

# PETTISTREE PARISH COUNCIL: RISK REGISTER 2023

Approved 21 March 2024

This table shows our Parish Council has identified and assessed the risks it faces and then satisfied itself that adequate steps have been taken to manage and minimise the key risks. In order to help prioritise risk management effort, the risks have been categorised into three levels: high (H), medium (M) and low (L).

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H M L	Management of Risk	ACTION Review Assess Revise
<b>FINANCIAL RISKS</b>				
<b>Precept</b>	Inadequate precept	L	The RFO prepares an annual budget taking account of past and current expenditure, future projects, current bank balances and debtors and creditors. The RFO and Chair determine from these data the amount of precept required from SCDC. A full budget review is undertaken by the Parish Council in November and the PC formally resolves the precept at its January Council Meeting. The RFO then submits a formal, written request to SCDC.  The PC is advised every April of the annual precept figure which is then transferred by BACS payment in two parts into the PC's current bank account.	Assess and Review annually
<b>Financial and general business</b>	Overspending or failure to maintain adequate reserves	L	The PC has determined and ratified a policy such that it will, in future, maintain a financial reserve based on the previous 5 years' spending or a	Review annually

			percentage of the precept. It will seek to protect these through judicious management of expenditure and low-risk fund raising.	
<b>Financial records</b>	Inadequate records  Changed financial	<b>L</b>	The PC operates under published financial regulations. These also set out how records must be maintained monthly by the PC and annually by an independent internal and external auditor. A copy of these financial regulations is readily available from the RFO.	Review annually
<b>Administration</b>	Loss of website	<b>M</b>	<b>The PC is dependent on our webmaster to post public documents.</b>	Assess a back-up system: Clerk will investigate the feasibility of enabling the Clerk to upload parish council documents to the existing website or creating a new website
	Unable to retain clerk	<b>L</b>	Ensure the clerk's duties are adequately covered by the RFO, Chair and PC	Review process for recruitment
	Retention and mobility of PC records	<b>H</b>	<b>Ensure that records are kept in a way which is accessible to councillors in the event of loss of clerk, RFO, Chair.</b>	Review current system by March 2024: A backup copy of the council's electronic documents will be saved to a USB drive by the Clerk and provided to a nominated councillor for safekeeping after each council meeting

<b>Banking</b>	Inadequate checks on receipts, payments and balances	L	The PC maintains two bank accounts. All payments are made using cheques drawn on the Current Account and must be signed by <b>two</b> signatories in line with the current mandate. Reserves are kept within the Savings account and may be transferred back to the Current Account to meet high levels of expenditure.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.
	Inadequate current signatories to sign cheques	L	The Clerk prepares monthly bank reconciliations for all accounts when the relevant statements are received to ensure all receipts, payments and transfers are properly recorded and any variations are reported immediately. All accounts are fully and independently audited each year.  Ensure mandates are up-to-date with adequate signatories.	
<b>Financial controls</b>	Inadequate processes or checks	L	Any financial obligation must be resolved and clearly minuted before any commitment is entered into. All payments must be notified, approved and clearly minuted by members at regular and quorate PC meetings. Any S137 payments must be recorded at time of approval. All payments are fully and independently audited each year.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.
<b>VAT</b>	Maintain records and claim refunds within set time limits	L	Under current HMRC legislation, the PC is able to reclaim all VAT paid on goods and services at the relevant rate. The RFO calculates the VAT paid by analysing all invoices using the PC's accounting spread sheets and retains all VAT receipts with PC records for HMRC inspection. The RFO makes VAT refund claims to HMRC annually in order to recover the tax paid and all claims against invoices are fully and independently audited each year.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.
<b>Annual return</b>	Incomplete and/or not submitted within required time limits	L	The annual return is completed by the RFO, approved and signed by the PC and then submitted to the Internal Auditor for completion and signature. Once checked and approved the annual return is sent onto the External Auditor within the required time limit. A diary of all the deadlines is kept by the RFO and the RFO reinforces these deadlines with both auditors.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.

