as recommended.	
Trees & or branches falling on road or cars/people	L	H	Annual inspection of trees on PC public amenity land carried out by qualified tree surgeon.	
Meeting locations do not conform with Health and Safety guidelines	L	L	All PC meetings are held in a hired meeting room at Barham Church, who are responsible for ensuring that relevant safety standards are met.	

Reviewed by the Parish Council 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023