



**Wellingborough**  
**Town Council**

## **Financial and General Risk strategy**

# Wellingborough Town Council- Financial and General Risk Strategy

Adopted 17.10.23 FG23/28

## Introduction

### **What is the Council here for?**

The purpose of the Town Council is “To represent the interests of the local community and provide appropriate assistance and support to established and new initiatives that will be of benefit to the Town and its residents, business and visitors”

### **What does it need in order to serve its purpose?**

People: Councillors, staff, volunteers, parishioners

Property: Items the Council provides as a service (e.g. events ) and items it needs in order to act (equipment, furniture)

Money: In the current economic climate a more prudent view of expenditure within the agreed budgets. Long-term investment of any surplus income held in reserves.

Knowledge: Information, experience, contacts and effective communication.

Good Name: To be seen by local peoples as making fair decision and providing value for money and also be effective and credible when representing the local community to others.

### **What might put its work at risk?**

Carrying out a general risk assessment gives the Council a chance to consider what might put its work at risk and decide how that risk should be managed. Risks to Parish Councils can include physical, financial or ‘intangible’ things (such as loss of reputation)

### **What can be done about it?**

Risks which can be predicted are generally managed by one or more of the following:

- Buying insurance cover
- Contracting out the risk
- Managing the risk within the Council

The Councils current risk strategy is overleaf

What is the Asset?	What is the risk?	High, Medium, Low Risk?	How is it currently managed?	Further recommendations	Who will Act?	Who will Review?	Review date
<b>DATA</b>	Data loss or breach	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Firewalls in place on devices</li> <li>2) I.T support contract in place for the management of systems.</li> <li>3) Passwords to contain letters and numbers, phrases, ideally staff passwords are generated by a password management software, using Google Authenticator</li> <li>4) All council staff passwords are saved in Sticky Passwords, (a password management system) Access is through two- step authentication.</li> <li>5) Staff Pc's have two step authentication</li> <li>6) Data backed up in two locations, Microsoft and with CloudyIT. These data storage sites are password protected and encrypted.</li> <li>7) Permissions set on sensitive files</li> <li>8) Communication with staff and councillors is conducted through .gov email accounts.</li> <li>9) The clerk has administration rights to delete accounts immediately on change of staff and or councillors.</li> <li>10) Data is stored in the cloud only to prevent loss.</li> <li>11) Policy in place to manage retention of data to ensure data kept is not excessive and complies with GDPR 2018.</li> <li>12) sensitive files encrypted to prevent forwarding or printing</li> <li>13) Personnel documents are restricted to Clerk access only. Permission can be created by IT to add other users if requested by the council.</li> <li>14) Hardcopy data is discouraged. If printed once read it must be shredded..</li> <li>15) A training budget is provided for the DPO and staff to update their knowledge of GDPR.</li> </ol>	Staff and councillors to be trained on GDPR annually in-house	Town Clerk	Council	October 2024

<b>PEOPLE</b>	Long terms absence of essential personnel	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Staff contracts in place covering length of absence, sickness etc..</li> <li>2) Administrator settings have been set up on all PC's to gain access if required by the Clerk and I.T. support.</li> <li>3) Council is a member of SLCC which can provide a Locum Clerk's support</li> <li>4) Employment Handbook adopted</li> </ul>	None	Town Clerk	Council	October 2024
	Accident/injury	L	<p>In-house</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Equipment visually inspected before use for any damage.</li> <li>2) Health &amp; Safety Policy and Lone Working Policy adopted</li> <li>3) Display Screen assessment conducted</li> </ul> <p>Insurance-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Employer's liability insurance</li> <li>2) Public liability insurance £10 million</li> <li>3) Follow levels of insurance recommended by insurer.</li> </ul>	Training courses to be attended by staff conducting risk assessments	Town Clerk	Council	October 2024
	Cllrs/staff working alone with public-assault malicious accusation	H	<p>In-house</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Health and Safety Policy and Lone working policy adopted for councillors and staff to follow</li> </ul>		Full Council	Council	October 2024

	Grievance , staff disciplinary matters	M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Town Clerk is a member of the Society of Local Council Clerks who provide advice on personnel matters.</li> <li>2) Member and Officer Relations Policy is in place.</li> <li>3) Employment Handbook adopted</li> <li>4) Appraisals conducted annually.</li> </ol>		Town Clerk	Council	October 2024
<b>PROPERTY</b>	Damage to/loss of Council property	M	<b>In-House-</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Asset Register updated when changes occur and is reported to council annually.</li> </ol> <b>2) Insurance-</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Insurance review conducted annually to ensure there is sufficient cover for the council.</li> </ol>		Town Clerk	Council	October 2024

<b>MONEY</b>	Insufficient funds	L	<b>In-House</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Annual budget approved by Full Council.</li> <li>2) Income, expenditure and budget monitoring approved by Finance and Governance Committee quarterly.</li> <li>3) Official Purchase orders to be issued for all work, goods and services.</li> <li>4) Agreed list of who has authority to spend approved by Full Council</li> <li>5) Reserves held specifically for Town Council property emergency/repairs.</li> <li>6) No employee or individual councillors can make payments or transfer money from any Council bank accounts.</li> <li>7) Two authorised signatures required by councillors for any payments to be issued.</li> <li>8) Four signatories held for each account.</li> <li>9) Financial Regulations adopted by the Council and reviewed every year.</li> <li>10) Direct Debits and Standing Orders approved annually</li> </ol> <b>Insurance-</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11) 1) Fidelity insurance in place and reviewed annually.</li> </ol>	Reserves increased annually to cover any emergency expenditure	Full Council	Full Council	October 2024
--------------	--------------------	---	---	--	--------------	--------------	--------------

