

Burnham-On-Sea and Highbridge Town Council Risk Management Policy

Adopted on 13th March 2023. To be reviewed annually

Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge Town Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employees, assets, liabilities and community against potential losses.

The Town 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 enable the Town Council to assess the risks that it faces and to implement adequate steps to minimise them.

SUBJECT	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	LEVEL H/M/L	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE
FINANCE				
Budget & Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its statutory duties	L	The Council receives monthly budget reports. Each Committee produces a DRAFT budget, which is considered by the Finance & Resources Committee before a recommendation final Draft budget is presented to Full Council for review and consideration. The report includes actual and projected position to the end of the year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the RFO. The Precept is derived directly from this information and is considered and approved by Full Council and the request submitted to the Sedgemoor District Council within the specified deadline.	Existing procedures adequate

Financial controls and records	Inadequate records	L	<p>The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements and is reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>Rialtas financial software is used to prepare accounts and Council subscribes to the support services.</p> <p>An order spreadsheet is completed and authorised by the Town Clerk to Deputy Clerk.</p> <p>Invoices are checked before being passed to the RFO for payment.</p> <p>Currently all payments are reported to Council for noting. From April 2023, all payments will be approved at a Finance & Resources Committee or Full Council and minuted for transparency.</p> <p>Ticketsolve is used for issuing tickets and taking payments at the Princess Theatre.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
			<p>Online bank payments are authorised by two Councillors. Councillors receive sight of invoices/documentation to check before authorising.</p> <p>Accounts are internally checked by at least two Councillors on a quarterly basis. Annual internal and external audits.</p>	
Banking	Inadequate checks	L	<p>The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements.</p> <p>Any cash is held in a locked safe.</p> <p>Cash is banked regularly. However, the Post office no longer accepts denominations smaller of a £1 that is not a full money bag. Anything less than a full bag is kept in a locked safe and banked as soon as practical.</p> <p>Cheque receipts are banked at least monthly.</p> <p>Accounts are reconciled on a monthly basis and recorded.</p> <p>Earmarked reserves are in a separate account.</p>	Existing procedures adequate

Receipt and payment of grants	<p>Monies ringfenced and accurately managed</p> <p>Power to pay and authorisation of Council to pay</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>The Town Council does not presently receive any regular grants. Any transactions from a grant received are itemised separately.</p> <p>All grant requests are made following the Grants Awards Policy & Procedure and a specific application form.</p> <p>All such expenditure goes to the Finance & Resources Committee process of approval, it is minuted and listed accordingly under the S137 expenditure heading.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
Salaries and associated costs	<p>Salary paid incorrectly</p> <p>Unpaid Tax and Pension payments</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>Financial controls in place to pay staff salaries agreed in line with NALC pay scales.</p> <p>Iris Payroll Services, an external company, is used for payroll services and the Council subscribes to support services.</p> <p>BACS payments for PAYE & Pensions made monthly.</p> <p>Internal check carried out by 2 Councillors on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Annual internal and external audits.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
VAT	Reclaiming	L	<p>VAT claims are completed electronically on HMRC website and acknowledgement printed and kept in office.</p> <p>Internally reviewed by at least 2 Councillors on quarterly basis.</p> <p>Rialtas financial software produces VAT reports.</p> <p>Financial Regulations set out the requirements.</p> <p>Annual internal and external audits.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
Employees	Fraud by staff	L	<p>Insurance in place.</p> <p>Receipts issued for income.</p> <p>Cash is kept in a locked safe.</p> <p>All payments require two Councillor signatures.</p> <p>All orders are authorised by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk.</p>	Existing procedures adequate

Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L L	Town Council practice is to seek, if possible, three quotations for any substantial work undertaken. For major work, competitive tenders would be sought in line with the rules for contracts in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. If problems encountered with contract, the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	Existing procedures adequate
Loans	High interest rates and non recognised lenders	L	Full Council to approve any loans. Loans to be taken out via PWLB and two signatures required.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Return	Not submitted within time limits	L	Rialtas are contracted to complete the end of year close down and complete the AGAR. Internal Auditors complete reviews throughout the year and sign off AGAR Agenda item on Full Council agenda for completing and signing by the Council and then checked and sent to External Auditor within time frame. Council could ask for an extension to the deadline.	Existing procedure adequate
Election	Mid-term election costs	M	Some monies are earmarked if a mid-term election is called. Measures cannot be adopted to minimise risk of a contested election.	Ensure monies are earmarked for elections costs when setting budget
ADMINISTRATION & LIABILITY				
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	The Town Council has adopted the General Power of Competence. Committees have power of expenditure, within their remit. Advice to be sought when required.	Existing procedure adequate

