# **Letwell Parish Council Risk Assessment May 2025**

“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 may be.

✍ Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings.

✍ Review, assess and revise if required.

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| **FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT** | |  |  |  |
| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H / M / L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Business continuity | Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an Unexpected or tragic circumstance Loss or theft/ inability to access records | L | All files to be held on a shared drive, giving access to Clerk and all councillors. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed the Chair to contact the Yorkshire  Associations of Local Councils for advice. | Reviewed, New Shared Drive April 25 |
| Business Continuity | Incapacity of Clerk or Resignation of clerk | L | Designate a person to temporarily act as Clerk in an emergency.  Locum clerk appointed with the month. Undertake succession planning | Reviewed |
| Business Continuity | Failure to retain or secure the necessary number of members for a Council | L | 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. | Review  Create Register |
| Precept | Adequacy of precept  Requirements not submitted to RBC  An amount not received by RBC  Loss of Parish Grant from  Rotherham | L  L  L  M | The Council reviews the Precept requirement annually at the December meeting and reviews the presented budget update information, including actual position and projected position to year end and estimated figures for the next financial year. With this information, the Council agrees the precept amount to be requested from Rotherham Borough Council. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to RBC.  The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (approx. April time).  The Council needs also to have adequate reserves to deal with an emergency, | Existing procedure adequate |
| Financial records | Inadequate records  Financial irregularities | L L | The Council has Financial Regulations that set out requirements and expectations.  The Council has appointed an independent internal audit to review processes. | Existing procedure adequate.  Review the Financial Regulations when necessary. |

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|  |  |  | Financial Regulations reviewed regularly and updated when required.  Systems of internal control in place.  Review of financial systems as part of Annual Governance and  Accountability Return (AGAR). Internal Audit report presented to Parish Council meeting.  All accounts available for public inspection.  The RFO maintains proper records, overseen by Councillors who undertake regular checks in accordance with the Council's audit plan. (Audit spot checks) Payments are authorised by the Council at each ordinary meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.  The Council has established a system of internal control. |  |
| Bank and banking | Inadequate checks  Bank mistakes  Loss  Charges | L  L  L  L | The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.  The bank may make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts and when the statements arrive.  The Clerk reviews the Council's banking arrangements regularly.  Councillor has electronic access view Council Bank statements etc. | Existing procedure adequate.  Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list, when necessary, especially after an AGM and an election.  Monitor the bank statements monthly. |
| **FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT** | |  |  |  |
| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H / M / L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Cash | Loss through theft or dishonesty | L | The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.  The Council’s insurance policy has a Fidelity Guarantee.  Finance is a standing item on Council agenda including reports and access to bank statements  A councillor has electronic access, view Council Bank statements etc. | Existing procedure adequate.    Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.  Ensure Fidelity Insurance is adequate. |
| Direct costs  Overhead expenses  Debts | Goods not supplied but billed  Incorrect invoicing  Cheque payable incorrect  Loss of stock  Unpaid invoices | L  L  L  L  L | The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. At each Council meeting, the list of invoices awaiting approval is approved. The Council has minimal stocks; these are checked and monitored by the Clerk.  Unpaid invoices to the Council are pursued, and progress reported to Council. The Parish Council does not currently have any up to date lease or rental agreements. | Existing procedure adequate.  Review the Financial Regulations when necessary. |
| 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 the S137 power of expenditure. | Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors request a copy of S137 rules if required. |
| Best value  Accountability | Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services | L M | As per Financial Regulations, normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender and report to the  Council. Parish Council to obtain at least two quotations for key purchases. | Existing procedure adequate.  Review Financial Regulations regularly. |

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| **FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT** | |  |  |  |
| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | H / M / L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Salaries and assoc. costs | Salary paid incorrectly  Wrong deductions of NI or Tax  Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to  HMRC | L  L  L | The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees at Council meetings (currently just the Clerk) and has a contract of employment. Salary rates are assessed annually by the Council and based on agreed NJC rates. | Existing system adequate. Reviewed, Council use PAYE Tools for processing employers pay/tax/NI |
| Clerk/Other workers  (voluntary/casual) | Loss of Clerk  Actions are undertaken  Health & Safety | L  L  L | A contingency arrangement in place with the neighbouring parish council to cover an unexpected loss of clerk, support is also available from YLCA. The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.  The Clerk is provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake the role.  Membership of the YLCA | Existing procedure adequate.  Review Membership status YLCA  Monitor working conditions, training and support  The council has introduced its own system and processes for dealing with Health and Safety including a nominat lead member. |
| Election costs | Risk of an election cost | L/M | The risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having an election as this is a legal  requirement democratic process. Sufficient budget reserves in place to cover this. | Existing procedure adequate. No reserve in place |
| VAT | Re-claiming/charging | L | The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.  VAT is accounted for in the cashbook. Internal Audit includes a check on VAT accounting. VAT is reclaimed at least annually. | Existing procedure adequate |

