Langton Matravers Parish Council
Policy and Risk Register

Introduction
The Council will identify those significant risks which could affect its financial position, operations, reputation or expose it to litigation. The Council will seek to reduce the scale of the risk by introducing practices/procedures which will reduce the likelihood of the risk and/or its impact. The risks identified together with their mitigation and status are listed below. The register will be reviewed annually.

Method
The Council has adopted an approach that defines five levels of impact and five of likelihood which are as follows:

Impact

A. None or trivial
B. Minimum (loss exceeds £100, slight service disruption, slight local disquiet)
C. Moderate (loss exceeds £1,000, service disruption, local disquiet, possible litigation)
D. Major (loss exceeds £10,000, service interruption, adverse publicity [local], litigation expected)
E. Extreme (loss exceeds precept, major service interruption, major adverse publicity [national], major litigation expected).

Likelihood

1. Remote (only occurs in exceptional circumstances)
2. Unlikely (occurs in a few circumstance)
3. Possible (occurs in some circumstances)
4. Probable (occurs in many circumstances)
5. Highly Probable (occurs frequently and in most circumstances)

The resulting scale of risk can be seen in the following table

Risk Rating
High
Medium
Low

E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
B1	B2	B3	B4	B5

Insignificant	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5

Risk #	Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Mitigation	Risk after Mitigation	Comment
Governance and Administration					
G1	Meetings	Meetings not held in a proper manner.	Standing Orders are in place, conduct overseen by Chairman and Clerk who are held to account by the Council.	C2	
G2	Structure	Appointees, committees etc. not constituted correctly.	Scheme of Delegation in place and overseen by the Governance Working Party and Clerk who is held to account by the Council.	C2	
G3	Minutes and Agendas (M&A)	Inaccurate, not issued in a timely manner, not compliant with legislation.	Minutes approved by Council. Standing orders in place, M&A published on website and noticeboards, overseen by Clerk for compliance with Local Government Act and GDPR, Clerk is held to account by Council.	C2	
G4	Councillors	Councillors are not aware of their responsibilities. Do not declare Interests when necessary. Behave in an unacceptable manner.	New Councillors provided with an induction pack, are made aware of training. They formally accept the Code of Conduct when signing their acceptance of office. Overseen by the Clerk.	C2	

G5`	Predetermination	A failure by a Councillor to approach a matter under debate without an open mind could lead to any resulting resolution to be ruled invalid.	New Councillors, as part of their induction, will be advised on this matter including the difference between "predetermination" and "predisposition". A Developer Communication Protocol is in place to ensure discussions with developers are open and transparent and for the avoidance of any perception of predetermination. The Chair/Clerk will advise the Councillor of any perceived predetermination.	C2	
G6	Grants	Appropriate powers not used (S.137 or Power of Competency). Powers not complied with (inappropriate beneficiary, no local benefit, statutory limit exceed) Applications not properly considered or are not affordable.	Grant award budget set annually. Grant award process in place together with application form. Overseen by Clerk who is held to account by the Council.	B2	
G7	Press and Media	The Press & Media (or other person) are not provided with reasonable facilities to report on an open meeting in contravention of legislation. Good relations with press are not maintained resulting in parishioners being incorrectly informed.	Dealings with the Media and the Press are subject to Standing Orders. The Clerk provides a monthly report for publication in the Dubber. The protocol for this and other communications with the press is covered in the Council's "Press Release Guidance".	B2	

G8	Information	Not published as required. Retained for longer that is necessary. Not properly secured and recoverable. Not made available when required. Not compliant with Data Protect legislation.	Digital records are backed up regularly. Publication Scheme (Freedom of Information), Document Retention Policy, Data Protection Policy, Data Processing Statement, Privacy Notices and website accessibility statement are all in place. Overseen by the Clerk who is held to account by the Council.	B2	A review of paper records needs to be undertaken and appropriate processes put in place.
Finance					
F1	Accounts Audit & AGAR	Accounts are not sufficient, timely and/or accurate. Auditors not correctly appointed. AGAR not correctly published.	Accounting is subject to the Council's Financial Regulations (FR). The Council uses an online accounting system to ensure accurate and timely records which are sufficient for the Council to fully understand its financial position and to enable auditors to examine the accounts. Councillors have online "read only" access to the system enabling checking and information sharing. Auditor appointments are undertaken in accordance with the Regulations. The clerk makes arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to accounts (AGAR) in accordance with the Local Accounts and Audit Act 2014.	D3	

