West Mersea
Town Council

FINGRINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEME 2026/27

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment, the Parish Council should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document has been produced to enable Fingringhoe Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimize them. The list is not exhaustive, and the Parish Council may wish to consider other risks not identified. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was devised:

- 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.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	**Risk(s) Identified**	**H/M/L**	**Management/Control of Risk**	**Review/Assess/Revise**
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to CCC Payment not received by CCC	L L L	To determine the precept amount required, the FPC regularly receives budget update information, and the precept is an agenda item at full Council. At the Precept meeting FPC receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to end the year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk/RFO. With this information FPC 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 Colchester City Council. This figure is submitted by the Clerk/RFO in writing to CCC. The Clerk/RFO informs Council when the monies are received (approximately May and September).	Existing procedure adequate.

Financial records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations annually for adequacy, improvement, and relevance.
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, BACs payment and reconciliation of accounts. FPC has 2 bank accounts (1 current, 1 savings account – both with NS & I). Cheques and online banking require two signatures, there are 3 nominated Councilors and the Clerk/RFO is not a signatory. The Clerk/RFO reconciles the bank accounts once a month with the bank statements and cash book.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations and bank signatory list, especially after an AGM and an election. Monitor the bank statements monthly.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	Fingringhoe Parish Council do not hold any cash.	Existing procedure adequate.
Reporting and auditing	Information communication	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly before each Council meeting, with the agenda, discussed and approved at the meeting. This statement includes, bank reconciliation, budget update, and a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank balance. The payments are also listed on the website after the end of each month.	Existing communication procedures adequate.
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed. Incorrect invoicing. Payments made are incorrect. Loss of stock.	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. No payments are made without an invoice. Councilor's are sent invoices by email and the Clerk/RFO files them in the appropriate month. Approval is also by email which the clerk files for the audit trail. Once approved, they are set up on the bank account and released by the signatories. Council approves the list of requests for payment. The Council does not carry any stock.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations annually.

Grants and support – payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure to go through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure. The Clerk has passed CILCA, but the Council are unable to adopt the General Power of Competence due to the number of co-opted Councillors. The Council does not have a grant awarding policy but a small amount for grants is budgeted each year.	The Council must not exceed to S137 limits. All expenditure must be within the appropriate power as GPoC not held.
Grants - receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Council does not receive any regular grants. Any other grants applied for or received are fully documented.	Procedure would need to be formed, if required.
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	Normal Council practice is to seek 3 quotes, where practical for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods, as per the Financial Regulations. For major contact services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk/RFO would investigate the situation, check the quotation/ tender, research the problem and report to Council.	Existing procedure adequate as per Financial Regulations.

Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong hours paid Wrong rate paid False employee Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax or NI contributions to HMRC	L L L L L L	The Council authorises the appointment of all employees. Salary rates are assessed annually and applied on 1 April each year. Salary analysis and payslips are produced by the Clerk/RFO monthly together with a schedule of payments to HMRC (for Tax and NI – where applicable). The Clerk/RFO, records the hours worked and has a contract of employment and job description. The pay calculations are calculated on PAYE Basic Tools supplied free by HMRC.	Existing appointment and payment system is adequate.
Employees	Loss of key personnel staff Fraud	M	All documents and records are stored on the Clerks laptop, where possible. Other records are stored in a secure metal chest. The documents on the Clerks laptop are regularly backed up on a memory stick. The Chairman holds a duplicate memory stick with old records on (copy held by Clerk). The insurance Fidelity Guarantee is £25000.	Existing procedures adequate. Review Insurance policy annually, including fidelity guarantee in view of level of reserves.
Election costs	Risk of an election cost.	M	Election costs will be budgeted for in the 2026/27 budget. Risk is higher in an election year. When a scheduled election is due, the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the City Council. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a by election, as this is a democratic process.	Existing measures adequate.