<b>Fraud</b>	Fraudulent placement of contracts for services or supply of goods	L	All councillors and RFO adhere to the strict rules and guidelines set on the procurement and purchase of services. It is the duty of the PC to ensure it obtains optimum value-for-money in the purchase of goods and services through competitive and confidential tendering. The PC must also strive to optimise the revenues and surpluses derived from appropriate fund-raising activities.	All members of the PC and the RFO are kept fully informed of the rules of public financial governance.
	False expense claims or unpermitted payments		In addition, the requirements of the PC's Insurance must be adhered to and any breaches, whether suspected or real, must be openly reported without delay. Finally, all payments and expense claims are fully and independently audited each year.	The Fidelity Guarantee and its accompanying insurance policy must be reviewed annually.

<b>Insurance</b>	Inadequate cover	L	A review is undertaken at the time of the annual policy renewal to ensure that the terms of the policy remain acceptable and that all known risks and assets are adequately protected.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.
	Cost		Further competitive quotes are obtained if deemed appropriate at renewal.	
<b>Assets</b>	Loss or damage	L	An Asset Register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items.	Review annually and inform Insurance Co if necessary.  An annual inspection of Assets to ensure public safety will be implemented
	Risk/damage to third party individuals and their property	L	Regular checks are made on all assets by members of the Parish Council. £5,000,000 Public Liability on Insurance Policy covered.	
<b>Election costs</b>	Unable to meet election costs	L	A reserve in the accounts should be budgeted for and maintained to cover unexpectedly high costs and red-ringed in the PC's reserve bank account.	2023-4 Budget allows for this

**GOVERNANCE RISKS**

<b>Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Human Rights Acts</b>	Absence of policies and lack of adherence preventing the community to free access of information	L	The PC has a model publication scheme in place to abide by the strict codes set by its Standing Orders to protect individual rights and privacy.	A publication scheme will be approved by May 2023
<b>Formal records of business and maintenance of statutory documents</b>	Inaccurate or incomplete minutes PC affairs conducted illegally or improperly	L	Summons and Agendas of meetings are produced and issued to all councillors within the correct time frame. The minutes of each meeting are produced and issued, in draft, to the PC for its review in advance of the following meeting. Thereafter, the minutes are revised, if required, and approved at the next quorate PC meeting and signed by the Chairman as a full and accurate record. Signed minutes are maintained by the Acting Clerk and kept in PC records and approved minutes are uploaded onto the PC website for public referral. Agendas are displayed on the PC notice boards within the correct time frame.	Existing procedures rely on actions by the Chair and Clerk

<b>Meeting location</b>	Adequacy  Health & safety	L	The PC meetings are held at Pettistree Parish Room which provides good meeting facilities for the whole council and opportunities for the community represented to engage in the meetings during each public session held. Meetings are advertised as much as possible in advance to ensure attendance. The PC considers the facilities are adequate for all who attend from a health & safety view, including the Annual Parish Meeting which is held in the Village Hall	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.
<b>Members interests</b>	Potential conflicts of interest	L	This is a standard agenda item at all meetings and all members of the PC are required to formally declare and register any Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary interests they may have in respect of any matters under discussion at the outset of each meeting. A register of interests is continuously maintained and updated both with the Chair and online.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate and individual councillors are to continue to review and advise any changes to the Chair

<b>Official records</b>	Loss through theft/fire/damage	L	The PC official records and supporting documents are stored at the home of the Acting Clerk and Chair and electronically.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate while we have an Acting Clerk. Efforts will be made to replace the Acting Clerk in May 2023
<b>Electronic records</b>	Loss through theft/fire/damage or corruption/loss of computer data	L	The PC's electronic data and records are stored on the Clerk's PC. Backups are taken at regular intervals.	Existing procedures are deemed inadequate. See above. A backup copy of the council's electronic documents will be saved to a USB drive by the Clerk and provided to a nominated councillor for safekeeping after each council meeting.
<b>COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY RISKS</b>				
<b>Community engagement</b>	Inability to address the main concerns of the community and address strategic, long-term needs	L	The PC makes the effort to communicate its own purpose and actions to its community and strive for higher levels of public engagement in and knowledge of its purpose (and limitations) and activities. It has the resources of a parish magazine (Pettistree People) an email Pettistree News and a WhatsApp group.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.
<b>Environment and aesthetics</b>	Degradation of the local environment	L	The PC maintains an active role in planning matters. It also strives to conserve the ecology of the parish to the best of its abilities in conjunction with Government agencies and the NFP sector to maintain a sustainable and balanced community and environment.	Existing procedures are deemed adequate.