F2	Budget and Precept	A budget is set which is insufficient to cover the Councils ongoing costs. The precept is not issued to Dorset by the appropriate time.	Budget and Precept are subject to the Council's FR. The budget is developed by the Clerk in conjunction with the "Ways and Means" portfolio holder or such Councillor who has financial expertise. It is then approved by full Council. The budget is set in January each year and the precept is submitted by the Clerk immediately afterwards.	C3	
F3	Procurement	Items are bought without proper authorisation. Purchases do not provide value for money	Procurement is subject to the Council's FR. All purchases are authorised by full Council other than the clerks delegated power to purchase items below £500 in value. All purchases above £500 are normally, subject to value obtained following competitive bids.	D3	

F4	Banking	An inadequate mandate is in place. Direct Debit and Standing Orders are not approved properly. Possible loss of funds in the event of a bank failure.	Banking is subject to the Council's FR. The Clerk is the online service administrator. There are a minimum of three approved signatories, two of whom are required to approve a bank payment. New regular payments (i.e. DD and SO) are approved by full Council before activation. Existing regular payments are reviewed and re approved annually. Although bank deposits up to £85,000 are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, the Council spreads fun s across different banks.	C2	
F5	Payments	Payments are made without proper approval and/or for the wrong amount.	Payments are subject to the Council's FR. All payments other than exceptional circumstances are made via online payments. The Clerk sets up the payment subject to checking prior approval and then two of the designated signatories double check the amount and payee prior to approval. The payment card is used when an approved purchase can only be completed online via the use of such a card and the value is less than £500.	D3	Council may wish to give thought to reviewing the control process for the use of the payment card.

F6	Value Added Tax (VAT)	VAT records are not correctly kept or claims not made.	VAT is subject to the Council's FR. The online accounting system automatically handles VAT and provides reminders to the Clerk and Councillors via their online "read only" access to the accounting system.	C2	
F7	Cash and Petty Cash	Cash and/or Petty Cash misused or not properly accounted for.	The Council does not maintain a petty cash float. Other cash is subject to the Council's FR. No payments are made in cash and cash receipts, if any, are banked in their entirety as soon as possible after being received.	B2	
F8	Salaries	Incorrect net salary paid. Incorrect deductions made. NI, tax and pension contributions not paid in a timely manner.	Payment of salaries is subject to the Council's FR. Clerk's salary is approved by full Council. Tax and NI is automatically calculated by HMRC's online app. Pension contributions are calculated by the online Nest (workplace pension scheme) app. Salary paid in accord with the contract of employment. Tax, NI and pension contributions also paid at month end. Amounts checked by Councillors individually and by full Council.	D3	

F9	Loans and Investments	Loans entered into without Government approval and/or at rates which are not sustainable. Risky investments entered into which puts the Council's funds at risk.	Loans and Investments are subject to the Council's Investment Strategy and FR. The Council, at the present time, does not see the need to take out loans. A loan will only be taken out with a full business case and with approval of the full Council. At the present time, the Council sees no need to hold funds in anything other than instant access or medium-term cash deposits. Any other investment will only be entered into with a full business case and approval of the Council.	E2	
F10	Income	Income is not collected and/or banked correctly.	Income is subject to the Council's FR. Precept, cemetery fees and allotment charges are set by full Council at least annually. The collection of income is the responsibility of the Clerk. All debtors are encouraged to pay directly into the Council's bank account. The Council will be informed of any irrecoverable debts, who will authorise the writing off of such debts.	C2	

