

SLIP END PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment sub-committee
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Low = inconvenient or problematic, but long term functioning of Parish Council and its reputation not seriously compromised
 Medium = could disrupt normal day to day running of council or have negative impact on image of council
 High = Will stop the normal functioning of the Parish Council for long enough to bring about lasting damage or disruption

SUBJECT	RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	MITIGATION/CONTROL/MANAGEMENT	FURTHER ACTIONS / REVIEWS
Cheque Signatories	Since January 2010 there have been four account signatories instead of three. This has significantly reduced the risk of less than two signatories being available to sign cheques.	Low	Low	Good forward planning and an awareness of forthcoming holidays for signatories will mitigate the risk.	No further action needed.
Parish Council Payments	Members (signatories) inadvertently signing a cheque which is "wrong"	From Low to Medium dependent on amounts concerned	Low	Distributing the cheque list to all members in advance of the meeting - 7 members have time to review the payments. We have also put in place the procedure of one member checking the cheques against the invoices at the meeting before they are signed.	Every month year to date expenditure v budgeted expenditure is circulated to all members. This should highlight any unexpected overpayment - but is dependent upon members actually examining the figures.
Ability to Raise cheques	Clerk out of action or cheque book mislaid	Low	Low	We normally have at least one spare cheque book. If the clerk was unwell, a member could write out the cheque.	The Parish Council currently has an exemplary record for prompt payment, so suppliers would no doubt wait a while if required. The cheque book should be kept in the lockable fireproof cabinet.
Precept	Either not applied for or not received	Initially low, but moving to medium with time	Low	The form is sent to the Clerk by the Unitary Council and returning the precept demand is part of the diarised budget planning procedure followed every year. It would be unlikely that Central Beds would not chase for it.	Ensuring that there is sufficient funds in the account at the start of the year in case the precept payment is delayed for any reason
Salary	Wrong salary paid	Low	Low	Net and gross salaries are checked by Clerk, net payments are also checked by members at meetings before cheques are signed.	From August 09 there is only be the clerk's salary on the Parish Council payroll. This net pay is the same every month.
PAYE	Not paid, underpaid or overpaid	Low	Low	It is only quarterly and now only relates to the Clerk as other people on payroll have transferred to CPG. The inland rev would send a reminder if we were overdue.	No further action needed.
Members Allowances	Incorrect Allowance Paid	Low	Low	With the exception of the chair's allowance these are paid six monthly which reduces the amount paid out at any one time. The payments are all listed on the cheque summary which is circulated prior to meetings and is checked again at the meeting.	No further action needed.

VAT	Not claimed on time	Low	Low	The VAT is usually claimed back once or twice in each financial year. There is no reminder system but the annual external audit questions the VAT claim, so this would provide a prompt if it had been overlooked and a claim can be made up to three years after the expenditure.	Diarise two reclaim dates per year.
Bank Account Misuse of	Money being taken from Parish Council bank account by Clerk, Member or other person	High	Low	We have now introduced getting each member in turn to check the quarterly statement against the accounts. This would identify any problems reasonably quickly & would reduce the opportunity of any clerk to misuse funds.	Members could request spot-checks? We could ask the bank to provide a monthly bank statement if more frequent checks were required?
Petty Cash	Stolen or misused	Zero	Zero	We do not have petty cash - the Clerk uses her own money and reclaims expenses at month end.	
Lack of Funds	That Parish Council expenditure exceeds the money held in the bank accounts	High	Low	Good budgeting procedure and the monthly monitoring of year to date expenditure against the budget would ensure risk was minimised.	Currently there are adequate levels of reserves held.
Data Protection	Being in breach of the Data Protection Act	Medium	Low	Clerk has attended training. We do not hold data for commercial purposes so do not need to be registered, but we must still abide by the legislation.	We need to ensure that we continue to monitor how we handle data, especially the removal of data after use and obtaining permission from individuals. We should write a Data Protection Policy and annually review the data held, especially by the Community Projects group where more personal information has been gathered.
E mail correspondence	Loss of emails - many communications are now in this format and should be recorded/retained.	High	Med	All the Clerk's emails are backed up to a separate email address (offsite) so can be re-downloaded at any time.	Do members have adequate back-up? And members should not use the nikki email address other than for emails that they will not need recalling in future
Electronically stored documents, minutes, agendas etc	Damage to hard drive on Clerks or members computer	High	Med	Good daily back up procedures in place for the Clerks documents meaning only very recently added items may be lost	Need to check what procedures members have for backing up their documents
Clerk's computer	virus or theft	High	Low	Good anti-virus software in place. Daily backup done automatically and the backed-up data is kept off site. Computer is insured	
Payroll	Clerk unable to operate payroll	Low	Low	As from mid 2009 this will be low impact as everyone except the Clerk will be paid by the community projects group. Clerk able to manage unpaid for a while	Maintain a list of known software users. Eg Community Projects Group staff who also operate Iris.
Playground (including youth shelter)	Damage to equipment or surfaces.	Medium	Low	Debbie and Andy Prothero make weekly visits and carry out written equipment inspections every month so our risk is limited to deliberate damage rather than wear and tear which are dealt with promptly. We also have Rospa carrying out their annual and very detailed inspection.	We would benefit by having a plan in place in case damage to the playground or another act of vandalism meant we had to shut the playground - eg warning or closure signs and padlocks for gates?
Bus Shelters	Damage to / vandalism	Low	Low	Historically damage tends to be limited to spray paint etc and this has not happened for some years. When it does, we call on Mr Palmer to repaint at a cost of approx £300.	Debbie and Andy Prothero tidy the shelters weekly - should we ask them to be observant for any failings in the structure?
Noticeboards	Damage/wear and tear/vandalism	Low	Low to Medium	The Clerk usually puts items on the noticeboards on a weekly basis so would notice any falling in the structure. The noticeboards are insured.	The Clerk should check the structure / maintenance when putting up new notices
Trees	Falling tree or heavy branch causes damage to property or injury to person	High	Low	There is no formal tree checking procedure in place, although there has been a recent (July 2009) assessment of many of the parish's trees by Andy Jones.	We need a list of all the Parish Council trees and a quarterly/six monthly (?) check of their condition.

