

Risk Management Scheme

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document has been produced to enable Harpole Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. The list is not exhaustive and the Parish Council may wish to consider other risks not identified.

Financial and Management				
Area	Risk	Control Measures	Recommendation	Residual Risk
Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Parish Council to carry out its Statutory Duties.	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget reviews throughout the year, and at the time the precept amount is considered, the Parish Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position, with indicative figures/costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information, and from consideration of any future projects, the Parish Council determines the amount of precept required for the following financial year. The Clerk requests the precept in writing. The Clerk advises the Parish Council when the precept monies are received.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW
Financial Records	Inadequate Records. Financial Irregularities.	The Parish Council has Finance Regulations which sets out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Finance Regulations annually.	LOW
Bank & Banking	Inadequate Checks. Banks Mistakes. Loss of Signatories.	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the banking requirements. The Clerk reconciles the bank account(s) once a month when the statement arrives. Any problems/irregularities are dealt with immediately. The Parish Council will choose replacement signatories from time to time, but the process can be slow.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Finance Regulations annually.	LOW

Reporting and Auditing	Information Communication . Compliance.	The Balance of Accounts is produced monthly and presented to the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee. The monthly report to the Parish Council includes a list of payments for approval at the meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW
Grants Payable	Power to pay. Authorisation of Parish Council to pay.	All such expenditure goes through the required Parish Council's process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW
Grants Received	Receipt of grant.	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One-off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would be created, if required.	LOW
Best Value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly. Overspend on services.	Normal Parish Council procedure is to seek, if possible, three quotations for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders are 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 the Parish Council. This is covered in the Finance Regulations.	Existing procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations annually.	LOW MED
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly. Unpaid Tax to Inland Revenue.	The Council uses an external payroll provider who advises of salary to be paid and contributions to be transferred to HMRC and NEST	Existing procedures adequate	LOW
Employees	Loss of Clerk. Fraud by Staff. Health & Safety.	Measures have been implemented so all records are held on a parish laptops, held by the Clerk and administrator. Details of all passwords and pins are held securely, accessible only to the Chairman, Clerk and administrator. The requirements of the Insurance are to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. All employees to be provided with adequate direction and the safety equipment needed to undertake their roles.	Existing procedures adequate. Monitor H&S Policy. Review Insurance Policy annually.	LOW
Councillor Allowances	Councillors overpaid. Income tax deduction.	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors.	No procedure required.	N/A
Election Costs	Risk of an election cost.	Risk is higher in an election year. When a scheduled election is due, the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the Unitary Council. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having elections, as this is a democratic process.	Council hold reserves to cover costs.	MED

VAT	Reclaiming.	The Clerk analyses any VAT charged on purchases within the expenditure of the Parish Council and maintains all VAT receipts within the Parish Council's records. The Clerk produces a VAT refund analysis and makes a claim to HM Revenue & Customs for recovery of the amounts. The refund is received via BACS transfer and the Clerk notifies the Parish Council at the next meeting. All documentation in relation to the process is maintained in the Parish Council's records.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Training	Lack of training can lead to incorrect decisions being taken.	All staff should be provided with relevant training, reference books and access to assistance and legal advice required to carry out the role. Parish Councillors should also be provided with training wherever applicable (whether new or refresher). The Parish Council is a member of NCALC which is a source of information/training for many aspects.	Clerk and Councillors to consider training periodically.	LOW
Audit – Internal	Completion within time limits	The Internal Auditor is appointed by the Council. Internal Auditor is supplied with documents requested to carry out the audit and the required form to complete and sign.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Annual Return	Completion and Submission within time limits.	The Annual Return is completed and signed by the Parish Council, submitted to the Internal Auditor for checking, completing and signing then checked and sent to the External Auditor within the time limit.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at a Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee Council meetings. The annual budget should reference the powers used for regular payments made.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices/ Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality. Business conduct.	Minutes and agendas 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 meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Parish Council meetings is managed by the Chair.	Existing Procedures Adequate. Training/guidance given to the Chair (if required). Members to adhere to the Code of Conduct.	LOW
Members Interests	Conflict of Interest. Register of Members Interests.	Declarations of interest by members at Parish Council meetings is a regular agenda item to remind members of their duty. Register of Members Interests forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing Procedures Adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register.	LOW-MED
Insurance	Adequacy and Cost	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements to ensure best value and that adequate cover is being achieved.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW

		The Council has included Cybercrime cover in its insurance.		TOGETHER HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL
Data Protection	Noncompliance.	The Parish Council is registered for Data Protection with the Information Commissioner, and NCALC is appointed as the Data Officer..	Ensure annual renewal of registration.	LOW
Freedom of Information	Non Compliance with the Act Publication Scheme.	The Parish Council has a Model Publication Scheme in place. To date there has been no requests under FOI. The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours work. The Parish Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours.	Monitor any requests made under FOI.	LOW
Transparency and accountability	Policy provision	The Council has adopted the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014	Existing procedures adequate	LOW
Councillors	Losing Councillors or having more than 7 vacancies at any one time	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow. This either leads to an election or into the 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 applications and a co-option vote held at a meeting. Appointment and formal co-option then takes place. If there are more than 7 vacancies at any one time, the Parish Council would become inquorate. The legal process of West Northamptonshire Council appointing members would take place.	Existing procedures adequate. Procedures of another body are adequate.	LOW
Litigation	Potential risk of legal action being taken against the Parish Council	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. To date the Parish Council hasn't had any claims made against it.	Insurance is adequate for requirements but there is still a risk of other claims.	MED
Physical Equipment or Areas				
Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) property	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedures adequate. Asset	LOW
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of Income Risk/damage to third parties	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed, inspected and maintained as required. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is actioned/authorised in accordance with the current procedures of the Parish Council. Assets are insured.	Existing procedures adequate.	LOW

Notice Boards	Risk of damage	The Parish Council currently has six notice boards. No formal inspection procedures are in place, but any reports of damage or faults are reported to the Parish Council and dealt with in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council.	Existing procedures adequate.	LOW
Meeting Location	Adequacy. Health & Safety.	The Parish Council's meetings are held in the Methodist Chapel and are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety, Disability Discrimination and comfort aspects.	Existing location adequate.	LOW
Electronic Records of the Parish Council	Loss through theft, fire, damage or corruption of computer	The Parish Council's records are accessed on the parish laptop. The files are backed up using cloud storage.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Paper Records of the Parish Council	Loss through theft, fire, damage or corruption of computer	The Parish Council's paper records are stored in the Parish office. The records include historical correspondence, minutes, agendas, insurance details, bank records etc.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW

Last Adopted by Harpole Parish Council

3rd March 2025

Reviewed and Readopted 7th September 2026

Next Review September 2027

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Chairman

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Parish Clerk