

ASHWELLTHORPE ND FUNDENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

General Risk Assessment

Foreword “The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council.”

‘Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation’s ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements.’ Audit Commission, Worth the Risk: Improving Risk Management in Local Government, (2001 :5)

Risk management is an essential feature of good governance. It is vital to recognise that risk management is not simply about health and safety but applies to all aspects of Ashwellthorpe and Fundenhall Parish Councils work.

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 measures to control them. The Parish Council is aware that although some risks can never be eliminated fully, it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic, and focussed approach to managing risk, which:

This Risk Assessment;

- Identifies the key risks facing the council
- Identifies what the risk may be
- Identifies the level of risk
- Evaluates the management and control of the risk and records findings
- Reviews, when significant changes in activities or risks occur

Assets

Risk No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1 – 10	Likelihood 1 -10	Risk Rate	Measures	Result
A1	PROW Information Lectern near village hall	Impact damage Vandalism Cost of replacement	Pedestrians	4	1	4	Dated Insurance including public liability	A
A2	Parish Noticeboards x 4	Impact damage Vandalism Cost of replacement	Pedestrians	4	1	4	Dated Insurance including public liability	A
A3	Village sign	Vandalism Impact damage Cost of replacement	Pedestrians	3	2	6	Dated Insurance including public liability	A
A5	Laptop and Printer	Cost of replacement Repair cost Accidental damage	Clerk Councillors Parishioners	2	2	4	Dated Insurance including public liability	A

Management

Risk No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1 -10	Likelihood 1- 10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
M1	Failure to attract sufficient candidates for councillor vacancies or election	Reduced representation. Possible meeting inquorate	Councillors	2	2	4	Publicise vacancies or election on noticeboards and website. Speak to friends and colleagues about vacancies	A
M2	Failure to achieve quorum at meetings	Decisions not made Business not transacted	Councillors Clerk	1	2	2	Record Attendance. Meeting information out promptly Contact councillors who fail to attend meetings	A

Risk No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1 -10	Likelihood 1- 10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
M3	Councillors acting alone outside of meetings	Personal Risk Councillors outside compliance	Councillors	2	2	4	Avoid making commitments on behalf of the council. Attend relevant training courses Issue and read Hood Councillor Guide	A
M4	Council decisions not implemented	Confidence undermined Reputation risk arises	Clerk	1	4	4	Clerk to publish draft unapproved minutes on website and noticeboard.	A
M5	Inaccurate, untimely minutes	Poor decisions in future Poor evidence for decisions	Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk to check minutes with chair not more than 14 working days after meeting prior to sending out to councillors	A
M7	Failure to recognise and address conflict of interest	Lack of transparency Open to complaints of bias	Councillors Clerk	1	2	2	Councillors reminded of Code of Conduct	A
M8	Loss of data on PC due to failure	Interruption to effective administration Possible financial loss	Clerk	1	4	4	External Hard drive Monthly back up	A
M9	Lack of professional advice	Poor decisions Possible non compliance	Clerk	2	2	4	Membership to NALC and SLCC Training	A
M10	Loss of services of clerk	Interruption to effective administration	Councillors Clerk	2	2	2	Approach Norfolk Association of Local Council Clerks and Norfolk Training Partnership for assistance in appointing a Locum	A

M11	To ensure the Parish Council is adhering to data protection law Or Unauthorised access, loss, or breach of sensitive personal and business data.	PC fails to adhere to data protection rules – complaints received due to a data protection breach/complaints to the Information Commissioner's Office.	Councillors Clerk	1	1	1	The council is registered with the governing body Information Commissioners Officer. Data protection policy adopted. Information audit carried out regularly by the clerk. Staff and Councillors are encouraged to use strong passwords and update these regularly. Clerk and councillors are trained in data protection Sensitive data access is restricted to the Clerk.	A
M12	Failure to identify local needs and wishes	Council not representing its constituents	Councillors	1	3	3	Publicise plans and invite comments Maintain contact with residents Advertise parish meetings	A
M13	Lack of proper communications	Breach of LGA Breach of Audit regulations Breach of transparency code for smaller authorities	Council Public	1	2	2	Noticeboard regularly updated Website regularly updated Clerks contact details available on noticeboard and website All councillors have full contact details for each other	A
M14	Personal Accident to Councillor, clerk, or voluntary worker	Legal action by employee Public or Volunteer	Council	1	2	2	Comprehensive Insurance purchased. Risk Assessments maintained	A
M15	Libel and Slander claim Legal Expenses accrued	Legal action by employee Public or Volunteer	Council	1	2	2	Media relations policy in force to guide Councillors and clerk in dealing with the public and media	A

M16	Clerk or Councillor acts ultra vires	Council brought into disrepute	Council Clerk	2	2	4	Councillors and clerk offered regular training sessions Policies and advice available from Clerk NALC advisory service available to all	A
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Financial

Risk No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1 -10	Likelihood 1- 10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
F1	Financial	Misappropriation of Council funds Financial loss	Public services	1	2	2	All banking arrangements and changes to banking services approved by the council and recorded in the minutes. Online Banking - dual authorisation. Two councillors have access to the council's bank along with the Clerk/RFO. If cheque needs to be raised, two councillors to sign each cheque and cheque stub. Internal audit carried out by appointed councillor who is not a signatory	A
F2	Income HMRC regulations are met	Unable to fulfil responsibilities	Public service	1	2	2	Ensure clerk/councillors understands and complies with VAT legislation	A
F3	Failure to complete/submit Annual Return on time	Poor auditors report.Public confidence suffers	Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk to maintain diary	A
F4	Accidental damage to fixed assets	Costs of repair Loss of service until repaired	Clerk	2	2	4	Maintain Insurance	A
F5	Improper contracting procedures	Possible increased costs. Poor level of service	Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk adequately trained Financial regulations adopted	A

