

LITTLE BRICKHILL PARISH COUNCIL - RISK ASSESSMENT

Aim	Risk	Method used to Minimise Risk	Person(s) Responsible	Actions Required / Taken
1. To ensure compliance with the Acts of Parliament, Council's financial regulations and code of conduct.	1. Lack of knowledge of regulations and codes.	Ensure that all Councillors have copies of Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. Highlight essential parts and provide training where possible.	Chair Clerk	All Documentation is available to view on the website via the following link. www.littlebrickhillparishcouncil.co.uk/Documents_23078.aspx
	2. Absence of standing orders	Ensure that Standing Orders are produced, understood by councillors, and reviewed at least once per year.	Chair Clerk	The latest version of S/O's were reviewed and adopted at meeting held on the 04/09/23.
	3. Items purchased without proper tendering procedures, resulting in accusations of commercial favouritism.	Ensure that all councillors are aware of financial regulations re estimates and full tender procedures.	Chair All councillors Clerk	See LBPC F/R's that were reviewed and adopted at meeting held on the 02/12/24.
	4 Payments made without prior approval and adequate control.	Introduce practice of estimates for all purchases over an agreed figure.	Clerk	See LBPC F/R's that were reviewed and adopted at meeting held on the 02/12/24.
	5. Lack of control of signatories to cheques.	Ensure all payments are approved in Council meetings and recorded in minutes. Keep cash payments to a minimum and avoid if possible.	Clerk	See LBPC F/R's that were reviewed and adopted at meeting held on the 02/12/24.
2. To identify and regularly review the Council's priorities.	1. Lack of knowledge of how to set objectives, set priorities, and identify risks to their achievement.	All councillors to be made aware of need for objectives and identification of risk. Attend training sessions if practicable.	Chair Clerk)))))
	2. Lack of commitment by council members	Add risk assessment to agenda at least quarterly, reviewing items, and results against those items.	Chair Clerk)) A Risk Assessment will be completed at least once a year as part of the Annual Return Submission.
	3. No risk analysis carried out.	As at 1 above. Ensure that completion of the risk assessment is given high priority, as a requirement of the Audit Commission.	Chair Clerk)))))
	4. No steps taken to combat identified risks	As at 2 above.	Chair Clerk)))))

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3. To influence other council departments and Government organisations to fulfil the requirements of the Parish population.	1. Lack of effective lines of communication with other organisations.	Note all communication lines which are essential or beneficial and make information available to all councillors. Establish contacts by name and where possible face-to-face.	Chair Clerk	MKCC are contacted as required for guidance and support.
	2. Lack of effective lines of communication with parishioners.	Take every opportunity to publicise role of Parish Council. Create Parish newsletter if none exists. Effective use of Notice Boards and "fliers". Use key issues to raise profile of PC and to test parishioner's views. Add social event to occasional meeting. Create Annual PC plan and put to parishioners for comment.	Chair	Via Website and Facebook (on occasions). It has been decided that LBPC will not be producing a Neighbourhood Plan.
	3. Lack of preparation on subjects requiring influence.	Ensure that all councillors are aware of need for careful research and are guided as to where to obtain relevant information on issues under discussion.	Chair Vice-Chair Clerk	This is provided by the Chair / Vice-Chair / Clerk.
	4. Lack of confidence by Parish Councillors.	As at 1 above. Experienced councillors to assist newcomers to establish essential contacts. Delegate responsibility for specific contacts to individual councillors	All Councillors	This has been adopted and is currently working.
4. To ensure that all councillors are aware of their responsibilities, and possible liabilities, and to provide adequate insurance cover for all possible risks	1. Lack of knowledge of possible culpability of councillors.	Creation of standing orders and familiarisation with those where greatest risk occurs.	Clerk All Councillors	See LBPC F/R's that were reviewed and adopted at meeting held on the 02/12/24.
	2. Lack of education of Councillors regarding culpability.	As at 1 above. Delegate responsibility to one or two councillors to assist newcomers to understand culpability. Attend any training courses available.	Chair Clerk	This is provided by the Chair / Vice-Chair / Clerk.
	3. Inadequate insurance cover taken out – property, personal liability, employer's liability.	Review risk assessment by including on agenda of PC meetings at least once a year. Delegate responsibility for keeping up to date with insurance requirements to an individual councillor.	Clerk	Clerk to ensure that this is covered as an agenda item when necessary.

