

Milton Abbot Grouped Parish Council

AGM Agenda 14th May 2015

Appendix C

Risk Assessment – Annual Review 2014/15

As part of a series of annual checks to ensure that the Parish Council is properly managed and is accountable for its actions, it is necessary to carry out a 'risk assessment'.

A risk is the likelihood of a hazard occurring. A hazard is a source of potential harm, damage or loss. So this risk assessment looks at the range of hazards that might affect the operation of Parish Council, its Councillors or members of the public interacting with it and assesses the risk of that hazard occurring and what could be done to minimise or avoid that happening.

Subject	Hazard	Level of risk	Risk management	Further Action
Parish Councillors	Vacancies sometimes occur between elections. If not filled, the Council runs a higher risk of being inquorate and thereby unable to conduct its business.	Low	Have a procedure by which casual vacancies are filled in an appropriate and timely manner.	Adopt such a procedure.
Parish Councillors	If Councillors fail to complete their initial register of interests, or review them regularly and a conflict of interest occurs, the Council may be brought into disrepute and the business of the Council adversely affected.	Low	Newly appointed Councillors to complete a register of interests within 28 days of appointment. Councillors to be required to advise the Clerk of any changes as they occur and to review their register of interests annually.	Clerk to monitor the completion of registers of interests for all Councillors. Clerk to instigate and monitor an annual review by Councillors of their registers of interest.

Financial resources	If the Parish Council does not have proper control over its financial assets, there is potential for loss through mis-management or fraud.	Low	<p>Regularly reconcile banking and financial records.</p> <p>Ensure that no one person can commit to expenditure on behalf of the Parish Council</p>	<p>Quarterly reconciliations signed by the Chair at Parish Council meetings.</p> <p>All expenses paid by cheque, with two signatories required.</p>
Parish Clerk	The resignation or incapacity of the Parish Council's only officer would leave it vulnerable to the interruption of the Council's business.	Medium	<p>Establish clear processes and procedures for managing the annual cycle of the Parish Council's business and its financial processes, to assist an interim appointee.</p> <p>Enable the Chair, vice-Chair or other appropriate Councillor to carry out the duties of the Parish Clerk during a period of absence or until a replacement is in post.</p>	<p>Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are being kept up to date.</p> <p>An annual cycle of the Council's business and management processes has been created.</p> <p>Create a Standing Committee of the Parish Council to appoint a suitable Councillor to carry out the duties of the Parish Clerk on an interim basis, should this become necessary.</p>

<p>Legal liability</p>	<p>If the Parish Council does not conduct itself properly it is vulnerable to legal challenge.</p> <p>If the Parish Council does not take reasonable steps to comply with relevant statutory requirements, it may become liable for costs and/or damages.</p> <p>If the Parish Council does not have adequate insurance cover for its own activities and those of individual parish councillors, financial losses may be incurred.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Ensure that the Parish Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are relevant, up to date and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Ensure that the Parish Council, Parish Clerk and individual parish councillors follow Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Obtain adequate insurance cover.</p>	<p>Annual review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.</p> <p>Membership of a professional body providing advice and guidance to parish councils on the conduct of their operations.</p> <p>Annual review of the adequacy of insurance cover.</p>
<p>Financial resources</p>	<p>If the Parish Council does not have proper control over its financial assets, there is potential for loss through mis-management or fraud.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Regularly review the reconciliation of banking and financial records.</p> <p>Ensure that no one person can commit to expenditure on behalf of the Parish Council</p>	<p>Quarterly reconciliations signed by the Chair at Parish Council meetings.</p> <p>All expenses paid by cheque, with two signatories required.</p>

<p>Health and Safety</p>	<p>If members and officers of the Parish Council, or third parties, are exposed to health and safety risks, the Parish Council may become liable.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Liability is only likely to occur in respect of premises used by and equipment owned by the Parish Council.</p>	<p>Ensure that all premises used by the Parish Council can provide satisfactory evidence of compliance with health and safety inspections.</p> <p>Ensure that the Parish Council's insurance covers its Vehicle Activated Signs.</p>
<p>Council records</p>	<p>Unless key records of the Parish Council are duplicated and held on separate sites, the Parish Council is vulnerable to their loss due to fire, flood or theft.</p> <p>Unless the Parish Council has a standalone system, records held on the Parish Clerk's computer may be lost, when they are transferred from one post-holder to another.</p> <p>It may be difficult to comply with Freedom of Information Act requests.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>No procedures are in place.</p>	<p>Carry out a review of the need for a computer owned by the Parish Council and provided for the Parish Clerk's use.</p> <p>Establish a record system.</p> <p>Set up duplicate storage of the Parish Council's records.</p>