



## Report ABPC/17/21

**To: Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council.**

**Date: 16 April 2018**

**Status: Public Report**

**Subject: Risk Assessment.**

1. **SUMMARY:**

This Report brings to the Parish Council the outcome of the completion of the Risk Assessment on the Parish Council.

2. **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION.**

The Parish Council needs to undertake a full risk assessment each year in respect of all of its activities as part of its corporate governance programme.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **To receive and note Report ABPC/17/21.**
2. **To receive and adopt the Risk Assessment.**

4. **INTRODUCTION:**

In all types of undertaking, there is a potential for events and consequences that may either be opportunities for benefit or threats to success. Parish Councils are no different and risk management is central to our strategic management.

Risk management is the process whereby Parish Councils methodically address the risks associated with what they do and the services which they provide. The focus of good risk management is to identify what can go wrong and take proportionate steps to avoid this or successfully manage the consequences.

Risk management is not just about financial management; it is about protecting the achievement of objectives set by the Council to deliver high quality public services. The failure to manage risks effectively can be expensive in terms of litigation and reputation, the ability to achieve desired targets, and, eventually, on the local community's Council Tax bills.

The Local Council Audit encourages Parish Councils to address these issues by placing emphasis on the need to keep under review and, if need be, strengthen their own Corporate Governance arrangements, thereby improving their stewardship of public funds and providing positive and continuing assurance to taxpayers.

The importance of looking afresh as risk comes in the wake of a more demanding society, bold initiatives and more challenge when things go wrong. It also arises because of the

significant changes taking place as a result of the Government's Localism Agenda.

The Council generally and Members individually are responsible for risk management because risks threaten the achievement of policy objectives.

5. **RISK ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES:**

Whilst the review has not highlighted any potential risks at the time of completion, it needs to be considered in terms of the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation where policies and Privacy Notices require reviewing and updating to comply with the new regulation..

6. **CONCLUSION**

The Parish Council is required to acknowledge the completion of the Annual Risk Assessment and to note that any changes to its activities will require an additional assessment to be carried out. This Risk Assessment forms part of the Annual Governance Report and can be called for by the Parish Council's External Auditor as one of their checks on the Annual Return.

7. **CONTACT OFFICER AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.**

If you have any queries about this report please contact the Responsible Financial Officer of the Council Tel.: 01233 721757 or email: [clerk@ald-bonnpc.kentparishes.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ald-bonnpc.kentparishes.gov.uk) prior to the meeting.

Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council  
Risk Assessment

Notes:

“The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council”

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed
- Identify what the risk might be
- Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings
- Review, assess and revise if required.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Topic	Risk	H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept	L	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information and the precept is an agenda item.	Existing procedure is adequate.
	Requirements not submitted to the Borough Council	L	With the budget 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 the Borough Council taking	

	Amount not received by the Parish Council	L	into account other income and grants. This figure is then submitted by the Clerk in writing to the Borough Council. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received.	
Financial records	Inadequate records  Financial irregularities	L  L	The Council has Financial Regulations, based on a model set produced by the National Association of Local Councils which are regularly reviewed, which set out the requirements. The accounts are audited by an independent person each year. During the year financial reports are produced on a regular basis. All cheques issued are signed by two councillors and a schedule of payments is approved at each meeting.	Existing procedures are adequate.
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The bank does make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank statements each month when the statements arrive, these are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their confirmation and correction.	Existing procedures are adequate.

Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Any cash received is banked as soon as practicable it is not added to the Petty Cash.	Existing procedures are adequate.
Reporting and Auditing	Information communication	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly and presented to Council. This statement includes, bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the Bank. A councillor is nominated to verify and sign the reconciliation.	Existing procedures are adequate
All costs & Expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing  Unpaid invoices	L L  L	The Council has financial regulations which set out the requirements. All invoices are checked by the Responsible Financial Officer for accuracy and for goods and services approved by the Council prior to being placed on the schedule of payments which is approved by the full Council. Unpaid invoices for goods and services are pursued and where possible, payment is obtained in advance.	Existing procedures are adequate.
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of the Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly.	Existing procedures are adequate/ currently under review to ensure compliance with

				General Data Protection Regulation
Grants – receivable	Receipts of grant	L	The Parish Council receives two grants each year towards its running costs from Ashford Borough Council these being Council Tax Support Grant and Concurrent Services Grant. Other one off grants come with terms and conditions to be satisfied these are monitored on a regular basis for compliance.	Existing procedures are adequate
Charges – rentals receivable	Receipt of rental	L	Allotments – an agreement for usage is issued which is signed by the tenant and the Parish Council. Rent is collected and banked.	Existing procedures are adequate.
Best Value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly	L	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements	Existing procedures are adequate.
	Overspend on services	M		
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong rate paid Wrong deductions of Tax or NI Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to HM Revenue & Customs	L L L L	The Parish Council has one employee. Salary rates are assessed annually. Salary analysis and slips are produced by the Clerk monthly together with a schedule of payments to H M Customs and Revenue (for Tax and NI). The payments are approved at the Council meeting and cheques signed. The Tax and NI is worked out using an	Existing procedures are adequate.

