

# SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL – RISK ASSESSMENT

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 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 has been produced to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them, it is reviewed in October each year

Last Updated: - September 2023

## RISK ASSESSMENT

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk
<b>Holding Parish Council Meetings</b>	<p>Risks to Health and Safety Possible Infection – Covid-19. It will never be risk free without a vaccine.</p> <p>Confirmed infections post meeting What has been considered <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19</a> The following links contain more information on each of these sections: Public Health and Health and safety Guidance <a href="https://wbcnet.wirral.gov.uk/covid-19/public-health-and-health-and-safety-guidance">https://wbcnet.wirral.gov.uk/covid-19/public-health-and-health-and-safety-guidance</a> Offices and contact centres: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres</a>  Cleaning in a non-healthcare setting: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-</a></p>	M	<p><b>Measures to Manage the Risks Effectively</b></p> <p>The Vernon Institute (or any alternative meeting venue) must be made COVID - secure and comply with current guidance.</p> <p>All attendees should be two metres apart, no personal contact, wearing face coverings when out of their seat; and track and trace list of contact details at each meeting. Each attendee contacted afterwards in the event of a confirmed infection.</p> <p><b>If covid infections increase face to face meetings may be cancelled until it is deemed safe to hold them.</b></p>

	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19">decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings</a> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19">Guidance on shielding and those defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable:</a> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19</a> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing</a> Guidance from the HSE on when incidences of Covid-19 need to be reported as they fall under RIDDOR: <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-coronavirus.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-coronavirus.htm</a>		
<b>Business Continuity</b>	Risk of Parish Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance.	L	<p>All files and recent records are kept by the Clerk. Regular back-ups of files are made to an external source.</p> <p>The Chairman holds a record of current user names and passwords in a sealed envelope in a secure place.</p>
<b>Parish Precept</b>	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties.	L	To determine the precept amount required, the Council receives budget update information monthly. At the Budget Council meeting Members receive 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 detailed in the Business Plan 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

	Precept requirements not submitted to the Principal Authority.	L	Cheshire West and Chester Council. The figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing.  The existing procedure is adequate. The Clerk submits the figure in writing immediately after it is agreed and informs the Council when the monies are received.
<b>Financial Records</b>	Inadequate records.  Financial irregularities.	L  L	The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements. Review the Financial regulations when considered necessary. The Internal auditor carries out audit annually and reports any discrepancies which are corrected. Existing procedure adequate
<b>Bank and banking</b>	Inadequate checks.  Banks mistakes.	L  L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.  If the bank makes an error this would be discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts once a month when the statements arrive; this would be dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction. The Clerk reviews the banking arrangements regularly.  Existing procedures are adequate
<b>Cheque Books</b>	Loss of cheques Fraudulent use.	L	Cheque Books held securely. No blank cheques are signed.
<b>Cash</b>	Loss through theft or dishonesty.	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.  Cash received is banked within 3 banking days.

			<p>The Council's Insurance Policy has a Fidelity Guarantee.</p> <p>Existing procedure is adequate.</p>
<b>Reporting and auditing</b>	Information Communication Compliance	L	<p>A budget monitoring statement is produced at each Council meeting. A full list of payments and receipts and cheques to be signed is provided at the meeting and the financial records including a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank statement are presented. The Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee.</p> <p>Internal auditor carries out audit annually</p> <p>Existing procedure are adequate.</p>
<b>Grants</b>	Receipt of grant.	L	<p>Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants.</p> <p>Procedure would be formed if required.</p>
<b>Charges-rents receivable</b>	Payment of rents.	L	<p>The Parish Council collects rent from Saughall Uniformed Groups HQ</p> <p>Existing procedure are adequate</p>
<b>Grants and support payable</b>	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay.	L	<p>All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, recorded in the minutes and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure.</p> <p>Existing procedure are adequate</p>
<b>Best Value accountability</b>	Procedures not followed for significant contracts. Best Value not achieved.	L	<p>Standing Orders correctly followed. Procurement procedures in place.</p>

