


# WEASENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
## RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted: August 2025
Reviewed: May 2026
Next Review: May 2027

## 1 Background

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect the Council's reputation or ability to successfully deliver its activities or objectives.

Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, assessed and controlled and is a requirement within the Council's Financial Regulations that the Parish Council put arrangements in place for the management of risk.

The risk register assists the Parish Council to assess the risks it faces and to identify adequate steps to be taken to minimise them.

## 2 Policy Purpose

To provide a framework to assist the Council to:

- Identify activity areas to be reviewed;
- Identify what risks may exist or arise;
- Evaluate the management and control of the risks and record the findings;
- Review, assess and revise the risks regularly and as required;
- Be able to demonstrate to residents and other stakeholders that the Council's risk management framework approach to risk is appropriate and proportionate

## 3 Implementation

The Council recognises that it is the responsibility of all Councillors and employees to have regard for risk in carrying out their duties. Risk management will be reviewed regularly by the Parish Clerk and included as a standing item on the May agenda, for consideration by the Parish Council.

## 4. Areas for Review

4.1 Areas the Parish Council will assess and review regularly fall within the following headings, using the Council's risk assessment template:

- Governance
- Financial management;
- Insurance;
- Assets - including: buildings, land, equipment, inspection and maintenance;
- Staffing;
- Health and safety

### 4.2 ***Governance***

- Council policies and procedures are developed and reviewed regularly;
- Recruitment of Councillors to vacancies, as soon as possible;
- Councillors have access to relevant training to enable them to understand their responsibilities
- Councillors work within the code of conduct and understand the mechanisms for disclosure of interests.

### 4.3 ***Financial Management***

The Council will review at yearly intervals the following:-

- Financial Regulations, monitoring the administration of the Council's financial affairs.

- Its responsibility for appointing, by resolution, a Responsible Financial Officer who is responsible for all the financial administration.
- Its responsibility for appointing, by resolution, an independent Internal Auditor to carry out the intermediate checks of the Council's financial procedures and accounting records.
- The preparation of bi-monthly accounts to ensure that that there are sufficient balances in reserves and in line with the budget to meet the forthcoming invoices and costs for the remainder of the year and future projects.
- Its budgetary requirements in order to agree a precept figure to be submitted to the District Council for the next financial year.
- Contracts for yearly services i.e. mowing, etc.
- Level of reserves.
- Banking arrangements.

***4.4 Insurance***

The Council will review at yearly intervals the following:

- The requirement for its Clerk to ensure adequate insurance for all the Council's risks.
- The insurance cover of all the Council's properties ensuring it is adequate in the current financial climate.
- Any necessary changes, amendments or any new requirements to be reported to the insurers throughout the year.
- Comparisons with the cover/policies offered by other companies to ensure best value.
- Any claims against the insurance cover whenever necessary.

***4.5 Assets - Building/Land Inspections and Maintenance***

The Council will review and inspect at regular intervals the following:

- The condition of the internal and external fabric of the buildings in its care.
- The heating and lighting provided and emergency lighting on a monthly basis.
- The condition of equipment provided for employees' use.
- Arrangements for an annual professional inspection of all the portable appliances and every 6 years a full electrical inspection.
- Any renewals and replacements under future projects.
- The state of the car parking areas for repairs etc.
- All the public furniture and public spaces under the Parish Council jurisdiction.

The Council will arrange the following:

- A full monthly inspection of all the play equipment and safety surfaces and a quick check on a weekly basis for any emergency repairs.
- An annual professional independent inspection of all the play equipment and to follow up and carry out the necessary repairs and adjustments recommended in the inspector's report.
- A review of the play area with a view to replacing any old or worn equipment or purchasing new additional items.

**4.6 *Staffing***

The Council will review when changes occur but at least on an annual basis the following:

- Terms and conditions of employment.

- Salaries.
- Staff training requirements.