F11	Assets	Assets are lost/mislaid and/or not recorded properly.	Assets, Properties and Estates are subject to the Council's FR. The Clerk is responsible for the safe keeping of all assets and related documentation. All assets are recorder in the Council's asset register which is reviewed at least annually.	D2	
F12	Insurance	Items of value are not, or underinsure. Third party, fidelity guarantee. and professional liabilities are not or underinsured.	Insurance is subject to the Council's FR. Insurnce is in place to cover loss, fire and theft for tangible assets. Liability insurance is in place for third parties, fidelity guarantee and professional indemnity. The Insurance is reviewed annually	D2	
Amenities and Operations					
A1	Staffing	Lack of proper process leading to unhappy staff and possible tribunal/other claims, which in turn leads to service disruption or interruption. Lack of performance review and training leads to a lower level of service than would otherwise be the case.	Staffing matters have been delegated to the Staffing Committee (SEDACC). NALC model contract and job specification in place. Regular appraisals take place. Also, in place are; Appraisal Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Training Policy Greivance Policy. Complaints Procedure, Disciplinary Procedure. There is also a separate Staff Appeals Committee (SAC).	D3	

A2	Staff Welfare	Lack of support on matters of staff welfare could lead to stress/injury and a subsequent drop in performance and possible disruption to operations and/or litigation.	Council is aware of its duty of care to its employees. The staffing Committee (SEDACC) will work closely with employees to identify and mitigate any welfare concerns. Procedures are in place to handle vexatious complainants. The Clerk is advised to work closely within her clerking network to identify such risks and in particular to invite colleagues to assist her to undertake regular Display Screen Equipment assessments.	C3	
A3	Business Recovery	Loss /unavailability of parish office, Village Hall, computer systems and/or key staff could lead to service disruption /interruption.	For office unavailability, the Clerk will work from home. For Village Hall unavailability, there is a de facto agreement to use the church. Loss of hardware will be replaced speedily. Digital records are backed up and kept off site. Locum Clerk will be appointed as soon as possible.	B3	Paper records review required. Staff continuity plan required

A4	H&S	Bus shelters, cemetery, highways furniture, public conveniences, playground and woodland trail are used by the public and the allotments by authorised tenants. There is a risk of injury if these are not maintained properly which in turn could lead to litigation.	All of these are inspected regularly by the Clerk together with Councillors (duly appointed by Council to undertake such roles). In the case of the Playground a RoSPA inspection takes place each year. All these amenities are maintained by contractors on a regular basis except in the case of allotments, bus shelters, highways furniture and woodland trail which are maintained on an as required basis. Overseen by the Clerk who is held to account by the Council.	D3	
A5	Dealings with the Public	Harm may be caused to members of the public (especially children and vulnerable adults) when dealing with the Council. New activities undertaken by the Council may have unacceptable risks.	A safeguarding policy is in place to minimise possible harm. The Council will not start a new activity until the clerk has completed a risk assessment and the Council have resolved that mitigated risks are acceptable.	C3	
A6	Stores and Equipment	Stores and equipment are at risk from loss damage, loss, fire and theft. Resulting in financial loss and/or disrupted service.	The Clerk is responsible for the care and custody of all stores and equipment. All equipment is kept under lock and key in either one of the designated workplaces.	B2	

A7	Allotment and Cemetery	Allotment tenants and owners of burial rights use these amenities in an inappropriate fashion causing nuisance to other users, members of the public and/or the Council.	Allotment users are subject to a tenancy agreement which outlines their responsibilities. The plots are regularly inspected by the Clerk together with duly appointed Councillors. Breaches may lead to termination of the tenancy. Burial rights owners enter into an agreement with the Council governed by the Cemetery Rules and Regulations which enables the Council the rectify the breach. Overseen by the Clerk who is held to account by the Council.	B2	
A8	Disputes	Members of the public may dispute their allotment or burial rights which might in turn lead to litigation.	All such agreements are subject to formal documentation. The Clerk will in accordance with the Document Retention Policy keep such records including termination letters indefinitely.	B2	

Adopted by resolution of the Council, 12th June 2025.
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