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5. To keep appropriate books of account accurately and up to date throughout the financial year.	1. Lack of knowledge of accounting requirements	Ensure that all councillors are familiar with current financial regulations and include them in standing orders. Regularly review standing orders.	Chair Clerk	See LBPC F/R's that were reviewed and adopted at meeting held on the 02/12/24.
	2. Lack of commitment to accounting requirements.	Appoint a councillor (or Clerk) as the RFO to take overall responsibility for financial management.		Clerk has been appointed as RFO.
	3. Bank charges unnecessarily incurred	As at 1 above. RFO to produce financial reports at all meetings. Internal audit reports to be made available to all councillors and any recommendations to be acted upon promptly.	Clerk	Financial reports are reviewed at every Parish Council meeting. Internal Audit reports are reviewed annually as part of the Annual Return.
	4. Inaccuracies in recording amounts totals in books of account, and bank reconciliations.	RFO to carry out regular inspection of books of account. Internal audit to be undertaken periodically during the current financial year.	RFO / Clerk	A review of accounts is conducted quarterly at Parish Council meetings.
	5. Inaccuracies and interest losses caused by account transfers.	RFO to ensure that books of account are formatted in such a way that internal controls are included and activated. Regular internal audits to advise on internal controls required.	RFO / Clerk	A review of accounts is conducted quarterly at Parish Council meetings.
	6. The most beneficial interest terms not being employed.	Keep number of accounts to a minimum but ensure that any large credit balances are deposited in an interest-bearing account.	RFO / Clerk	We have one account, and this is reviewed monthly.
	7. Inadequate control of cash receipts and payments.	Ensure that favourable interest rate is obtained in deposit accounts and review against alternatives but bearing in mind the risks in changing accounts.	RFO / Clerk	We have one account, and this is reviewed monthly.
	8. Books of account not kept up to date/ invoices not posted promptly.	Avoid cash payments and receipts if possible. Where cash payments and receipts are unavoidable use a properly controlled petty cash account with a set maximum balance.	RFO / Clerk	N/A.
	9. Internal controls not in place or not operated.	Regular checks by RFO and internal auditor. Financial reports at all PC meetings.	RFO / Clerk	Books are checked monthly by the Clerk and a review of accounts is conducted quarterly at Parish Council meetings.

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	10. Payments missed or delayed due to inadequate filing of invoices.	As at 8 above.	RFO / Clerk	Books are checked monthly by the Clerk and a review of accounts is conducted quarterly at Parish Council meetings.
	11. Clerk taken ill or leaves without replacement	As at 8 above.	RFO / Clerk	Books are checked monthly by the Clerk and a review of accounts is conducted quarterly at Parish Council meetings.
		Appoint a councillor as RFO to be familiar with all aspects of financial matters.	RFO / Clerk	Chair to stand in as a substitute if required.
6. To ensure that payments made from council funds and the use of assets, represent value for money, are adequately managed, and comply generally with the wishes of the residents.	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of wishes of residents.</p> <p>2. Use of funds not giving value for money.</p> <p>3. Use of funds not in accordance with the wishes of the residents</p> <p>4. Charges for use of facilities inadequate.</p> <p>5. Fund raising not properly controlled or not in accordance with regulations.</p>	<p>As at 3.2. Ensure residents are consulted on all major financial issues.</p> <p>Effective budget planning processes. Creation of annual plan after consultation process. Creation of outline 2/3-year plan.</p> <p>As at 2 above Appointment of RFO to create effective financial management. Internal audit checks to cover consultation process.</p> <p>Effective financial management by RFO. Internal audit checks.</p> <p>All councillors to be aware of need to check regulations before commencing fund-raising activities. Effective financial management by RFO.</p>	<p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>Chair / RFO / Clerk</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p>	<p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>The Precept is managed monthly, and the agenda is available for all residents to view on the Notice Boards and can attend the meetings if they wish. Also meeting dates and agenda are available on the Little Brickhill Parish Council's website.</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p>

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<p>7. To ensure that the annual precept requirement results from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget is regularly monitored; and reserves are appropriate.</p>	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of budgetary process, and Council regulations.</p> <p>2. Lack of commitment to budgetary process.</p> <p>3. Inadequate consideration of requirements for annual precept.</p> <p>4. Calculation not in accordance with Council regulations.</p> <p>5. Inadequate internal controls with regard to monitoring expenditure.</p> <p>6. Reserves too low.</p>	<p>Include regulations in Standing Orders issued to all councillors. Place item on agenda early in year to remind councillors of budget process and actions required. Delegate responsibility for managing budgetary process to one councillor or to councillor appointed as RFO.</p> <p>As at 1. Above. Involve all councillors in budgetary process not solely the clerk.</p> <p>Place item on agenda early in year to remind councillors of budget process and actions required. Delegate responsibility for managing budgetary process to one councillor or to councillor appointed as RFO. Start consideration of calculation at least 4 months prior to submission date.</p> <p>Create annual and 2/3 plans to assist in process.</p> <p>Checks by RFO and Internal Auditor.</p> <p>Checks by RFO and Internal Auditor. Financial and budget progress reports to all PC meetings. As at 5 above.</p>	<p>Chair / RFO / Clerk</p> <p>Chair / RFO / Clerk</p> <p>Chair / RFO / Clerk</p> <p>Chair / RFO / Clerk</p> <p>Chair / RFO / Clerk</p>	<p>))) This issue is reviewed at the half year stage by all Councillors and in November and December when budgets are set.))))) This happens in November and December each year when budgets are set.)))) Conducted on a quarterly basis. Monitored monthly.</p>
<p>8. To explore all possible sources of income, and to ensure that expected income is fully received.</p>	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of possible sources of income e.g., grants.</p> <p>2. Lack of commitment to pursue possible sources of income.</p> <p>3. Receipts not banked or not banked promptly.</p> <p>4. Debts not pursued promptly.</p>	<p>Appoint a councillor as Grants Officer to gain experience of all grants available and application procedures.</p> <p>As at 1.</p> <p>Regular checks by councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks.</p> <p>As at 3 above.</p>	<p>RFO / Clerk</p> <p>RFO / Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>RFO / Clerk</p>	<p>)) To be addressed when required.))) Reviewed monthly. N/A</p>



