

Knowstone Parish Council Risk Assessment

*To be reviewed at Knowstone
Parish Council meeting on 23rd
May 2023, Agenda Item 15*

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document enables Knowstone Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management/control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties	L	<p>To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget updates, financial statements and bank reconciliations from the Clerk/RFO.</p> <p>At the precept meeting Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information the 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 North Devon District Council. The figure is then submitted by the Clerk in writing. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received.</p>	Existing procedure adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council adopted amended Financial Regulations in August 2021 that set out the requirements.	Financial Regulations reviewed annually

Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Banks mistakes	L	The Council's guidelines are set out in its Financial Regulations which are reviewed annually	Existing procedure adequate
		L	Bi-monthly reconciliation & financial report	Existing procedure adequate
Reporting and auditing	Inadequate information and communication	L	Financial information is a regular agenda item (Finance Report) and accounts discussed/reviewed and approved bi-monthly	Existing procedures adequate.
Grants	Failure to understand, seek, secure and spend any grants awarded	L	Regular financial reporting to the Parish Council by the Clerk	Existing procedures adequate.
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate.
Best value accountability	Work awarded Incorrectly.	L	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work to be undertaken.	Existing procedure adequate. Included within Financial regulations.
	Overspend on services.	M	For major work competitive tenders would be sought. If problems encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly. Unpaid Tax to Inland Revenue.	L L	KPC has one employee, the Clerk/RFO calculates the salary and makes appropriate returns to HMRC.	Existing procedure adequate.
Employees	Fraud by staff	L	Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance adhered to with regards to fraud.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Health and safety	L		

			All employees to be provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles	Monitor health and safety requirements and insurance annually.
VAT	Reclaiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedures adequate
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Annual Return is completed and submitted online within the prescribed time frame by the Clerk/RFO after being agreed by the Council and signed by the Chairman	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at full Council Meetings, including reference to the power used under the Finance section of agenda and Finance report monthly.	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes/agendas/ Notices/ Statutory Documents`	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manor by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Business conduct	L	Agenda displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair	Members adhere to Code of Conduct and Standing Orders
Members interests	Conflict of interests	L	Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Register of members interests	M	Register of members' interests forms reviewed regularly.	Members take responsibility to update register.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L M	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements. Employers and Employee liabilities a necessity and within policies. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Fidelity checks in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Insurance reviewed annually.
Data protection	Policy provision	L	The Parish Council is registered with ICO	Review annually
	Data breaches	M		

			Physical data stored in locked filing cabinet; electronic data on password protected devices; all councillors to have separate council email account.	Existing procedures adequate.
Freedom of Information	Policy Provision	L M	To date there has been one request under FOI. The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours work. The Parish Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours	Monitor any requests made under FOI. Review the situation annually. FOI policy to be drawn up
PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party's property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision	Existing procedures adequate
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities	L	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. Assets are insured.	Existing procedures adequate
Notice Board	Risk of damage	L	The Parish Council currently has three noticeboards. No formal inspection procedures are in place but any reports of damage or faults to the Parish Council are dealt with in accordance with the correct procedures of the Council.	Existing procedures adequate
Meeting locations	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Parish Council meetings are held in a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and the general public.	Existing procedures adequate
Council records – paper	Loss through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft • Fire • Damage 	L M L	The most recent Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk in a fireproof lockable filing cabinet & in archives at the Parish Hall. Records include historical correspondences, minutes, insurance, and bank	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate.

			records. The documents are stored in a lockable cupboard and filing cabinet.	
Council records – electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of external drive	L M	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on a council owned laptop which is password protected and kept at the Clerk's home. Back-ups of electronic data are made at regular intervals onto USB sticks and to the Cloud.	Existing procedures considered adequate
OTHER				
Planning applications	Missed opportunity to comment/slow response	L	The Council can call an extraordinary meeting to discuss a planning application that is received between meetings, or it can ask the Planning Department for an extension to the deadline for receiving a response.	Existing procedures considered adequate
	Personal safety during site visits / observation validation	L	<p>The Parish Council to nominate two councillors to visit any property for which a planning application has been submitted within the Parish of Knowstone or would impact the Parish to allow for corroboration of onsite discussion</p> <p>Councillors should be aware of the need to ensure their own person safety when making a site visit and to wear appropriate PPE whenever relevant and necessary</p>	