	Overspending on services because charges to the Parish Council are too high.	M	<p>Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work to be undertaken.</p> <p>For major work competitive tenders are sought. If problems were encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.</p> <p>Existing procedure are adequate</p>
<b>Salaries and assoc. costs</b>	<p>Salary paid incorrectly.</p> <p>Unpaid Tax to Inland Revenue.</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>The only paid employee is the Clerk. The Clerk presents a monthly account and itemises the wages and expenses together with receipts where appropriate. The Parish Council must approve this before payment is made.</p> <p>Internal auditor ensures that deductions are properly administered.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>
<b>Employees</b>	Fraud by staff	L	<p>Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance adhered to with regards to fraud.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate.</p>
<b>Election Costs</b>	Risk of an election cost	L/M	<p>Risk is higher in an election year. When an election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the Borough Council for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election as this is a democratic process and should not be stifled.</p> <p>Existing procedure is adequate.</p>

<b>VAT</b>	Reclaiming/charging	L	<p>The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.</p> <p>Existing procedure are adequate</p>
<b>Annual Return</b>	Submit within time limits	L	<p>Annual Return completed and signed by the Council is submitted to Internal Auditor for completion and signing and is then checked and sent to External Auditor within time frame laid down.</p> <p>Existing procedure are adequate</p>
<b>Legal Powers</b>	Illegal activity or payments	L	<p>All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council are resolved at Council meetings.</p> <p>Existing procedure are adequate</p>
<b>Minutes/Agendas/ Notices Statutory Documents`</b>	Not legal or accurate	L	<p>Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements in respect of Access to Information Regulations.</p> <p>Minutes are approved and signed at the next ordinary Council meeting.</p> <p>Agendas are published according to legal requirements.</p>
	Business conducted	L	<p>Members adhere to their Code of Conduct and to the Council's Standing Orders.</p>

			Business conducted at Council meetings are managed by the Chairman.  Existing procedures are adequate.
<b>Computer Records</b>	Reliability of system Loss of data through system error or theft Corruption of data through system error or theft. Corruption of data from viruses or hacking.	L	Back up to icloud. Professional anti-virus software.  Existing procedures are adequate.
<b>Members interests</b>	Not maintained in accordance with the Code of Conduct.  Register of Members' interests	L  L	Up to date Code of Conduct adopted by Council.  Register of interests filed with Cheshire West and Chester Council. Declaration on all agendas so that Interests are up to date  Existing procedures are adequate.
<b>Insurance</b>	Inadequate cover or over insurance Cost  Compliance  Fidelity Guarantee	L L  L  M	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements prior to the renewal.  Employers and Employee liabilities are a necessity and within policies.  Ensure compliance measures are in place and Fidelity checks in place.  Existing procedures are adequate.
<b>Data protection</b>	Policy provision	L	The Clerk is registered with the Information Commissioner, ensuring annual renewal.  The Council has the following in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Protection and Retention Policy</li> <li>• Cyber Security Policy</li> <li>• Subject Access Request Response Policy</li> <li>• General Privacy Notice.</li> </ul>

			<p>They can be viewed on the website. They are reviewed annually.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate.</p>
<b>Freedom of Information</b>	Policy provision	<p>L</p> <p>M</p>	<p>The Council has a Model Publication Scheme for Local Councils in place which is published on its website. Agendas and Minutes are also available on the website.</p> <p>The Parish Council responds within the timescale laid down to FOI requests.</p> <p>The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create several additional hours work. The Parish Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>
<b>PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS</b>			
<b>Assets</b>	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) property	L	<p>The Council has a Fixed Asset Register which is kept up to date. An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>
<b>Maintenance</b>	Poor performance of assets or amenities	L	<p>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.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>



<b>Notice Boards</b>	Risk of damage	L	<p>The Parish Council has several notice boards. No formal inspection procedures are in place but any reports of damage and faults are reported to the Council. Any costs for repairs/maintenance work are subject to approval by the Council.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>
<b>Meeting locations</b>	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	<p>The Parish Council meetings are held in venues considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, Members and the general public.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>
<b>Council records – paper</b>	Loss through: Theft Fire damage	L M L	<p>The Parish Council's deeds are securely stored by Topwood Ltd in Malpas. The signed Council Minutes are deposited in the Public Records Office on an annual basis. Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>
<b>Council records – electronic</b>	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer	L M	<p>The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Council's computer which is kept at the home of the Clerk.</p> <p>Back-ups of electronic data are made at regular intervals and stored away from her home.</p> <p>Existing procedures are adequate</p>