

# CRANFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## RISK ASSESSMENT – MARCH 2022



A Risk Assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable Cranford Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. Cranford Parish Council will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate risks, in so far as is practically and reasonably possible. This document has been produced to enable Cranford Parish Council to assess the risks it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

Rating A = Satisfactory, Rating B = Review Proposed, Rating X = Unsatisfactory

	Risks Identified	Management/Control	Rating	Review/Assess	Action By
<b>Financial</b>	Inadequate records Financial Irregularities	The Parish Council uses Model Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	A	Existing procedure adequate. Review Annually	Clerk /Council
	Lack of commitment by Councillors to the budgetary process	Include regulations in Standing Orders issued to all Councillors. Place item on Agenda early in the year to remind Councillors of budget process and actions required. Involve all Councillors in budgetary process not solely the Clerk.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk /Council
	Failure to ensure that the annual precept results from an adequate budgetary process.	Start consideration of budgetary process at least four months prior to submission date of Precept. Checks by Clerk/RFO and Chairman	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk/ Council

	<b>Risks Identified</b>	<b>Management/Control</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Review/Assess</b>	<b>Action By</b>
<b>Financial contd</b>	Inadequate internal controls with regard to monitoring expenditure	Internal Control checks are carried out every meeting by a different councillor to ensure effective financial management by Clerk/RFO.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk / Council
	Reserves too high/low	External Auditor advises reserve balance must not exceed the Precept.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council / External Auditor
	Illegal activity or payments	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at Council meetings, as per the Financial regulations	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk / Council
	Fraud by Employees/ Councillors	Ensure level of Fidelity Insurance is adequate and review annually.	A	Existing procedures adequate	Clerk

	Risks Identified	Management/Control	Rating	Review/Assess	Action By
<b>Business Continuity</b>	Incapacity/Absence of Clerk/ Resignation of Clerk	Clerk to ensure all passwords are forwarded to Chairman to allow access in times of incapacity  Clerk to arrange a reciprocal arrangement with another Parish Council in the event of unable to attend a meeting	A		Clerk / Council
	Loss or damage to Council records through theft/fire/damage Inability to access records	Minutes and Agendas are held on the Council's website and Council's computer. Paper copies held in locked office at Clerks home. Data Back-up is in the Cloud and on an external hard drive Chairman has access to the Cloud if necessary	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
	Security of data (IT systems and support)	Confidential paper documents are stored in a locked filing cabinet at the Clerk's home. Council's computer is password protected and has anti-virus software  Any confidential paper documents are securely shredded.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk

	Risks Identified	Management/Control	Rating	Review/Assess	Action By
<b>Business Continuity contd</b>	Failure to retain or secure the necessary number of members for the Council	Clerk to maintain an up to date Councillor Attendance Register. Advertise for an election immediately a vacancy exists. Co-opt Members where no election is held.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk / Council
	Election costs	In an election year, estimated costs obtained from the Electoral Officer at North Northants Council (NNC) and included in the budget if insufficient reserves in General Reserves. In other years the Council has a contingency in budget to meet possible by-election costs.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk / Council

	Risks Identified	Management/Control	Rating	Review/Assess	Action By
Legal	Conflict of Interests  Members Register of Interests	Councillors are required to declare an interest in any item of business and this is recorded in the Minutes. Completed Register of Interests forms are submitted to the Monitoring Officer at NNC and regularly reviewed. Any change in a Councillor's Register of Interests must be notified to the Clerk.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk  Councillors
	Freedom of Information	Councils are required to adopt the model publication scheme, make information available to the public, review and update the guide to information and respond to any FOI requests in the appropriate way	A	Adoption of the model publication scheme and delegation to the Clerk for the review and update of the guide to information  Monitoring of any FOI requests,	Council / Clerk  Clerk
	Governing Policies not up to date	All Policies are reviewed annually by the Council and a check list is retained by the Clerk.	A	Existing procedure adequate	Council / Clerk
	Failure to ensure that all employees are paid in accordance with Council regulations and are adequately monitored. Failure to comply with Inland Revenue and HMRC regulations.	A Contract of Employment and Job Description is agreed for the Clerk. Clerk runs payroll using the HMRC BASIC PAYE tools. Ensure employee regulations are available and understood by the Clerk. No additional payment to the Clerk without Council approval.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk  Council  Internal Auditor

	<b>Risks Identified</b>	<b>Management/Control</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Review/Assess</b>	<b>Action By</b>
<b>Governance &amp; Management</b>	Lack of knowledge of regulations and codes	Ensure that a Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place and are reviewed annually. Highlight essential parts and provide training where relevant.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
	Action by the Parish Council outside its powers laid down by Parliament	Clerk to monitor relevant legislation and report to Council and include relevant powers to pay on Agendas	B	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
	Lack of commitment to regulations and procedures	Chairman and Clerk to review Council's meeting and operational procedures annually.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Chairman
	Notice of meeting	The meeting Agenda is placed on village noticeboards and on the Council's website giving the required notice of each meeting. Councillors to receive summons electronically	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk

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Governance & Management contd	Approval of minutes	Minutes are approved at the next Meeting of the Council. Draft Minutes are forwarded to Councillors no later than two weeks after a meeting. Draft Minutes are displayed on the Council's website and noticeboards once checked by the Chairman	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
	Written communication to third parties	All formal written communication/emails should be directed through the Clerk and may be signed by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman when necessary. Letters to be on headed paper	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
	Engagement by Members in the operation and activities of the Parish Council	Take every opportunity to publicise the role of the Parish Council. Public Open Forum Sessions are held at start of each Council meeting. Effective use of village noticeboards. Use key issues to raise the profile of the Parish Council and to test parishioners' views. Councillors details are available on the website	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council
	Impact of Public spending cuts	Councillors to be made aware that priorities must be set on the basis of the financial capacity of the Parish Council to deliver. Attend training where appropriate.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council
	Lack of engagement by Councillors and Residents on major items of public interest	Ensure publicity through local village news channels, village noticeboards and website.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council

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<b>Governance &amp; Management contd</b>	Lack of knowledge by Councillors on their role, responsibility and accountability	Experienced Councillors to assist new Members. Councillors to attend relevant training courses. Clerk to provide guidance in specific areas	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council Clerk
	Inadequate insurance cover for members and Clerk	Review Risk Assessment by including on Agenda of Parish Council meetings at least annually. Ensure a Risk Assessment is carried out for all new assets and appropriate insurance cover implemented.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
	Failure to identify, value and maintain all assets of the Parish Council, and ensure that asset and	Record and maintain a record of all assets for which the Parish Council is responsible and include in the year end accounts. Arrange for annual review of valuations and arrange for professional valuation	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
	Adoption and implementation of appropriate Government legislation	Clerk to have appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at Parish Council meetings.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk



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<b>Assets and Property</b>	Loss of damage to Assets Risk/damage to third party property	An annual review of any assets will undertaken for insurance purposes.  Regular risk checks around the Parish.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk Council
	Poor maintenance of assets or amenities	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	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council / Clerk
	Employment of Contractors	Use approved contactors.  Ensure that all contractors hold sufficient public liability insurance and health and safety certificates.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Council / Clerk
	Damage to Noticeboards	The Parish Council has two noticeboards in the Village and regular visual inspections are undertaken by the Clerk. Any damage or faults to be reported to the Parish Council.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Clerk
	Adequacy of meeting locations Health & Safety	Parish Council meetings are held in Cranford Village Hall which is a venue considered to have all the appropriate facilities for the Clerk, Councillors and the general public.	A	Existing procedure adequate.	Cl