**4.7** ***Health and Safety***

The Council will review the following:

- On an annual basis the Council's Health and Safety Policy, which highlights the safety of all its employees and the use of all Council facilities.
- On an annual basis all premises for compliance with all food hygiene and other regulations.
- Annual inspections of:
  - Emergency lighting,
  - Legionella (e.g. water storage)
  - fire extinguishers & alarms;
- All trees and hedging belonging to the Council for safety purposes on a regular basis but at least annually.

**4.8** ***Reputational, Legal and Compliance, and Operational/Service Delivery Risks***

The Council will review the following:

- Reputational Risks
- Legal and Compliance Risks
- Operational and Service Delivery Risks

## 5 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier as changes or legislation arise.

**WEASENHAM PARISH COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LIKELIHOOD** | Highly probable 76–99% | 4 | | **TREAT** - Take action to reduce risk exposure & introduce measures | | **TERMINATE -** Stop activity generating the risk |
| | Probable 51%-75% | 3 | | | | |
| | Possible 26%-50% | 2 | | | | |
| | Unlikely 1%-25% | 1 | **TOLERATE** - Risk acceptable | | | **TRANSFER** – Usually via insurance or other arrangements |
| | | | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| | | | Minor | Moderate | **Serious** | **Major** |
| | | | **IMPACT** | | | |

The above can assist as a visual tool in the assessment of risk

**Key:** Green risks – considered reasonably acceptable. It is unlikely that further additional measures are required to control these risks

Amber risks - reasonably acceptable, however, further additional measures may be needed to treat and reduce exposure of the risk. Amber risks should be monitored regularly and reported periodically to Council

Red risks - these are not acceptable to the Council and immediate action is required to bring the risk down to a lower category. The Chairman and Council must be advised of any red risk areas and action planned to control the risk. Any action taken must be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

**RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE FORM** **(Clerk = combined Clerk/RFO role)**

| POTENTIAL RISK | Impact | Likelihood | Risk rating | Controls to minimise risk | Additional controls required/In place | Timescales | Responsible For |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GOVERNANCE** | | | | | | | |
| Breach or absence of up to date Standing Orders | 1 | 1 | | S.O. – annual review<br>All Councillors have a copy<br>Induction/training for new Cllrs. | Refreshers/ updates for Cllrs | Ongoing | Clerk<br>Chair |
| Lack of awareness of changes in legislation & good practice | 2 | 1 | | Attendance at training<br>Good Cllr guide for all Cllrs<br>Reports & papers from Clerk | All new Cllrs to attend training<br>Regular updates via County Assoc website, newsletter | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Working within powers & duties | 2 | 1 | | Clerk attends regular training & holds CilCA qualification and maintains CPD | Councillors to attend regular training | Ongoing | Clerk<br>Chair |
| Lack of commitment to policies & procedures | 2 | 1 | | Reference to legislation/policy in agenda items & in reports | Annual updates | Ongoing | Clerk<br>Chair |
| Councillors fail to declare interests | 2 | 2 | | Cllrs sign declaration of interests (DOI)<br>DOI included on every agenda | Periodic refresher/ information for Cllrs | Ongoing | Clerk<br>Chair |
| Libel or slander claims received | 2 | 1 | | Insurance in place | Annual review of insurance – Clerk | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Poor relationships with District Council & other parishes | 2 | 1 | | District Cllrs invited to meetings<br>Liaison with other Clerks & with D.C. teams – elections/member services / planning. | Chairman has regular contact with District Cllrs & other Parish Chairs. Joint working/ sharing of knowledge in place | Ongoing | Clerk<br>Chair |

