

RISK ASSESSMENT STRATEGY DACRE PARISH COUNCIL

RISK	RISK FACTOR	CONTROL METHOD
FINANCE		
Theft or misappropriation of Parish Council Finances	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clerk is not a signatory for cheques but verifies all expenditure 2) Two Councillors' signatures required on each cheque or authorisation of other payment method (at least three signatories agreed by the Council) 3) Monthly reconciliation of bank account 4) The Parish Council does not run a petty cash system 5) No payments are made in cash 6) Collection of money from toilet honesty box is made by Clerk and a Councillor 7) Internal checks carried out periodically by two Councillors who are not signatories 8) Internal audit carried out by person with accountancy experience 9) Parish Council has Fidelity Insurance 10) No Councillor may sign a cheque payable to themselves or to a company in which they have a pecuniary interest (<i>as required by Financial Regulations</i>)
Adequacy of precept	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget updates and the precept is an agenda item at the meeting in December.
Precept not submitted/not paid	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Diary/reminder system in operation to ensure precept deadline is adhered to and that the precept is received
Invoices received not processed or cheque payments wrongly processed	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) All invoices checked by Clerk for accuracy 2) At each meeting payments are authorised by the full Council. 3) Cheque stub and invoice are initialled as verified by the two cheque signatories
VAT Claims not made	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) VAT claim submitted annually 2) Diary/reminder system in operation to ensure VAT re-payment received
Accounts & book-keeping incorrect	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clerk maintains proper records, overseen by the two Councillors undertaking regular internal checks 2) Internal and external audit carried out annually

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Inadequate or mismanaged budgets	Low	1) Updated budget submitted to full Council at every meeting
Costs of services excessive	Low	1) Quotations requested for all regular services 2) Service costs reviewed annually
Insurance level incorrect	Low	1) Review of insurance cover is carried out annually to ensure relevant liabilities are insured 2) Asset register is maintained and checked during Internal Audit
Bank account unsuitable	Low	1) Clerk carries out regular review of available accounts, looking at services and interest offered
Pension obligations not undertaken (re new legislation 2016) Fines can be levied if appropriate pension schemes are not set up within certain time limits	Low	1) Clerk will check regularly whether any employee wishes to opt-in to a pension scheme. Given the level of salary, any pension will not need to be a qualifying pension so can be set up quickly. The Council will not be required to contribute.
CLERK		
Legal issues surrounding Parish Council as an employer	Low	1) Clerk is employed under the terms of a version of the Model Contract agreed by NALC and SLCC. These organisations will offer assistance in case of problems
Salary payment incorrect / not made	Low	1) Payment made quarterly using a specialist payroll company which is approved by full Council at meeting 2) Salary rates are on standard scale and increased if there is a national agreement
PAYE /NIC payments not made to HMRC	Low	1) Payroll system implemented by experienced specialist company who calculate the amounts to be sent to HMRC. Clerk writes cheque at same time as cheque for salary and posts to HMRC after authorisation as necessary
Absence of Clerk	Low	1) A Councillor will take the Minutes / undertake essential duties

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GENERAL		
Meeting mismanagement	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clerk receives appropriate training re agendas, roles, procedures, minutes etc 2) Chairman receives appropriate initial and on-going training 3) Councillors receive initial and on-going training 4) Council is kept updated of new procedural legislation by Clerk 5) Standing Orders exist and are regularly reviewed to ensure all items are managed correctly Latest NALC model (2018) adopted.
Minutes mismanagement	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Minutes are numbered and dated 2) Minutes are approved by the full Council and each page is signed, at the following meeting
Minutes destroyed or lost	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Signed copies are kept in folder in secure place (Clerk's home) 2) Second copy kept by Chairman 3) Electronic copy of minutes kept on Parish Council computer and website and backed up regularly onto external storage device
Security of Council documents	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Documents are kept in secure place (Clerk's home) 2) Electronic copies are kept where possible on Parish Council computer and backed up onto external storage device 3) External storage device is not permanently connected to mitigate risk of ransom attack/computer virus
Members interests	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Members are asked annually to complete / update a Register of Interest Form 2) Each Parish Council meeting agenda includes item re "Declaration of interest" and the chairman asks all members present to declare an interest if appropriate 3) If an interest is declared this is noted in the minutes 4) A process for dealing with dispensations exists in Standing Orders
Unlawful actions	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clerk advises Council regarding appropriate legislation 2) Clerk ensures Council adheres to all standing orders and financial regulations. 3) Clerk is encouraged to attend relevant training to ensure knowledge is current 4) Clerk deals with complaints according to adopted procedures

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Existence of Council Policies	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clerk ensures that relevant policies are drafted and put to Council for adoption 2) Clerk ensures that policies are reviewed as appropriate 3) Clerk ensures that Council actions are within adopted policies
Unavailability of Meeting Room	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Annual timetable of meetings published in May, and dates checked with Booking Secretary of meeting room 2) Alternative venues identified for use in case of unavailability of usual meeting room and booking details held on file
Councillor disqualification through non-attendance	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clerk notes apologies, keeps attendance records and advises Council if any Councillor is approaching limit for disqualification
COMMUNICATIONS		
Lack of written information for public concerning Council business	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Minutes are posted on noticeboards and on a local parish web site 2) Policies are posted on web site within 1 month of adoption 3) Clerk deals with requests for information according to adopted and published Publication scheme
Lack of written information for public concerning Council finances including requirements of Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities 2015	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Information re audit etc is published according to statutory guidance 2) Annual Return is displayed according to statutory guidance 3) Annual accounts are published on the local parish website 4) Relevant information sent to neighbouring Clerk and published on the local website as required by Code
Lack of Parish Council information on website	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Parish Council website is owned and maintained by the Clerk 2) The Clerk undertakes to post all Parish Council information in a timely manner
Disruption of website	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The website has been developed and is hosted by a professional company. A support contract exists in case of problems 2) Clerk keeps copies of all information posted on the website 3) Domain name can be changed if necessary