VAT	Reclaiming	L	VAT is reclaimed annually. The Clerk/RFO analyses any VAT charged on purchases within the expenditure of the Council and maintains all VAT receipts within the Council's records. The Clerk/RFO produces a VAT refund analysis and the Clerk/RFO makes a claim to HM Revenue & Customs for recovery of the amounts. The refund is received via BACS transfer and the Clerk/RFO notifies the Council at the next meeting. All documentation in relation to the process is maintained in the Council's records.	Existing procedures adequate.
Annual return	Submit within time limits to avoid charges	L	The Annual Return is submitted annually. After the internal audit the Annual Return is signed by the auditor, referred to the Council for approval and submitted with the time limits. Due to the level of receipts and payments (less than £25000), there is currently no requirement for an external auditor to review.	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of Council are be resolved and minuted at Council meetings, and to include reference to the powers used, if not already done so in the budget. The annual budget to reference the powers used for regular payments made.	Existing procedures adequate.
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices Statutory documents	Accuracy, and legality Business conduct	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements and best practice guidelines. Minutes are approved and signed at the following meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings is managed by the Chair.	Existing procedures adequate. Training/guidance available to the Chair (if required). Members to adhere to the Code of Conduct/ Member Officer Protocol
Members interests	Conflict of interest. Register of members interests.	L L	Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings is a regular agenda item to remind members of their duty. Register of Members Interests forms are reviewed regularly.	Existing procedure adequate. Members should take responsibility for this register.
Insurance	Adequacy, cost, compliance and fidelity guarantee	L	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements to ensure best value and that adequate cover is being achieved. The insurance is approved annually.	Existing procedures adequate.

Data Protection	Policy	L	A data breach policy was adopted on 27 July 2021. Minute ref 052/21. The Council is registered for Data Protection with the Information Commissioner.	Existing procedures adequate
Freedom of Information Act	Policy	L	A Freedom of Information policy was adopted on 27 July 2021. Minute ref 052/21. The Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create additional hours work. The Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours.	Monitor any requests made under FOI. Note review dates.
Training	Lack of training can lead to incorrect decisions being taken and misinformation.	L	The Clerk /RFO should be provided with relevant training, reference books and access to assistance and legal advice required to carry out the role. Councillor's should also be provided with training wherever applicable (whether new or refresher). The Council is a member of NALC & EALC which is a source of information/training for many aspects. It is useful but not essential for the Clerk to be CiLCA trained.	Consider regular training for staff and Councillor's. The Clerk is CiLCA trained.
Audit – internal	Arrange once or twice per year of which one must coincide with the annual return	L	The Internal Auditor is appointed by the Council. Internal Auditor is supplied with relevant documents to audit and the required form to complete and sign.	Existing procedures adequate.
Insurance -	Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership	L	Regular inspections are in place for the play area, pond area and trees on owned or leased land. Other assets (per the Assets Register) are checked annually.	Existing procedures adequate.
Councillors	Losing Councillors or having more than 4 vacancies at any one time	L	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow. The monitoring officer should be contacted. This either leads to an election or the co-option process. An election is out of the Council's control. The co-option process being with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applications and a co-option vote held at a meeting. Appointment and formal co-option then takes place. If there are more than 4 vacancies at any one time, the Council would become inquorate, and CCC would intervene.	Existing procedures adequate. Procedures determined by Monitoring Officer at CCC must be followed.
Litigation	Potential risk of legal action being taken against the Council	M	Public liability insurance covers general personal injury claims where the Council is found to be at fault, but not spurious or frivolous claims – these cannot be insured against.	Insurance is adequate for requirements but there is still a risk of other claims.

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS

Subject	**Risk(s) Identified**	**H/M/L**	**Management/Control of Risk**	**Review/Assess/Revise**
Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) property	L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedures adequate. Asset register updated annually.
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of Income Risk/damage to third parties	L	All assets owned by the Council are regularly annually, inspected and maintained as required. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is actioned/authorised in accordance with the current procedures of the Council. Assets are insured.	Existing procedures adequate.
Notice boards	Risk of damage by accident or vandalism	L	The Council has three notice boards which are inspected regularly when notices are posted.	Existing procedures adequate.
Street furniture	See assets above	L	See assets above	See assets.
Meeting location	Adequacy. Health & Safety	L	The Council meetings are held in the village hall in the parish of Fingringhoe. The premises and facilities are maintained by the Village Hall Committee (separate to the Council) and are adequate for the purposes of the meeting from Health & Safety, Disability Discrimination and comfort aspects. The Chairman of the meeting provides a H & S briefing at the start of each meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.

Council records – paper	Loss through theft, fire, or damage	M	The Council's paper records are stored in the clerk's home/fireproof metal chest. The records include historical correspondence, minutes, agendas, insurance details, bank records etc. Historic records are kept at the Records Office at Essex Archive. It is believed that a number of paper records were lost after a change of personnel in April 2021.	Existing procedures adequate.
Council records – electronic	Loss through theft, fire, damage, or corruption of computer	L	The Council's records are stored on the Clerk's laptop. Back-ups of the files are via a memory stick at regular intervals.	Existing procedures adequate.

Reviewed: 19th May 2026
Minute reference: 071/26
Next review: May 27