



Ripple Parish Council

Risk Strategy and Management Policy

Adopted on 19th February 2024

Next review due in May 2025 or sooner if required

Introduction

Risk management is a structured approach to managing known, and perceived threats, (for example, cuts at Borough and County level which may reduce local services). It closely relates to a Council's ongoing activities and flows from regular assessment of risk, for Parish Councils this may be described as risk awareness & engagement.

It is recommended that Ripple Parish Council and its Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer manage risks to Ripple on an ongoing basis within its vicinity by:

- identifying risks to the parish and parishioners
- developing strategies to manage, and alleviate these risks
- working in partnership with the community using its resources
- working with others outside its boundaries who share its interests and aims

A Structured Approach

The Council's approach to risk management starts at the beginning of each business year. By setting aside time to review its business and strategies the Council will gain a clear view of its priorities, and revisit its objectives and how they are to be managed. This has the advantage of developing clear roles that will help the Council effectively use its powers and duties for the benefit of the community.

Risk Management Assessments

When the need is identified in year risk management assessments may be carried out by the lead Councillor(s) with the assistance of the Clerk as required. For example, when there is new housing development in the parish assessing new play areas for children, and their ongoing safety.

Consideration by the Council

The Council as the decision-making body resolves issues and makes decisions by consensus following constructive engagement and thought by all its members.

To assist Councillors to act as a corporate body several basic requirements need to be in place, including early referral of projects with:

- Answers to key questions - Why? What? When?
 - Community benefit? (*should be clearly established*)
 - Consequences? (*if not done now, or in future*)
 - Cost/benefit ratio? (*benefit must outweigh cost*)
 - Comparison with other projects? (order of priority)

- Specialist Advice -
 - Health & Safety, Legal, Resources, Facility Management, trees, footpaths etc.

- Up to date reports - s
 - showing progress, latest and planned expenditure on current projects
 - significant projects (over £500.00) planned over next three to five years by programme, e.g. village works, bus shelters etc

Action by Working Party

Where this applies this is driven by a clear programme of work delegated by the Council and monitored by ongoing monthly progress reports to the Council.

Business Item	Risk	Level of Risk High/Medium/Low	Alleviation of Risk by Ripple Parish Council	Ongoing Review
Council				
Declaration of Interest	Debating and voting on issues without declaring a personal interest	M	Chairman will prompt at meetings by asking if anyone had an interest to declare	Register of Interest Review
Decision Making	Having to complete all council responsibilities without a full compliment of councillors	H	Keep promoting the work of the council in different ways to generate interest	Keep promoting the work of the council through Facebook, newsletters, noticeboards
Training	The council will not be run to proper practices due to lack of awareness	M	Training to be arranged for councillors and clerk	Clerk to arrange training
Review of Risk Assessment Policy	Changing Circumstances	M	Annual Review	Commencing 2025
Resources & Services	Recognition of potential cuts at District and County level that may reduce or eliminate local services	M	Identifying areas at potential risk. Inviting district and county councillors to parish council meetings.	Budget for any areas of concern
Finance				
Precept	Ensure the precept is adequate for the councils planned expenditure	L	RFO prepares budget forecasting expenditure on new and existing projects	Council reviews budget before precept is agreed to ensure accuracy and all projects are covered
Financial Regulations	Not followed or becomes out of date	M	Ensure most up to date version is adopted and used	Reviewed annually
Banking	Inadequate checks resulting in error/financial loss	H	All payments whether by BACS or cheque should be signed with 2 signatures	Bank signatories to be urgently reviewed as out of date

		M	RFO completes monthly bank reconciliation of all receipts and payments	Existing procedures to be retained
Insurance	Ensuring insurance is adequate covering all risks	M	Ensure cover is reviewed and any new assets added	Reviewed annually
Assets	Not being aware of assets	L	Maintaining a asset register	Updated annually
VAT	Potential loss of receipts to council and forgetting to recover VAT annually	L	Receipts are recorded on finance system with VAT being saved separately. RFO to send VAT reclaim to HM Customs and Revenue annually	Existing procedures to be retained
Staff	Retention of Staff	M	Contract provided setting out terms of employment	Annual review to ensure both parties are happy with the role
	Paying correct salary	L	PATA hired to run payroll	
Data Protection	Not complying with GDPR	L	GDPR policy adopted	Review policy annually
Freedom of Information	Not complying with the Freedom of information act 2000	L	Relates to requests for information	Information to be available in accordance with the act.

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