	Direct debits and standing orders taking out more money than agreed.	L-M	<b>In –House</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Bank account to be monitored by statements by RFO and Finance and Governance.</li> <li>2) All direct debits and standing orders approved annually through the Council.</li> <li>3) Bank reconciliations signed by two councillors each quarter, not signatories.</li> <li>4) Direct Debits and Standing Orders can be cancelled or suspended by RFO, if a need arises.</li> </ol>		Town Clerk	Full Council	October 2024
	Bank or custodian ceases trading	L-M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Invest in UK banks, invested in by the government.</li> </ol>		Full Council	Council	October 2024
	Insufficient insurance cover	L	<b>In-house-</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Annual review of cover.</li> <li>2) Designated person responsible for insurance (RFO)</li> <li>3) Notify insurers of significant changes during the year.</li> <li>4) Use insurer with specialist council experience.</li> <li>5) Assets evaluated every five years to insure it covers replacement value.</li> <li>6) Asset Register reviewed annually.</li> </ol>		Town Clerk	Full Council	October 2024
	Dishonesty	L	<b>In-house-</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Accounts audited internally and externally each year and are approved by Council.</li> <li>2) Financial Regulations in place.</li> <li>3) Payments authorised by 2 signatories and checked by the RFO.</li> <li>4) A log of decisions made by the Clerk or officers under delegated powers are recorded and are available for public inspection.</li> <li>5) Fidelity insurance in place and reviewed annually.</li> <li>6) Accounts prepared by RFO and approved by Finance and Governance Committee quarterly.</li> <li>7) Year end Bank reconciliations approved and signed by the Chairman of Council annually at the Full Council Meeting.</li> <li>8) Internal System Review carried out by members each year, who have no affiliations to the Finance and Governance Committee.</li> <li>9) Reimbursement and Expenses forms completed with</li> </ol>		Full Council	Full Council	October 2024

			receipts attached and checked by the RFO before being included s part of the monthly payroll.				
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



	Incorrect payments made by internet banking		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Payments made by two authorised signatures</li> <li>2) Signatories approved by Full Council</li> <li>3) Payments uploaded by the Deputy Clerk and checked by the RFO</li> <li>4) Financial Regulations in place which are reviewed every year.</li> <li>5) Internet banking access restricted for employees to view and upload only.</li> <li>6) Payments can only be released by two councillors.</li> </ul>				October 2024
<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	Lack of specialist knowledge for events and projects	M	<p><b>In-house-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Training budget in place for councillor and staff training.</li> <li>2) SLCC Membership is paid tby the council for the Clerk.</li> <li>3) Regular meetings are held with other local council Clerks to share knowledge with other Clerks</li> <li>4) Weekly team meetings in place between Clerk and Leader for support.</li> <li>5) Training statement of intent adopted and training plan put in place for councillors and officers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Contracted out-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Specialists with own insurance called in where necessary.</li> </ul>		Town Clerk	Full Council	October 2024

	Loss of knowledge due to loss of key personnel	M	<b>In-house</b> 1) Reference books and training materials held electronically. 2) Passwords kept in password manager 3) Policies and procedures for working practices are in place. <b>Contracted out-</b> 1) Membership held for advisory groups i.e. ( SLCC, ICO)		Town Clerk	Full Council	October 2024
	Failure to communicate effectively	L	<b>In-house-</b> 1) Social Media and website updated twice weekly. Scheduling software used to make posts daily on social media. 2) Agendas, minutes etc. Circulated to all councillors well in advance of the meetings. (in accordance with legal requirements) 3) Monthly newsletter provided to all members. 4) Weekly Team meetings held by the Town Clerk with all other employees. 5) Registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. 6) Contracts and tenders placed on the council website and government Contracts Finders website to comply with Openness and Transparency regulations 2015 7) Noticeboard being purchased to be used for communication in the Town Centre 8) FOI publication scheme adopted 9) Communications Policy and Strategy adopted		Town Clerk	Full Council	October 2024
	Computer failure	L	1) Backups of data done daily by CloudyIT and Office 365 2) Data stored in the cloud which can be accessed from any device. Nothing stored locally. 3) Contract in place for I.T. support. 4) Insurance cover in place. 5) Two spare PC towers are held in storage, which can be used for temporary replacements.		Town Clerk	Council	October 2024

<b>REPUTATION</b>	Loss of the Councils good name	M	<b>In-house-</b> 1) Annual internal/external audits, approved by Council. 2) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in place. 3) All councillors must sign a Code of Conduct and complete Register of Interest. 4) Register of gifts is kept in the office and reported to Monitoring Officer 5) Legal advice sought when in doubt, or from bodies to which we hold membership. 6) Standing Orders and all other policies reviewed annually. 7) Training budget for Staff and Councillors	Induction programme and staff and councillor training	Full Council	Full Council	October 2024
	Failure to comply with current legislation	L	<b>In-house-</b> 1) Training budget for councillors and staff. 2) Town Clerk is a member of SLCC for updates. 3) Council registered with ICO		Town Clerk	Council	October 2024
	Damage, injury to public etc. by contractors	L	<b>In-house-</b> 1) Seek to use reputable, recommended contractors. 2) Contractors public liability insurance is requested before work commences 3) Risk assessments received or conducted before work commences.		Town Clerk	Full Council	October 2024