			Inland Revenue computer programme with automated updates. All Tax and NI payments are submitted monthly. The Clerk maintains a time sheet and has a contract of employment and job description.	
Employees	Loss of key personnel	L	The Clerk is required to give one months notice under the terms of the contract of employment. In the event of long-term sickness the Parish Council has "Key man" insurance to enable the employment of a Locum Clerk at no cost to the Council.	Existing procedures are adequate
	Fraud by staff	L	The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance are to be adhered to with regard to Fraud.	
	Actions undertaken by staff	L	The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role	
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	L	No allowances are paid to the Parish Councillors	No procedure required
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	M	Risk is higher in an election year, but on recent history there is now a high risk that a by-election is called for any casual vacancies. At present Ashford Borough Council do not pass on the charge for a scheduled election.	Existing procedure is adequate.- However, if the Borough Council changes its policy with regard to scheduled elections the procedure is inadequate and will

			There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having elections, as this is a democratic process. The Council maintains a reserve in case of an election.	need to be reviewed.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Parish Council has Financial Regulation which set out the requirements	Existing procedures are adequate
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	The Annual Return is completed by the Clerk, submitted to the independent internal auditor for completion, submitted to the Council for approval before sending to the External Auditor within the time limit with all legal notices displayed as required.	Existing procedures are adequate.
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Parish Council meetings.	Existing procedures are adequate.
Minutes/Agendas/Notices/Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and Agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Draft minutes are circulated as soon as prepared the minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements.	Existing procedures are adequate
	Business conduct	L	Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by	Members to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

	Compliance with the Transparency Code 2015 and Freedom Of Information Act 2000	M	the Chairman. Whilst the Transparency Code is not mandatory for an authority for the size of the Parish Council it is strongly recommended to comply with the requirements.	Existing procedures are adequate. The Council's data policies are currently under review to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation
Members interests	Conflict of interest	L	Although not a requirement, the declaring of interests by members at a meeting should be an obvious process, a reminder is placed on the agenda and should remain there.	Existing procedures are adequate
	Register of Members interests	M	The Code of Conduct requires a register of interests by members and this is the Monitoring Officers responsibility at the Borough Council. This is also published on the Parish Council website	Members are responsible for updating their entries on the register.
Insurance	Adequacy	L	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Any acquisitions made during the year are notified to the insurer.	Existing procedures are adequate
	Cost	L	Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for.	Review insurance provision annually
Data Protection	Policy provision	L	The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioners Office for Data	Ensure annual review of registration

			Protection	Data protection policies and privacy notices are currently under review to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.
Freedom of Information Act	Policy  Provision	L  M	The Parish Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. There have been no requests for information to date but the Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this may require many hours of additional work. The council is able to request a fee if the work will take more than 15 hours but the applicant also has the right to re-submit the request broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act.
<b>PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/control of risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedures are 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 these repairs are actioned/authorised	Ensure inspections are carried out.

	Loss of income or performance Risk to third parties	L L	in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council. All play equipment is inspected by a qualified inspector on a weekly basis in accordance with insurance requirements and ROSPA recommendations. All assets are insured and reviewed annually.	
Notice boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety	L L	Parish Council has 3 notice boards sited around the Parish. All locations have approval by relevant parties and insurance cover. They are inspected regularly by the Clerk. Any repairs/maintenance requirements are brought to the attention of the Council in accordance with the correct procedures	Existing procedures are adequate.
Street furniture	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	The Parish Council is responsible for various items (i.e. bins, seats, etc.) around the Parishes and covered by insurance. No formalised programme of inspections is carried out, all reports of damage or faults are reported to the Council and/or dealt with	Existing procedures are adequate
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Parish Council meetings are usually held at the Eco Centre on Goldwell Lane, if not available then the Village Hall on Roman	Existing locations are adequate

			Road. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health and Safety and comfort aspects	
Council records – Paper	Loss through: Theft Damage Fire	L L M	The Parish Council records are stored at The Mission Hall. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, leases for land or property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries, etc. Recent materials are in a metal filing cabinet (not fire proof) older records at the Village Hall and historical records at the Kent Archive.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate.
Council records – electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage corruption of computer	L M	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Council's computer held by the Clerk. Back ups of the files are taken monthly on an external hard drive and exchanged with the Chairman at Parish Council meetings. To mitigate against ransomware a daily back up to memory stick is undertaken and kept in a fire proof safe at the Mission Hall.	Existing procedures are adequate.  Procedures are currently under review to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.