

HEADON-CUM-UPTON, GROVE & STOKEHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Financial Risk Assessment

“The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Parish Council.”

This Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable **Headon-cum-Upton, Grove & Stokeham Parish Council** to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment we can then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

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.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Parish Councillors	Losing Parish Councillor membership or having more than 8 vacancies at any one time	L	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow. This either leads to a bi-election or into a 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 applicants and co-option vote at a Parish Council meeting then appointment. If there are more than 8 vacancies at any one time on the Parish Council it becomes inquorate. The legal process of Bassetlaw District Council appointing members takes place.	Existing procedures adequate. Procedures of another body are adequate.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to Bassetlaw District Council in time. Amount not received by HUGS Parish Council	L L	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information and the precept is an agenda item at full Parish Council. At the Budget/Precept meeting Parish Councillors receive a budget plan prepared by the Clerk. With this information the Parish Council maps out the required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from Bassetlaw District Council. This figure is submitted by the Clerk on the required form to Bassetlaw District Council. The Precept should be considered by the Parish Council before the deadline set by Bassetlaw District Council. The Clerk informs the Parish Council when the monies are received (generally April and/or September). If the precept is not received, then reserve money will be used until this time.	Existing procedure adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Annual review of Financial Regulations
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank/Accounts mistakes Charges Loss of signatories Loss of access to bank information	L L L L M	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Any financial errors can be found when the Clerk reconciles the accounts with the bank statement. Any anomalies will be identified and rectified. The Parish Council would choose new signatories following an Election. This can take time with the bank and necessary paperwork. All Parish Councillors are encouraged to be bank signatories. Inconsistency in staff and councillors could make this a risk. Bank details to be kept by chair as well as the Clerk. Payments are set up by the Clerk and authorised by 2 signatories.	Existing procedure adequate.
Loss	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Cash / cheques received are banked promptly. Petty Cash is not kept.	Existing procedure adequate.
Litigation	Potential risk of legal action being taken against the Parish Council	M	Public liability insurance covers general personal injury claims where the Parish Council is found to be at fault, but not spurious or frivolous claims - these cannot be insured against. Ensure Risk Assessments are carried out where there are potential areas for risk.	Insurance is adequate for requirements but there is still risk of other claims.
Reporting and auditing	Information communication Compliance within required timescale	L M	Accounts consisting of receipts and payments, and a Bank reconciliation is produced each quarter and is approved at a full Council meeting. The Parish Council appoint an Internal Auditor to ensure compliance.	Existing procedure adequate.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Grants and support - payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Parish Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Parish Council process of approval, being minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors request S137 rules if required.
Grants	Grant Application Process	L	Grants issued are authorised and agreed by Full Council, generally at the Budget meeting.	Procedure and Application form adequate
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, 3 quotations for any work required to be undertaken for goods and services. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be 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 Parish Council. This is covered in the Financial Regulations. Each contractor would have their own Public Liability Insurance.	Existing procedure adequate.
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Loss of stock Unpaid invoices	L L L L L	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. At each Parish Council meeting the list of payments are authorised. The Clerk processes these payments via the online bank account and they are authorised by two Parish Councillors. The Parish Council has minimal stocks; these are checked and monitored by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate
Employees	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff Actions undertaken by staff Health & Safety	L L L	In case of loss of Clerk there is a risk of losing access to parish information. Locum to be employed through SLCC or NALC. The Clerk is provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role incl. Membership of NALC. The Clerk works from home.	Passwords and access information to be held by Chairman (in a sealed envelope) as well as Clerk. Monitor working conditions, safety requirements and insurance regularly.
Salaries and assoc. costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong hours paid Wrong rate paid False employee Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue	L L L L L L	The Parish Council will authorise the appointment of all employees through the Parish Council. Salary rates are assessed annually at the budget/precept meeting and applied on 1 April each year, or when notification is received from NALC. Employment papers checked on appointment. Payments are made to the Inland Revenue (for Tax and NI) as necessary by the Clerk, who is experienced in employment issues. The Clerk has a contract of employment and job description Salaries are paid on the 28 th of each month.	Existing system Adequate.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	M	Risk is higher in an election year, but there is a risk that a by- election is called for any casual vacancies. When a scheduled election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from Bassetlaw District Council for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having elections, as this is a democratic process. The Parish Council have money in reserves if needed to pay for any election costs.	Parish Council should consider precepting a larger amount each year, and saving each year to cover all costs, as recommended by the Clerk.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. VAT is re claimed annually if applicable.	Existing procedure adequate.
Employers Annual Return	Paying and accounting for NI and Tax of employees' salaries	L	Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online to the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame.	Existing procedure adequate.
Annual Return	Completion/Submission within time limits	L	The Annual Return is completed and signed by the Parish Council, submitted to the internal audit for completion and signing then checked and sent on to the External Auditor.	Existing procedure adequate.
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Meetings. Advice to be sought from NALC or Bassetlaw District Council when needed.	Existing procedure adequate.
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	M M	Minutes and agenda 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 Parish Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements, Business conducted at Parish Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	Existing procedure adequate.. Members to adhere to Code of Conduct and Standing orders
Members interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members interests	L M	Declarations of Interest should be declared at each meeting. Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Parish Councillors and updated accordingly. The onus is on Parish Councillors to keep these up to date. These are held by Bassetlaw District Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance	L L	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for. Ensure compliance measures are in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance.
Freedom of Information Act/GDPR	Policy Provision	M	The Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this may require many hours of additional work. The Clerk and Council must comply with GDPR and carry out any necessary and relevant training.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the FOI Act.

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Asset register to be updated Annually.
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of income or performance Risk to third parties Damage to equipment.	L L L	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. All assets are insured and reviewed annually. All public amenity land is inspected regularly by Councillors and the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure inspections carried out.
Notice boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety	L L	The Parish Council has four notice boards sited in the parish. All locations have approval by relevant parties and are insured. They are inspected regularly by the Clerk - any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Keys held by Parish Councillors.	Existing procedure adequate.
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Parish Council Meetings are held at Headon Village Hall, Church Street, Headon. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Parish Councillors and Public who attend from a Health & Safety and comfort aspect.	Existing locations adequate.
Parish Council records - paper	Loss through: Fire, theft and damage	L M L	Current Parish Council records (last 3 years) are stored at the home of the Parish Clerk. All other records are stored at Headon Village Hall. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, leases for land or property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. in a locked but not fire proof cupboard.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate.
Parish Council records - electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage corruption of computer	L M	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerks Laptop. Back-up of the files need to be taken at regular intervals and kept on a hard drive, which is stored separately from the lap top.	A memory stick/hard drive back-up of electronic files.

This Financial Risk Assessment was reviewed and accepted by Headon-cum-Upton, Grove & Stokeham Parish Council on the 13th April 2026 (agenda Item 26/188) to be reviewed again March 2027