



RISK REGISTER SHIPTON GORGE

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Reviewed and Approved

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Signed.....

Mary Boughton, Chairman of the Shipton Gorge Parish Council

Risk Register

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This register should be reviewed regularly, and must be amended whenever new risks are identified or circumstances change.

It is recommended that reviews be carried out on at least a three yearly basis and adopted at the meeting at which the reviewed register is approved.

INTRODUCTION

Risk is the possibility of danger, loss or injury taking place. The subject of risk and how it can be measured and how it can be managed is a complex and important factor for many organisations and businesses.

Fortunately for the Parish Council there is no need and in fact no merit in conducting an in depth analysis. For decades parish councils have worked on common sense and established ways of working. Today, life is unfortunately more litigious and insurers and auditors recommend or insist that the Parish Council has a risk register.

It is the duty of the Council to conduct its business in such a manner that risks are minimised wherever possible. It is also the duty of the Council to ensure that there is adequate insurance to cover some risks.

The register is only a collection of the conceived risks that the Parish Council has collected together.

Although it may be possible to quantify all risks there is limited benefit from carrying out such an analysis. Simple risk categories of **high, medium and low** that could reasonably be expected over a twenty year period are more appropriate and have been adopted:-

LOW RISK – An event that is unlikely to occur within a twenty year period

MEDIUM RISK – An event that could reasonably be expected to ~~Event may~~ occur within a twenty year period

HIGH RISK – An event that is likely to occur within a twenty year period

The Register may be added to at any time.

Insurance is the main tool that the Council uses to protect itself should a risk materialise. The Parish Council's current insurers are Came and Company Local Council Insurance (Underwritten by Aviva Insurance Ltd). Their Parish Council Policy booklet and the policy schedule have been consulted when assessing cover required.

Risk Number 1

Description:

Funds not being available to the Parish Council due to fraud

Narrative:

Currently the Parish Council funds are managed by the Responsible Financial Officer, in conjunction with the Parish Clerk who receives the bank statements and holds the cheque books. The Clerk is authorised to move money between the three bank accounts as necessary. The Clerk cannot sign cheques. All cheques require two authorised signatures in order to be accepted for payment.

At Parish Council meetings cheques raised since the previous meeting are recorded and approved. In addition, an Internal Audit is carried out four times a year by an independent auditor.

For a small parish council, with limited funds, these sensible, simple measures are appropriate to reduce the risk of fraud and have proved effective over many decades.

Currently the maximum amount of funds that could be obtained through fraud would be no more than £16,000.

It is acknowledged that no system can totally eliminate all risk of fraud and this simple system is no exception.

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

NONE.

Covered by Insurance:

Yes (if found within 3 years)

Risk Number 2

Description:

Funds not being available to the Parish Council due to mismanagement

Narrative:

The income available to the Parish Council, the precept, is agreed at a Parish Council meeting, usually in November, for the next financial year.

The Parish Council's principal income is the precept, along with interest, donations and grants. The Parish Council are made aware of the financial situation at every meeting and there should be no misunderstanding on what funds are available.

If there was a case for a large amount to be spent that had not been covered by the precept or other sources of income, the Responsible Financial Officer should refuse releasing funds until the Council had decided how the amount would be paid. Options would be paid from any available reserves, although these are usually maintained at a low level, or by the Council agreeing to take out a loan.

This risk would only be significant if the Responsible Financial Officer and the Clerk were not sufficiently punctilious in carrying out their duties and if in conjunction with this the majority of councillors were negligent in their responsibilities.

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

None

Covered by Insurance:

No

Risk Number 3

Description:

Destruction or loss of Parish Council records
(letters, minutes, financial details and any papers relating to the village.)

Narrative:

Parish records are kept in several places:-

Village Hall filing cabinet has archive data.

Clerk's residence, consisting of mainly recent records.

The Chairman, Playing Field Committee chair and Planning Committee chair all hold records pertaining to their council work in their residences.

The loss of a document can usually be worked around. Copies of bank statements can be obtained from the bank if required and planning records are kept by WDDC. Minutes and letters are sometimes irreplaceable since they can relate to the history of the village. Their relevance may not be realised for some years. However the majority of correspondence, minutes and other papers are held on the parish computer and this is backed up by the Clerk onto a memory stick which is kept at her residence.

Risk Category: MEDIUM

Further Action:

All holders of records to review record location and ensure computer files are backed up and/or a duplicate hard copy is kept

Clerk to back up computerised records once every month and ensure a duplicate memory stock is left with a Parish Councillor.

Council to regularly review the archiving of old minutes and documents in line with DAPTC recommendations.

Covered by Insurance:

No

Risk Number 4

Description:

Parish Council or Clerk, or Councillor being sued for Libel or Slander

Narrative:

The council is covered for Libel and Slander, subject to conditions.

It the responsibility of all Councillors and the Clerk that they conduct themselves in such a manner that claims for libel and slander will not occur.

Minutes of Parish Council meetings are only published in draft form until all Councillors have approved them and the Chairman has signed them.

Letters from the Clerk are sent without a third party routinely checking content. However on contentious issues it is expected as normal practice for the Clerk to discuss content with the Chairman.

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

All Councillors and the Clerk should be cognisant of the possibility of slander when speaking in public at Parish Council meetings or when representing the Parish Council at other events, and also of libel when checking and approving minutes, letters and other documents.