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| Lack of effective lines of communication with parish residents | 2 | 2 | | Regular articles in Weasenham Newsletter, updates on website & Facebook. | Key information posted on 3 x notices: meetings, audit, contact details | Ongoing | Councillor |
| | **Impact** | **Likelihood** | **Risk rating** | **Controls to minimise risk** | **Additional controls required/In place** | **Timescales** | **Responsible For** |
| **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT** | | | | | | | |
| Precept inadequate | 2 | 1 | | Robust review and development of budget | Bi monthly monitoring of income & expenditure at PC meetings | Ongoing | Clerk Chair |
| Incomplete or inaccurate financial records | 2 | 1 | | Financial monitoring software in place – cash books. Cash received procedure in place. | Monthly reconciliation – payments & bank statements Ongoing review of procedures. Internal audit in place. | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Breach of Financial Regulations | 2 | 1 | | Financial Regulations (FR) reviewed annually. Councillors have copy of FR's. Clerk ensures expenditure within FR | Councillors to attend training & reference to governance & accountability guidance (audit) Clerk attends financial training | Annual | All |
| Council overspend on budget | | | | Income & expenditure monitored closed by CL/RFO | Income & expenditure report to PC meeting monthly | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Incorrect VAT claim or non-compliance | 2 | 1 | | RFO scrutinises all invoices to maximise reclaim | VAT claim checked. | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Banking errors /charges | 1 | 1 | | Bank reconciliation – monthly Bank balances checked | Monitor records | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Insufficient signatories | 2 | 1 | | Two Councillors to be signed up as signatories | Ensure bank signatory information updated | As arise | Clerk |
| Loss of interest | 2 | 2 | | Review interest rates & providers regularly | Investigate options for higher yield investments. Develop Investment policy | Annually | Clerk Chair |
| Loss or theft of cash | 1 | 1 | | Fidelity insurance in place | Cash locked in safe /banked timely | Ongoing | Clerk |

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| Loss or theft of assets | 2 | 1 | | Keep assets secure<br>Asset register to Council annually for review | Ensure asset register kept up to date. Ensure insurance cover sufficient | Annually | Clerk |
| Grant funding – loss of or not used correctly | 3 | 2 | | Monitoring of project & claim milestones. Robust monitoring of grant expenditure | Use of project plan to keep on track. Update residents with progress report<br>using range of methods | Bi-monthly | Clerk |
| | **Impact** | **Likelihood** | **Risk rating** | **Controls to minimise risk** | **Additional controls required/In place** | **Timescales** | **Responsible For** |
| Payments made without prior approval and adequate control | 2 | 1 | | Payments made in line with F.R & approved in Council meetings, recorded in minutes<br>2 signatories required | Payments made, reported to Council monthly (retrospectively) | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Items purchased without proper tendering procedures | 2 | 1 | | Procedures in line with F.R.s. Estimates/quotations procedure in place. Testing for competitiveness & VFM | Quotes sought and reconciliation against invoice received for payment | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Failure to maximise Income | 2 | 1 | | Sales invoices monitored & tel contact made to debtors | Identify potential funding opportunities & update Council. | Ongoing | Clerk A/C Asst |
| Salaries paid incorrectly & not in accordance with F. Regs & incorrect deductions collected & paid to HMRC & pension providers | 1 | 1 | | Use HMRC payroll tool. Monthly salary calculation report checked by Clerk before authorisation to make payments | Monthly reports & payments to HMRC & pension providers reconciled against bank statement entries | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Late submission or failure to prepare & submit year end accounts to external | 3 | 1 | | Assistance received with year end close down procedures on financial system by RBS. | Internal auditor visit to check year end & signs off annual accounting statement.<br>Standing Orders sets out timetable | End of year audits | Clerk |

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| auditors within timescales | | | | Annual AGAR signed off by Parish Council (May/June) | | | |
| **INSURANCE** | | | | | | | |
| Council has inadequate cover | 2 | 1 | | Insurance cover reviewed annually including for:<br>Public liability, Assets<br>Employers liability, Fidelity,<br>Libel/slander,<br>Loss of revenue, property damage, personal accident, money & assault | Clerk to seek prompt insurance quote. | Annual | Clerk |
| | **Impact** | **Likelihood** | **Risk rating** | **Controls to minimise risk** | **Additional controls required/In place** | **Timescales** | **Responsible For** |
| **BUILDINGS, LAND & ASSET INSPECTION & MAINTENANCE** | | | | | | | |
| Lack of information on property, land & equipment | | | | Electronic deed information available. Copies of licences/ agreements held in safe | Arrange a regular review of buildings & valuation of assets & equipment | Annual | Clerk |
| Failure to identify & value assets/land & equipment correctly | 2 | 2 | | Assets recorded & updated. Asset register reviewed and updated regularly, at least annually in line with external audit requirements | Arrange professional re-valuation of land & buildings for asset register every 10 years. | 2020/21 | Clerk |
| Major work identified to buildings/assets – not already identified or budgeted for | 2 | 1 | | Regular inspection of facilities undertaken. | Earmarked reserves in place for key assets | Ongoing | Clerk |
| **STAFFING** | | | | | | | |

