



MORETONHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY



The greatest risk facing the Council is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected by village residents.

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that enable Moretonhampstead Parish Council (MPC) to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the Council 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 MPC 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 main points have been followed and the register constructed accordingly.

- 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.

Subject	Risk(s) identified	Level H/M/L	Management/control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties	Low	To determine the precept amount required, the Council receives budget update information monthly. At the precept meeting, held not later than the end of January each year, Council receives 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 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 MPC.	Existing procedure adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records. Financial irregularities	Low	The Council has Financial Regulations in place. Reconciliation completed by the Clerk/RFO and checked by councillors at meetings. Two signatories required on cheques plus internal and external audit. Internal Financial Regulator checks and reports back to MPC. All financial obligations are resolved and clearly minuted before any commitment.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks	Low	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements.	Existing procedure adequate.

	Banks mistakes	Low	Monthly reconciliation of accounts. Financial regulations are reviewed annually in May.	Existing procedure adequate.
Cash	Loss through dishonesty or error	Low	Cheques or BACs payments are authorised at Council meetings and are signed or approved by 2 councillors. No petty cash is held. A £200 monthly limit is set on the business debit card.	No change required
Reporting and Auditing	Information communication	Low	Financial information is a regular agenda item (Report of internal financial regulator) and discussed/reviewed and approved at each meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.
Salaries and Expenses	Salaries incorrect, wrong hourly rate or hours worked.	Low	MPC uses an external payroll provider, any changes to salary and overtime payments are authorised by chairman and vice chairman.	Existing procedures checked annually.
	Fraud or incorrect claims	Low	Expenses must be approved. Mileage claims paid on completion of claim form and receipts provided. Mileage claim rates match those recommended by NALC.	
	Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to Inland Revenue		All NI and tax calculated by external payroll.	
Grants	Receipt of grant	Low	Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants.	Procedure would be established, if required
Grants and support payable	Power to pay. Authorisation of Council to pay.	Low	Any such expenditure would go through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly. Any payments made using S137 approved in the same way.	Existing procedure adequate.
Election Costs	Risk of unexpected election	Med	The Council will try to build up contingency funds in order to fund contested elections.	Should be included in budget when setting precept.
Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly.	Low	Normal Parish Council practice would be to endeavour to get 3 quotations for any substantial purchase/work to be undertaken (purchases over £2500). MPC will approve tender documents as needed. If problems encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council. Effective budget management Forward planning	Existing procedure adequate.
	Overspend on services.	Med		Include when reviewing Financial regulations
	Use of funds not giving value for money	Low		
Business continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to unexpected or tragic circumstances.	Low	All files and records are kept in secure locked cabinet at MPC office. Electronic data is backed up regularly through Dropbox. Council maintains 3+ cheque signatories	Existing procedures adequate. May be necessary to purchase a fire proof safe for burial records.

			In the event of short term illness, the Clerk will inform the Chair/Vice – Chairman of absence as soon as possible. If the Clerk has failed to arrive within 10 minutes of meeting start time and no contact has been made, the meeting should continue, and one of the councillors will note the minutes of the meeting. In the event the Clerk is unavailable longer term (more than 1 month), the Chairman/Vice – Chairman will discuss with the council.	Obtain alternative signatory in the event of councillor resignation
Clerk/RFO	Loss of Clerk Limited funds for advertising.	Low	Set aside contingency in budget to pay for this type of eventuality.	Include in financial statement when setting precept
	Actions taken by Clerk/performance in post	Low	Clerk supported in role by Councillors. DALC training when required and access to relevant assistance and legal advice if necessary.	Performance appraisals to be undertaken. DALC membership maintained
	Fraud	Low	Requirements of Employee dishonesty insurance (Fidelity insurance) adhered to.	Existing procedures adequate. Checked by internal financial regulator.
	Health and safety	Low	All employees to be provided adequate direction needed to undertake their roles	Monitor health and safety requirements and insurance annually
VAT	Reclaiming/charging	Low	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out requirements regarding VAT recovery. MPC reclaims VAT annually at end of financial year.	Existing procedures adequate
Annual Governance and accountability Return	Must be submitted within time limits (normally mid-June)	Low	Annual Return is completed and submitted online with the prescribed time frame by the Clerk. Annual Return completed and signed by the Council, submitted to Internal Auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent to External Auditor within time frame.	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	Low	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at full Council Meetings and Finance report monthly. Appropriate policies and procedures in place	Existing procedures adequate Policies and procedures to be reviewed as appropriate
Minutes/agendas/ Notices and Statutory Documents`	Accuracy and legality	Low	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Agenda displayed according to legal requirements.	Existing procedures adequate.

