

Stanion Parish Council Risk Assessment 2023/2024

Overview

A Risk Assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable Stanion Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. Stanion Parish Council will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate risks, in so far as is practically and reasonably possible. This document has been produced to enable Stanion Parish Council to assess the risks it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

Rating A = Satisfactory, Rating B = Review Proposed, Rating X = Unsatisfactory Next review date: June 2024

	Risks Identified	Management/Control	Rating	Review/Assess	Action by
Financial 1	Inadequate records. Financial Irregularities.	The Parish Council will use Financial Regulations which set out the requirements based on NALC Model Regulations. Appointment of Northants CALC Ltd Internal Audit Service.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate. Review January 2024	Clerk/RFO Council
2	Lack of commitment by councillors to the budgetary process.	The full Council will receive detailed budget estimates. The precept will be determined on basis of the budget set. Expenditure against budget will be reported regularly to the Council.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
3	Failure to ensure that consideration of budgetary process is begun early enough to submit precept.	Consideration of budgetary process will start at least 3 months prior to submission date of precept. Checks by Clerk/RFO and Councillors will be part of internal control procedure.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
4	Inadequate internal controls with regard to monitoring expenditure.	Financial internal control checks will be carried out regularly by a Councillor who is not a bank signatory to ensure effective financial management by Clerk/RFO.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
5	Reserves too high/low.	The Practitioners' Guide advises reserve balance must not exceed the precept but should be sufficient to allow the Council to operate if the expected precept is not received.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council

6	Illegal activity or payments.	All activity and payments within the powers of the Council to be resolved at Council meetings as per Financial Regulations.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
7	Fraud by Clerk/RFO and Councillors.	Ensure level of fidelity insurance is adequate and review annually. Payments authorised by two councillors	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO
8	Cash handling.	Cash may be received and should be paid into the current account. No petty cash is kept irrespective of the amount.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO
9	VAT – requirements of HMRC not met.	VAT will be reclaimed at least yearly.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO
Business Continuity 1	Incapacity, absence and/or resignation of Clerk/RFO.	A Councillor will be designated to temporarily act as Clerk/RFO in an emergency. (The Councillor cannot receive remuneration for clerical duties.)	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council
2	Loss or damage to Council records through theft, fire and/or other damage. Inability to access records.	Minutes and agendas are held on the Council's website. Paper copies are held by the Council until they are transferred to County Archive. Data is backed up on cloud storage. Copies of policies and other records are also on the website and can be downloaded. Passwords are available to the Chairman and the Councillor designated to act as temporary Clerk/RFO in an emergency.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO
3	Security of data (IT systems and support).	Any confidential documents are securely destroyed. The Council laptop is password protected and has security protection through AVG Antivirus. The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
4	Failure to retain or secure the necessary number of members for the Council.	Clerk/RFO to maintain an up-to-date Councillor Attendance Register. The Council will have a policy for casual vacancies.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council

5	Election costs.	The Council will maintain an election fund to meet any election costs. If this is insufficient at any point in time, the shortfall will be met from the general reserve.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
Legal 1	Freedom of Information.	The Council has adopted the Model Scheme produced by the Office of the Information Commissioner. Northants CALC Ltd is currently assisting with FOI requests.	B	FOI requests actioned by Northants CALC Ltd during governance recovery.	Northants CALC Ltd
2	Governing policies not up to date.	The Clerk/RFO has begun a rolling policy review schedule and policies will be referred to Council for review as and when necessary.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
3	Failure to ensure that all employees are paid in accordance with Council regulations and are adequately monitored. Failure to comply with Inland Revenue and HMRC regulations.	A contract of employment and job description is agreed for the Clerk/RFO. Payroll is provided by Charity Payroll Services. Ensure employee regulations are available and understood by the Clerk/RFO. No additional payment made to the Clerk/RFO without Council approval.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council Internal Auditor Internal Controller
4	Conflict of interest. Members Register of Interests.	Councillors are required to declare where they have an interest in any item of business and this will be recorded in the minutes. Completed Register of Interests forms by Councillors are submitted to the Monitoring Officer at NNC and periodically reviewed. Any change in a Councillors Register of Interest must be declared. A Code of Conduct must be adopted and reviewed as required.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Councillors

Governance & Management 1	Lack of knowledge of regulations and legislation	Ensure that a Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place and are reviewed annually. Highlight essential parts and provide training where relevant. Councillors to attend training courses. Membership of Northants CALC Ltd.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Councillors
2	Action by the Council outside its legal powers.	Clerk/RFO to monitor relevant legislation and report to Council. Advice to be sought from other bodies where required.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO
3	Lack of commitment to regulations and procedures.	Council and the Clerk/RFO to review the Council's meeting and operational procedures annually.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
4	Notice of meeting.	The meeting agenda is placed on village noticeboards and on the website giving the required notice of each meeting. Councillors to receive summons electronically.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO
5	Accurate and legal minutes.	Minutes are presented to the next Council meeting for approval. Minutes are produced for all meetings. Draft minutes are posted on the website.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
6	Written communication to third parties.	All formal written communications should be directed through the Clerk/RFO or agreed at Council meetings and copied to the Clerk/RFO.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council
7	Council engagement by members in the operation and activities of the Council.	Ensure every opportunity is taken to publicise the role of the Council through the website. Effective use of village noticeboards. Use key issues to raise the profile of the Council and to test residents' views.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
8	Impact of public spending cuts.	All Councillors to be made aware that priorities must be set on the basis of the financial capacity of the Council to deliver. Councillors to attend training where appropriate.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council

9	Lack of engagement by Councillors and residents on major items of public interest.	Ensure publicity through village noticeboards, leaflets and the website.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
10	Lack of knowledge by Councillors on their role, responsibility and accountability.	All Councillors to receive an induction upon becoming a member of the Council. Councillors to attend all relevant training courses.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
11	Inadequate insurance cover for Councillors and Clerk/RFO.	Include a review of a Risk Assessment on the agenda of Council meetings at least annually. Ensure a Risk Assessment is carried out for all new assets and appropriate insurance cover maintained.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
12	Failure to identify, value and maintain all assets of the Council and ensure that asset and investment registers are complete.	A record to be maintained of all assets for which the Council is responsible and include in the year-end accounts. Arrange for an annual review of valuations and obtain a professional valuation where appropriate.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
13	Adoption and implementation of appropriate government legislation.	Clerk to have appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at Council meetings. Clerk to attend training and conferences and to read sector publications to keep up to date.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
Assets and property 1	Loss or damage to Assets Risk/damage to third party.	An Asset Register is to be maintained for asset control. An annual review of any assets will be undertaken for insurance purposes. Regular risk checks of Council property to be carried out. Repairs to be undertaken by a competent contractor. Public liability insurance is in place.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council

2	Poor maintenance of assets or amenities.	All assets owned by the Council will be regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is to be actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Council.	B	Procedure once in place will be adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
3	Employment of Contractors.	All contractors must hold sufficient public liability insurance and health and safety certificates. Contractors to be issued with Council's requirements.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council
4	Adequacy of meeting locations Health & Safety COVID-19.	Council meetings are held in The Village Hall which is a venue considered to have all the appropriate facilities for the Clerk/RFO, Councillors and the general public.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/RFO Council