F6	Inadequate Insurance	Balance of costs to be found	Clerk	1	4	4	Council to review annually or if circumstances change	A
F7	Failure to recover VAT	Wasted resources	Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk to review Internal Auditor to check	A
F8	Failure to calculate/submit precept on time	Inadequate resources to meet commitments	Clerk	1	2	2	Agenda item to councillors to consider and approve. Clerk to respond to South Norfolk Council correspondence.	A
F9	Inadequate annual precept and unsound budget	Inadequate resources to meet commitments	Councillors	1	2	2	Clerk and councillors to build sound budget using known commitments.	A
F10	Failure to stay within budget	Inadequate control	Councillors	1	2	2	Clerk to review	A
F11	Holding excessive or inadequate reserves	Auditors report Poor use of resources Inability to meet commitments	Councillors	2	2	4	Clerk to review as part of budgeting	A
F12	Fraud by Clerk	Reputation Costs, Litigation	Clerk	1	2	2	Adequate internal audit Regular reporting to councillors Control measures in place for spending	A
F13	Fraud by Councillors	Reputation Costs, Litigation	Clerk	1	2	2	Adequate internal audit Regular reporting to councillors Control measures in place for spending	A
F14	Improper financial records	Potential for wasted resources	Clerk	1	2	2	Internal audit	A
F15	Failure to maintain fixed assets register	Improper control Poor auditors report	Clerk	1	2	2	Council to review Internal audit	A

No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1 -10	Likelihood 1- 10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
F16	Failure to comply with relevant legislation	Reputation damage Costs, Litigation	Councillors Clerk	2	2	4	Membership to NALC and SLCC Clerk to attend training	A
F17	Failure to spend CIL during 5 year time limit	Inadequate control	Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk completes CIL return and sends it to SND	A

Play Area

No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1 -10	Likelihood 1- 10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
P1	Equipment which is dangerous is not identified	Play area condition deteriorates	Public	2	1	2	Inspections will be undertaken to identify any problems/hazards that have been created by use, abuse weather and age. Routine Inspections: An inspection will be carried out by a person nominated by the parish council. Annual Inspections: An inspection will be undertaken on a yearly basis by an accredited independent inspector.	A
P2	Equipment which is damaged is not dealt with correctly	People are injured whilst using the play equipment	Public	2	1	2	All items shown on the Asset register will be inspected. All inspection reports will be retained by designated councillor. They will be available for inspection by request. Any issues raised by any inspection will be brought to the parish councils attention. Any questions will be raised with the Annual Inspecting body, and in the event of immediate remedial action needing to be taken the Chair or Vice Chair of the parish	A

							council will have delegated powers to close any piece of play equipment by either its removal, isolation or rendering harmless any dangers found.	
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Trees

No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1 -10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
T1	Trees than need to be managed are not identified	Unidentified hazardous trees Unidentified hazard to pubic and property No remedial action planned/assessed	Public Property	2	2	4	1. Appoint a Tree warden 2. Regular (4 or 5 yearly(professional tree survey)	A
T2	Vulnerable trees are not managed	Ongoing hazard to public Ongoing hazard to property	Public Property	2	2	4	1. Requesting parishioners to report damage to trees. 2. Informal review of trees on parish land after adverse weather. 3. Take advise from qualified Arboriculturalist. 4. Install guarding items around tree(s)	A

Pond area

No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1 -10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
P1	Pond and surrounding area	Safety	Public	2	1	2	Grass cut by Omache Gardens. Notice on gates to warn about water. Life bouy and safety notices in place. Gates kept locked shut	

	Failure to take adequate steps to protect members of the public using council property		Public				Specialist contractors employed where possible Visual inspection of assets by Chair and councillors Defects reported to Chair or Clerk for action	
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Footpath Warden

No	Item	Risk	Affected	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1-10	Risk Rate	Measures	Results
F1	Injury – falling or slipping on route	Varies depends on weather conditions underfoot	Warden	1	1	1	Wear appropriate footwear with firm gripping soles. Hiking sticks can be used for additional support	A
F2	Lone working	Medium – difficulty of calling for assistance	Warden	1	1	1	Inform a friend/colleague/family member of their route. Carry a working mobile phone at all times	A
F3	Obstructed footpaths	Medium – impact on walking public	Warden Public	1	1	1	Do not attempt to remove obstacles. All obstacles should be reported to the relevant bodies. Only attempt to climb over an obstacle if it is safe to do so.	A
F4	Damaged Stiles and bridges	Low – impact on walking public	Warden Public	1	1	1	Do not attempt to cross stiles/bridges if they are broken. Maintenance issues should be reported to the relevant bodies	A
F5	Plants cause irritation	Low	Warden	1	1	1	Wear long trousers and long sleeved shirts. Carry a small first aid kit.	A
F6	Bites, stings, attacks by animals	Low	Warden	1	1	1	Maintain vigilance, wear long trousers and long sleeved shirts. Carry a small first aid kit.	A
F7	Extremes of temperature	Low	Warden	1	1	1	Check weather reports prior to going out. Wear suitable clothing appropriate to the weather conditions and carry sufficient water.	A

Risk Scoring = Severity x Likelihood (S x L)

For grading risk, the scores obtained from the risk matrix are assigned grades as follows:

1 - 3 = Low Risk, easy measures implemented immediately and further action planned for when resources permit

4 -10 = Moderate Risk Actions implemented as soon as possible but no later than a year

12 -16 = High Risk Actions implemented as soon as possible but no later than six months

20 - 25 = Extreme Risk Requires urgent action.

Results key: - **A** = Adequately controlled, **N** = Not Adequately controlled

General Risk Assessment adopted September 2025.

Review Annually