

OPERATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Date of presentation to Finance Committee	04/04/2024
Date adopted	11/04/2024
Date of next review	April 2025

Introduction

The parish council is required to comply with the law. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, s3 refers to the requirement for the council to ensure that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective and includes effective arrangements for the management of risk.

Tibberton Parish Council has an agreed policy for managing financial risk (Internal Controls) and has an agreed statement of internal controls. This document adds to the fore-mentioned documents to provide evidence of effective arrangements for managing operational risk.

On an annual basis, the Parish Council will review, assess and record:

1. The availability and performance of council members.

1a. This means that in addition to their legal duties which require each member to:

- complete and sign a declaration of acceptance of office
- complete and sign their entry on the register of interests
- declare all relevant pecuniary and other interests as and when they arise,

all council members will, where possible:

- ★ complete a full term of office.
- ★ Maintain a list of potential members in the event of a casual vacancy.
- ★ Advise in good time their intention not to stand for re-election.
- ★ Agree an annual timetable of council meetings at the annual council meeting.
- ★ Attend all meetings when summoned to attend.
- ★ Give notice if unable to attend any meeting to which they have been summoned.
- ★ Notify the clerk if they are to be away from home for more than one week.
- ★ Regularly review their entry on the register of interests and amend if necessary.
- ★ Attend relevant training courses including an induction course within six months of becoming a council member.
- ★ Read key parish council documents (Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations) at least once, know where to find them and review them at least annually.
- ★ Prepare fully for each council meeting.
- ★ Support the Chairman and the decisions made in the democratic forum of the council meeting.

1b. The Chairman is to be the public face of the parish council who speaks for, and represents, the council at parish community or other civic occasions and functions.

2. The availability and performance of the Proper Officer (the Clerk/RFO).

2a. This means that in addition to the legal duties which require the Clerk/RFO to:

- prepare and sign the agenda for all council meetings
- manage the council's financial affairs

the Clerk will, where possible:

- Possess or undertake training for, the Certificate in Local Council Administration
- Comply with their job description.
- Maintain a calendar for all policy reviews and a record of key procedures.

- Agree in advance with the Staffing Committee their holiday dates.
- Notify the council in advance of any significant absences.
- Publish an out-of-office email response with alternative points of contact if absent for more than one week.
- Attend training courses as and when necessary.
- Maintain a continuous professional development (CPD) record to achieve an annual minimum of 12 CPD points.
- Ideally give three months' notice when intending to leave the council.

2b. The council will, where possible:

- Follow the nationally endorsed (NALC and SLCC) terms of employment.
- Appoint staff members subsequent to interview and receipt of references and subject to compliance with the council's rules on equality of opportunity.
- Provide, maintain and keep up to date all necessary tools and equipment needed by the Clerk to comply with their job description including all necessary office, computer, storage and communication equipment and facilities.
- Advertise any vacancy in the office of clerk locally and via the county association.

3. Security, Freedom of Information, GDPR and other statutes.

3a. The Clerk is expected to, where possible:

- ❖ Maintain a system to facilitate easy access to council records.
- ❖ Safeguard key documents against loss by theft or fire, and retain a copy of such documents stored in a different location, eg cloud storage
- ❖ Ensure regular back-up of electronic files and records.
- ❖ Follow the council's Retention and Disposal Policy
- ❖ Ensure electronic records are safeguarded against virus and malware and provide evidence that appropriate anti-virus software is in use.
- ❖ Ensure only essential paper records are retained and that they are safely stored with a record kept of what they are and where to find them.
- ❖ Maintain the council-specific email address: clerk@tibbertonparishcouncil.gov.uk
- ❖ Ensure the council's email address is used only for council business.
- ❖ Maintain the council's Asset Register for annual review by the council.
- ❖ Present the annual insurance review which covers all known risks and all the council's assets, to the council for approval.
- ❖ Ensure the council's administration tools are well maintained and securely stored.
- ❖ Maintain a list of all passwords and usernames securely and not divulge them to anyone except insofar as to notify the Chairman how to access the list.
- ❖ Follow the rules regarding data protection, confidentiality, libel and copyright.
- ❖ Confirm with the website provider that they are working to ensure protection against hacking and viruses.
- ❖ Work within the standards set by NALC for the Local Council Awards Scheme working to the Foundation level as a minimum.

3b. The Parish Council is expected to annually review:

- ❖ Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct.
- ❖ Key procedures guidance and policies, including this document.
- ❖ Its Complaints Policy, Grant Awarding Policy and Publication Scheme
- ❖ The council's asset register and insurance cover.

4. Emergency and Contingency Plans

This means that the council will prepare for operational emergencies by:

- Ensuring council members know how to access council documents.
- The Clerk will maintain an emergency plan detailing key contacts.

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