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| Timely Annual return | Submit within time limits | | L | | Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within the time limit.  Regular reports to Council on timescales and requirements.  Include a timetable in Standing Orders/Financial Regulations. Internal Audit checks. Financial reports to all Parish Council meetings. | | Existing procedures adequate. Reviewed – set annual date | |
| **FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT** | | |  | |  | |  | |
| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | | H / M / L | | Management/Control of Risk | | Review/Assess/Revise | |
| Legal powers | Illegal activity or payments | | L | | All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council Meetings. | | All activities and payments recorded and minuted. | |
| Council records - paper | Loss through: theft  fire  damage | | L | | Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, documents for ownership of property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc.  Recent materials are in a filing cabinet (not fireproof). | | Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provide adequately. Deeds/leases copied and deposited off-site.  Consider purchase of fireproof cabinet  Review with Clerk | |
| Council records -  Electronic /Minutes | Loss through:  Theft, fire, damage  Corruption of computer | | L | | The Parish Council’s electronic records are stored on the shared drive and are regularly updated to the council website.Backups of the files are available on the shared drive | | Existing procedure adequate.  We have a shared drive and website for storing all records | |
| **LIABILITY** | | |  | |  | |  | | |
| Subject | | | Risk(s) Identified | | H / M / L | | Management/Control of Risk | | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Legal Powers | | | Illegal activity or payments | | L | | All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted. | | Existing procedure adequate. |

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| Insurance | Adequacy  Cost  Compliance  Fidelity Guarantee | L  L  L  M | An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.  All Council members, employees and volunteers of the Parish Council are covered under the Personal Accident section.  The cost of the Council's insurance policy is included in its annual budget.  New assets are included on the policy asap. | Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance provision annually.  Review of compliance.  Reviewed Personal Accident/Fidelity |
| Data protection | Policy  Provision | L | The Council is not registered with the Data Protection Agency as does not hold information that requires it to be done so. | The Council review on an annual basis if required to register with the Data Protection Agency. |
| Policies | Ensuring that the Council’s policies and standard documents are up to date and meet best practice guidelines. |  | The Council is a member of YLCA and uses their templates as a basis for its documents.  The Clerk ensures that relevant policies are drafted and put to Council for adoption.  The Council reviews all policies and documents at each Annual Meeting of the Council or when review date is due.  The Clerk advises the Council as to whether proposed actions are within adopted policies.  Documents are displayed on the Council's website. | Reviewed appropriately |

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| **ASSETS** | | | | | |
| Subject | Risk(s) Identified |  | H / M / L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Parish Hall | Loss or Damage  Risk/damage to  party(ies)/property | third | L  L | An asset register is kept up to date, and insurance Is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks and risk assessment made by the Hall made by Members of the Parish Council or Clerk. Emergency arrangements in place, including reporting of incidents. Users of Hall made aware of the arrangements. | Existing procedure adequate.  Reviewed Asset Register & emergency arrangements  Review insurance requirements annually. |
| Noticeboards | Risk/damage/injury to third parties  Roadside safety |  | L | The Council has one notice board sited in the Parish (open/not key operated). There is, insurance cover, and inspected regularly by a councillor ~~-~~ any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. | Existing procedure adequate. |
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| Minutes/Agendas/ Notices/Statutory documents | Accuracy and legality Business conduct |  | L L | Minutes and agenda are produced with the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements.  Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.  Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements.  Business conducted at Council meetings managed by the Chair. | Existing procedure adequate.  Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required).  Members to adhere to Code of Conduct. |
| Public Liability | Risk of third party, property or individuals | | M | Insurance is in place. Risk assessments regularly carried out to comply with the requirements. | Existing procedures adequate.    Ensure risk assessments are carried out. |
| Employer Liability | Non-compliance with employment law | | L | Undertake adequate training and seek advice from the Yorkshire Association of Local Councils. | Existing procedures adequate. Review as required |
| Legal Liability | Legality of activities  Proper and timely reporting via  Minutes  Proper document control | | M  L  L | Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice if necessary.  Council always receives and approves Minutes of monthly meetings.  Retention of documents policy in place. | Existing procedures adequate. |
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| **COUNCILLORS’ PROPRIETY** | | |  |  | |
| Subject | Risk(s) Identified | | H / M / L | Management/Control of Risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| Members interests | Conflict of interest  Register of Members' interests | | M M | Councillors have a duty to declare any interests at the start of the meeting.  Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed regularly by Councillors. Code of Conduct Scheme in place which members are signatories to | Existing procedure adequate. Members to take responsibility to update their Register. |
| Lack of knowledge by Councillors on their role, responsibility and accountability |  | |  | Delegate responsibility to one or two experienced Councillors to assist new Members. Attend any training courses available. | REVIEW  Create a roles and responsibility document for  councillor/clerk/financial controller |

This Policy was amended at an Ordinary Parish Council meeting on the 21May 2025.

All risks were reassessed and identified.

The Parish Council meeting reference is 25/26/010c)

Next date for review is May 2026

This Policy was adopted at an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on the 21 of March 2024.

The Parish Council meeting reference is 24-027