	Business conduct	Low	Business conducted at Council meetings is managed by the Chair (or vice chair in his/her absence).	Members adhere to Code of Conduct.
	Non-compliance with statutory regulations	Low	Clerk advises Council of statutory requirements	Members adhere to Code of Conduct
Members' interests	Conflict of interests.	Low	Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings.	Existing procedures adequate. Members take responsibility to update register.
	Register of members interests	Med	Register of members' interests' forms reviewed regularly.	
Insurance	Adequacy	Low	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements. Employers and Employee liabilities a necessity and within policies. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Fidelity checks in place through independent financial regulator.	Existing procedure adequate. Insurance reviewed annually.
	Cost	Low		
	Compliance	Low		
	Fidelity Guarantee (employee dishonesty insurance)	Low		
Data protection	Policy provision	Low	MPC has a Data protection policy in place.	Existing policy is adequate.
Freedom of Information	Policy Provision	Low	The Council needs to have a Model Publication scheme in place.	A Model Publication scheme is being prepared and will be put to council in due course.
		Med	The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours' work.	
Communication	Lack of effective communication with residents.	L/M	Articles in parish News in Moreton and Facebook page.	Existing communication is adequate.
Notice board used to publicise meetings, including agendas and minutes.	Lack of support for Council	L/M	The Council has its own Website which includes details of meetings, councillor information, policies and procedures, planning news, useful contacts and points of interest.	
PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT / AREAS				
Assets	Loss or damage	Low	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision	Existing procedures adequate
	Risk/damage to third parties property	Low	Insurance policy provided by Came & Company Parish Council Insurance and underwritten by AXA Insurance, reviewed annually to ensure adequate cover.	
Asset Management	Premises or other assets being closed or unavailable for use by the Council or community due to poor or dangerous condition.	Low	An asset register produced and reserves in place such that assets can be replaced at the end of their natural life. All assets are insured by Came & Company.	Existing procedures adequate Council consider delegated powers to the Clerk authorising him/her to act on behalf of the

				Council in urgency or emergency
Recreation Areas	The Sentry / Children's play area The Pound	Low	Areas regularly inspected by Councillors and staff	Monthly inspections undertaken, reported to MPC and minuted.
Notice Board	Risk of Damage or injury to third parties. Location suitability	Low	All covered by insurance policy and inspected regularly	Adequate inspections undertaken
Street Furniture	Risk of Damage or injury to third parties. Location suitability	Low	Street furniture covered by insurance policy and inspected regularly by Councillors and staff.	Monthly inspections undertaken, reported and minuted.
Council records – paper	Loss through: Theft Fire damage	Low Med Low	The Parish Council records are stored at MPC office. Records include historical correspondences, minutes, insurance, and bank records. The documents are stored in a lockable cabinet.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate.
Council records – electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer	Low Med	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Council laptop held at the MPC office. Backups of electronic data are made at regular intervals through Dropbox. Anti-virus measures in place.	Existing procedures considered adequate
Allotments income	Rental received from allotments	Low	Rents set annually by Council.	Existing procedures considered adequate
MISCELLANEOUS				
Poor reputation of the Council	The work of the Council is not understood leading to negative feedback from parishioners and dissatisfaction with the way services are carried out	Low	Regular use of communication channels including web site and News in Moreton to explain the Council's activities. Use of Social Media.	Communication Plan and Use of Social Media
Lack of Training or time to undertake the role of the PC	Inadequate knowledge or specialist ability may lead to poor decisions	Low	Adequate training budget available. Encourage training for Councillors and staff	Consider a training record and review annually.

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