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| Inadequate staffing capacity to fulfil the Council's roles & responsibilities | 2 | 1 | | Annual appraisals in place & training requirement reviewed.<br>Regular meetings between Clerk & Chairman – any issues arising and priorities | Ongoing review of staff structure e.g. clerk/RFO responsibilities for business continuity | Annual/ Ongoing | Clerk |
| Notice received or ill health of key staff e.g. Clerk | 3 | 1 | | Job description/Person Spec in place to expedite recruitment process. 3 mth notice required by Clerk. | Passwords available to Chair & Vice chair in emergency.<br>Review of staff structure | Ongoing | Chair |
| Inadequate training | | | | Council membership of NorfolkALC | Regular attendance at training, CILCA & refreshers | Ongoing | Clerk |
| | **Impact** | **Likelihood** | **Risk rating** | **Controls to minimise risk** | **Additional controls required/In place** | **Timescales** | **Responsible For** |
| **HEALTH & SAFETY** | | | | | | | |
| Lack of knowledge of H & S requirements | 2 | 1 | | H & S policy in place – reviewed annually. Staff have copy of policy & training | Annual visit & inspections by H&S expert/contractor | Annual | Clerk |
| Lone working | 1 | 1 | | Mobile provided phones for lone workers | Risk assessments in place | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Failure to undertake H & S checks or compliance with legislation | 3 | 1 | | Programme for undertaking weekly/monthly/annual checks in place - for buildings, play equipment.<br>H & S Policy sets out requirements<br>Staff training – per policy | Checks/inspections recorded in logs e.g. fire alarm testing, legionella, play equipment. Checked also at annual H & S consultant visit, legionella, PAT testing – annual certification in place | Ongoing | Clerk |

## 4.8 Reputational, Legal and Compliance, and Operational/Service Delivery Risks

### 1. Purpose and Scope

This risk assessment identifies and evaluates key risks that could affect the Parish Council's ability to act lawfully, maintain public confidence, and deliver local services effectively. It is intended to support good governance, audit assurance, decision-making, and annual review by the Council.

### 2. Risk Scoring Framework

| Score | Likelihood | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | Rare | Minor inconvenience or isolated issue |
| **2** | Unlikely | Limited disruption, low financial or reputational impact |
| **3** | Possible | Noticeable service impact, local concern, or corrective action required |
| **4** | Likely | Significant reputational, legal, financial, or service impact |
| **5** | Almost certain | Severe impact, statutory breach, major service failure, or external intervention |

Risk rating is calculated by multiplying likelihood by impact. Scores of 1–6 are Low, 7–14 are Medium, and 15–25 are High. Low risks should be monitored annually, Medium risks should be reviewed at least quarterly or when circumstances change, and High risks require prompt action by the Council.

### 3. Risk Register

#### *3.1 Reputational Risks*

| Risk | Potential impact | Existing controls | Further actions | Rating | Owner |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Poor communication with residents or stakeholders** | Loss of public confidence, complaints, misinformation, or reduced engagement. | Agendas and minutes published; public participation at meetings; Clerk handles formal correspondence. | Maintain a communications protocol; agree response times; use consistent wording for public updates. | Medium | Clerk and Chair |
| **Inaccurate, incomplete, or delayed** | Perception of poor transparency and potential challenge | Publication schedule; minutes approved at | Introduce a publication checklist for agendas, | Medium | Clerk |