Minutes/ Agendas/ Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Non compliances with statutory requirements	L L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next meetings. Agendas displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at meetings should be managed by the Chair.	Existing procedures adequate Members adhere to Code of Conduct and Member/Officers Relations Policy and undertake adequate training.
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	M	Insurance in place. Open spaces checked regularly. Trees investigated when damage reported. Tree survey carried out in 2021 and a maintenance programme in place. Risk assessments carried out on individual events e.g. Fireworks display. All third party users of Council facilities have to complete a booking form. Health and safety services provided by Worknest.	Existing procedures adequate
Legal liability	Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership	H	Checks undertaken on buildings on a weekly basis. Insurance in place and new equipment added ad hoc. Adequate Cemetery Rules in place. Yearly memorial inspections carried out. Health and safety services provided by Worknest.	Existing procedures adequate

Employer Liability	Non-compliance with Employment Law	L	Membership of various national and regional bodies including South West Councils. Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk are members of SLCC and the Council is a member of SALC. Policies in place. Employer's Liability insurance in place. Health and safety services provided by Worknest.	Existing procedures adequate
Employer Liability	Safety of staff and visitors	M/H	Employees are provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles. Staff training undertaken as required and appraisals in place. Health and safety services provided by Worknest. Risk assessments carried out. Staff issued with mobile phones.	Existing procedures adequate
Freedom of Information	Policy provision	L	The Council has a Model Publication Scheme and Freedom of Information Policy in place. The Town Council can request a fee for substantial requests.	Monitor and report any impacts made under FOI
Data Protection	Mis-use of information	L	Town Council is registered with the Information Commissioner and renewed annually. Policies in place.	Ensure annual renewal of registration
Council records - Paper	Loss through theft, fire, damage	L/M	Historical minutes have been deposited at Gloucestershire Archives (up to 2005). Burial records are stored in a fire proof safe. All records from Mid 2016 are electronic. All other records are stored in the Council office. Filing system is currently being updated. Land and buildings registered with Land Registry.	Damage or theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate

Council records - electronic	Loss through theft, fire, damage, corruption	L/M	The Town Council's electronic records are stored on a cloud basis system. IT plan is in place for support services. Off-site daily back-up. Anti-virus protection annually renewed and installed by IT support services.	Existing procedures adequate
Members Interests	Registers of Interests	M	Councillors have a legal duty to complete a form for the Register of Members Interests and keep it up to date within 28 days of any changes and to withdraw from a meeting in the event of a pecuniary interest. Declaration of Interests is an agenda item for all meetings.	Existing procedures adequate Members have a personal responsibility to declare interests and update their register entries
ASSETS				
Asset register	Asset register incomplete	L	An asset register is updated as required.	Existing procedures adequate
Buildings	Loss or damage	M	Buildings insured. Value increased annually by RPI. Regular checks by staff and reports from public investigated. Alarm system installed at The Princess Theatre and Old Court House. A register of named key holders is maintained. Annual Fire Safety and PAT Testing.	Existing procedure adequate
Buildings	Maintenance of buildings etc	M	Buildings currently maintained on an ad hoc basis.	Existing procedures adequate
Other assets e.g. litter bins, bus shelters	Loss or damage	L	Contract in place with Sedgemoor District Council for bins to be regularly emptied and checked. Insurance in place.	Existing procedures adequate
Vehicles	Unable to use due to fire, theft, accident. Third party liability	L/M L/M	One vehicle owned by the Council. Comprehensive vehicle insurance in place. Driver training to be undertaken on all new vehicles. Vehicle inspected in morning before vehicle driven. Vehicle stored in secure car park.	Existing procedures adequate