Covered by Insurance:

No

Risk Number 5

Description:

Vandalism/theft at the King George Playing Field

Narrative:

Vandalism and theft have occurred at the playing field in the past, but in recent years there have been no occurrences.

Additional security measures were put in place in 2003 following the last major incident of theft following advice from the Police Crime Prevention Office and these have proved successful. All Councillors and parishioners are encouraged to be vigilant.

The field and its equipment are checked weekly by a member of the Parish Council on a rota basis and this is recorded. There is little more that can be done.

Risk Category: HIGH

Further Action:

NONE

Covered by Insurance:

Yes

Risk Number 6

Description:

Play equipment becoming dangerous and beyond repair

Narrative:

Currently the equipment is inspected once a week and repairs are undertaken promptly.

Any equipment found to be damaged or dangerous at the weekly inspection is taken out of use immediately.

A Playing Field Safety Inspection is carried out annually by a competent and authorized body, such as RoSPA, and their recommendations for any improvements carried out.

The cost of new equipment is significant and it is possible that some equipment may be beyond repair within the next ten years.

Government legislation will require some of the equipment to be replaced with equipment to a higher safety standard in the future although it is not usual for new legislation to act retrospectively.

The Parish Council makes provision for the future replacement of equipment by putting a sum of money into a separate account annually to provide for this.

Risk Category: MEDIUM

Further Action:

NONE

Covered by Insurance:

No

Risk Number 7

Description:

Injury caused to a person while attending an event organised by the Parish Council.

Narrative:

The Parish Council has adequate Public Liability insurance for its own events.

On an irregular basis the Parish Council may allow the Playing Field to be used for events organised partly or solely by other groups.

If such events are run jointly with the Parish Council and parish councillors are part of the organising committee, the Parish Council's Public Liability insurance is valid for the event.

If such an event is run solely by another organisation and the Parish Council are not involved, the organisation must provide its own Public Liability cover and a copy must be lodged with the Parish Clerk prior to the event. The organisers are also required to carry out a Risk Assessment for the event in advance and to the satisfaction of the Parish Council and to provide a written copy to the Parish Council for their records.

If felt necessary the Parish Council's Resilience Plan Volunteers may be asked to be involved in such an event.

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

NONE

Covered by Insurance:

Yes

Risk Number 8

Description:

Injury to person/s at the King George's Playing Field

Narrative:

There is always a risk that children or adults may suffer accidental injury while using the facilities in the Playing Field. If subsequently any of the facilities at the field are shown to have been in a dangerous condition and so contributed to such an accident, the Parish Council could be deemed to be liable.

The field and its equipment are inspected weekly by a Parish Councillor and observations are recorded and signed in a book. Any repairs or maintenance required are undertaken before equipment becomes dangerous. An Accident Book is also kept.

Warning and advisory notices are erected where deemed necessary to safeguard individuals and the equipment.

A Playing Field Inspection is carried out annually by a competent and authorized body, such as RoSPA, and their recommendations for any improvements recorded as critical are carried out swiftly and low level risks being noted and appropriate action taken.

Risk Category: MEDIUM

Further Action:

NONE

The Parish Council currently meets its responsibilities

Covered by Insurance:

Yes

Risk Number 9

Description:

Injury to person/s whilst operating or using equipment that is the property of the Parish Council

Narrative:

The Parish Council owns a mower, strimmer, and several hand tools used for the maintenance of the field and its equipment. It is the responsibility of the operator, whether a contractor or volunteer, to use the safety equipment provided. Instruction manuals and training, where appropriate, are provided.

The machinery is serviced annually in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.

The groundsman and any volunteers are reminded of their responsibility to use equipment responsibly and they are covered by insurance

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

NONE

Covered by Insurance:

Yes

Risk Number 10

Description:

Vandalism/theft at the Village Green

Narrative:

The Village Green is a small area of grass and shrubs partially surrounded by a wooden post and rail fence and large stones on the roadside. There is a telephone kiosk, a commemorative tree and an electricity post on the land.

The Parish Council is the owner of the land.

There is no knowledge of recent vandalism or theft at this location and the risk of such occurrence is considered minimal.

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

NONE

Covered by Insurance:

No

Risk Number 11**Description:**

Injury to person at the Village Green

Narrative:

The Village Green is a small area of grass and shrubs partially surrounded by a wooden post and rail fence and large stones on the roadside. There is a telephone kiosk, a commemorative tree and an electricity post on the land.

The Parish Council is the owner of the land.

The grass is maintained by a contractor who reports to a Parish Councillor if any obvious hazards become apparent. No significant risk of injury is envisaged and should this occur the land is covered by the Parish Council's public liability insurance.

The old village pump/drain is sealed and represents no risk other than a trip hazard, but being very obvious this is low risk.

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

NONE

Covered by Insurance:

Yes

Risk Number 12

Description:

Loss or damage of IT equipment

Narrative:

The Parish Council's IT equipment is normally kept at the Clerk's residence. Portable items are sometimes taken to outside meetings. The risk of loss or damage is considered to be no greater than that for an ordinary member of the public using such equipment and normal precautions are taken.

Risk Category: LOW

Further Action:

NONE

Covered by Insurance:

Yes (all risks insurance)