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| **publication of information** | from residents or auditors. | council meetings; website maintained. | minutes, policies, finance reports, and statutory notices. | | |
| **Councillor conduct or conflicts of interest** | Damage to trust in the Council, standards complaints, or meeting disruption. | Code of Conduct adopted; declarations of interest requested at meetings; register of interests maintained. | Provide periodic councillor training; remind members of conduct requirements before contentious items. | Medium | Full Council |
| **Handling of complaints or contentious local issues is perceived as unfair** | Escalation of complaints, reputational harm, or strained relationships with residents and partners. | Complaints procedure; decisions recorded in minutes; advice sought where required. | Review complaints procedure annually; keep an issues log for recurring concerns and lessons learned. | Medium | Clerk and Chair |

### 3.2 Legal and Compliance Risks

| Risk | Potential impact | Existing controls | Further actions | Rating | Owner |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Failure to act within legal powers or follow proper decision-making procedures** | Unlawful decision, challenge, invalid expenditure, or requirement to revisit decisions. | Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted; agendas specify business; advice provided by Clerk. | Record legal power where appropriate for significant expenditure; seek county association or professional advice for complex matters. | Medium | Full Council and Clerk |
| **Failure to comply with Freedom of Information, data protection, or records retention requirements** | Regulatory complaint, enforcement action, loss of trust, or inappropriate disclosure of personal data. | Data protection policy; secure storage of records; Clerk monitors statutory deadlines. | Maintain retention schedule; undertake annual data protection review; ensure councillors use appropriate council channels. | Medium | Clerk |

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| **Failure to meet audit, accounts, transparency, or publication requirements** | Qualified audit, public objection, reputational damage, or additional administrative work. | Annual governance and accountability timetable; internal audit; financial reports to Council. | Maintain compliance calendar; review requirements before year-end and before publication of statutory documents. | Medium | RFO/Clerk and Full Council |
| **Non-compliance with procurement, contract, employment, or health and safety obligations** | Legal dispute, employment claim, insurance issue, injury risk, or financial loss. | Financial Regulations; insurance cover; risk assessments for relevant activities; professional advice where required. | Review contracts and insurance annually; document procurement decisions; keep staff and volunteer arrangements under review. | Medium | Clerk and Full Council |

### 3.3 Operational and Service Delivery Risks

| Risk | Potential impact | Existing controls | Further actions | Rating | Owner |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Loss or unavailability of the Clerk, key councillors, or essential records** | Interrupted administration, missed deadlines, delayed payments, or inability to progress Council business. | Minutes and records retained; Chair and Vice-Chair provide continuity; key processes known to Clerk. | Prepare a business continuity plan; maintain secure access arrangements for essential records, passwords, and contacts. | Medium | Clerk and Chair |
| **Failure of IT systems, email, website, or document storage** | Loss of records, missed communications, publication delays, or weakened cyber security. | Use of email and digital storage; website provider arrangements; documents backed up where available. | Introduce routine backups; review access permissions; use strong passwords and multi-factor authentication where available. | Medium | Clerk |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Failure to maintain council assets, land, equipment, or public amenities** | Service disruption, public complaint, injury risk, insurance claim, or increased repair costs. | Asset register; insurance; inspections undertaken where required; repairs considered by Council. | Adopt an inspection schedule; record defects and actions; review insurance and asset register annually. | Medium | Full Council |
| **Inability to deliver agreed projects or services because of capacity, supplier, funding, or weather issues** | Delay, budget pressure, loss of community confidence, or reduced service quality. | Budget monitoring; council approval of expenditure; suppliers engaged as required. | Use project plans for larger items; identify dependencies and contingency options; review progress at meetings. | Medium | Project lead and Full Council |

**4. Review and Monitoring**

The Council should review this risk assessment at least annually, and sooner if there is a significant change in law, staffing, assets, services, insurance arrangements, complaints, or local circumstances. Actions arising from the assessment should be recorded in minutes and assigned to an owner with a target date where appropriate.