Gardening	Current contractors unable to carry out their duties and public areas become unkempt and overgrown	low	Medium	In over two years of using the Prothero's services they have never failed to meet their contractual obligations. But we do not have a back-up plan	Get names of contractors who would be willing to help on an ad-hoc basis if required at short notice.
Grass Cutting (additional)	Richard Gurney unable to carry out the extra cutting he is contracted to do	low	Medium	As above, no problems to date, but we don't have a back up plan.	Possibly the Prothero's could assist but again we need details of other contractors who could help.
Closed churchyard at St Andrews	problems arising from trees, paths and monuments inc gravestones causing damage or injury to person	High	Low	Gravestones were safety checked about 2 years ago. The trees were all checked by Andy Jones in July 2009 and he had no concerns. Andy Prothero is there regularly gardening so would hopefully notice any obvious problems	Do we need a more organised approach - quarterly checks? Should we take advice from the Church Council on what others do?
Aley Green Cemetery	problems arising from trees, paths and monuments inc gravestones	High (but shared with Caddington and Markyate)	Low	There is a risk assessment in place for the graves but not anything else	Improved and extended risk assessment.
Running of Parish Council	Parish Council unable to operate due to tragic or exceptional circumstances	High	Low	There is no specific plan in place other than the Emergency Plan, which would be for a larger scale disaster	Members need to share information or at least provide other members with access to it, if necessary.
Meeting Place	Unavailability of Village Hall	Low	Low	The Peter Edwards Hall could be used as an alternative venue - this would be straightforward	Find out if Slip End Lower School could be booked at short notice
Clerk unable to work	Illness or unexpected situation renders Clerk unable to carry out duties	Low moving to High with time.	Low	Clerk has all current and completed actions logged on a spreadsheet called "Action Summary". This details every job and task currently awaiting completion and what has happened to date - eg if a response is awaited from elsewhere. It would be easy for someone to see what had been done and what needed to be done - all tasks have a deadline date shown.	It would be sensible to familiarise one or two members with this spreadsheet and method of work and to show them how all files (pc and hard copy) are organised so that it could be handed over if necessary. At the least written instructions for carrying out basic aspects of the job should be written down.
Insurance	Assets that have not been covered are stolen or damaged. Or are inadequately covered	Medium	Low	We currently review the assets register when the end of year accounts is done.	We could improve this by having a six monthly review of the assets - not the value just to check we don't have anything new that should be covered?
Public Consultation	Failing to adequately inform residents about plans for work, changes or improvements within the parish.	low	moving from medium to low	Poor consultation with the public on some recent issues did lead to some complaints. However the introduction of the Parish Plan, the Community Projects Group, regular flyers and additional noticeboards and a more informative website, has considerably improved this area.	The possibility of the parish news going to every home every month is being considered. Raising awareness of the website at its launch in early 2010 will also have a positive impact.
Contractors	Injury to one of our contractors becoming the responsibility of the parish council	High	Low	This would only be a problem if we were to be sued by one of our contractors. Our contractors are Richard Gurney and the Protheros.	We need to check our legal position, provision of training, our levels of insurance and consider contracts with both contractors. We do have a contract with the Prothero's but not a current one with Mr Gurney
Community Projects Group	Whilst no longer directly involved in the runnings of youth club and chatty club and village day, the Parish Council still has a partnership with the cpg and especially a financial link. The risk is that some kind of mismanagement by this group impacts on the Parish Council.	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	We currently have no one employed in the role of Community Project Manager - this increases currently the risk of some aspect of administration being overlooked. However, we also have Carol Brennan supervising the accounts so between her and Karen it is less likely that mistakes are made. The Parish Council is asking for feedback on the accounts twice a year in the formal arena of the PC meeting, where comments and concerns can be minuted. Two Parish Council members must be on the CPG Committee at all times.	All should remain vigilant about matters handled by the CPG particularly whilst the group is in its infancy and new procedures are still being put in place. Advice and reminders about carrying out CRB checks, updating the insurance, training employees and volunteers, getting references etc has all been passed on.

Hard copy documents	Damage from loss, fire or flood	Medium	Low	The Clerks documents are all stored in a metal filing cabinet - so low risk of damage unless in extreme circumstances	Clerk should lock the cabinet at night during holidays etc. Parish Council should consider moving to digital storage of documents.
Very old archive info	Damage from loss, fire or flood	Low	Low	Currently stored in Clerks loft and various cupboards	Could be stored in County Storage - Clerk to investigate - or in the roofspace at Peter Edwards Hall?
Model Publication Scheme	Failing to adhere to this policy	Low	Low	Our policy is new and has been publicised on our notice boards	We should review our policy annually but no other action is required.