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	5. VAT claims not made promptly or made incorrectly.	Ensure Clerk has appropriate and up-to-date VAT official publications. Regular checks by councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks.	RFO / Clerk	VAT claim to be submitted at least once a year.
9. To ensure that salaries paid to employees and amounts paid to contractors are paid in accordance with council regulations and adequately monitored.	<p>1. Inappropriate rate of pay to employees.</p> <p>2. Tax and NI arrangements not in accordance with regulations.</p> <p>3. Amounts paid to contractors not in accordance with contract and inadequately monitored.</p>	<p>Ensure employee regulations are available and understood by Clerk. Checks by councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks</p> <p>As at 1 above.</p> <p>Internal audit checks Checks by councillor appointed as RFO. Appoint councillor to monitor contract work carried out.</p>	<p>Chair / RFO / Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>	<p>Salary to be paid in accordance with National published Salary Scales.</p> <p>Clerk to ensure that all rules are followed. Clerk has run a PAYE System from 03/09/12.</p> <p>This is reviewed monthly at Parish Council meetings.</p>
10. To ensure that year end accounts are prepared on the correct accounting basis, on time, and supported by an adequate audit trail.	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of Council regulations and procedures.</p> <p>2. Late or non- submission of annual accounts.</p> <p>3. Year-end accounts not prepared, inaccurate, or not in accordance with Council requirements.</p> <p>4. Inadequate audit trail from records to final accounts.</p>	<p>Include financial regulations in Standing Orders. Attend training seminars where available.</p> <p>Include a time table in Standing Orders. Councillor appointed as RFO to monitor progress against timetable and report to PC meetings.</p> <p>Checks by councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks</p> <p>As at 3 above.</p>	<p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p>	<p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>Year-end accounts are prepared by the Clerk and are reviewed at the April meeting. These are subject to an annual internal audit and are signed off at the June meeting and submitted as part of the Annual Return.</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p>
11. To identify, value, and maintain all the assets of the Parish Council, and ensure that asset and investment	1. Lack of knowledge of assets of Parish Council.	Ascertain and record all assets for which Parish council is responsible. Create permanent asset register.	Clerk) <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p>



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registers are complete, accurate and properly maintained.	2. Assets lost or misappropriated	Establish who is responsible for security and maintenance of each asset. Appoint councillor responsible for regular monitoring of location and use of assets.	Clerk	Reviewed annually as part of the Internal Audit and Annual Return submission.)
	3. Inadequate or inaccurate valuation of the council's assets.	Arrange for periodic review of valuations and arrange for professional valuation where necessary. Internal audit checks.	Clerk)
	4. Asset register not established or inadequately maintained.	Create asset register in accordance with Audit Commission requirements.	Clerk)
12. To comply with appropriate Government legislation regarding disability, racial equality, safeguarding children etc.	1. Lack of knowledge of applicable legislation	Clerk to have all appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at PC meetings.	Clerk)
	2. Lack of public awareness of applicable legislation.	Include, as appropriate, in any public consultations.	Clerk) Clerk to ensure that he/she are up to date with current legislation and include as agenda items, when required.
	3. Failure to comply with applicable legislation.	As at 1 above	Clerk)
13. To carry out adequate safety checks on all buildings, properties, and equipment for which the council is responsible.	1. Lack of information on properties, buildings, and equipment.	Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by Clerk. Include in asset register all properties for which PC responsible.	Clerk)
	2. Lack of knowledge of safety requirements.	Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by Clerk. Place subject as item on PC meeting agenda at regular intervals.	Clerk) The main asset is the Community Centre, and any issues are covered at the regularly held meetings of the Community Centre Committee. Also, an update will be available as an agenda item at each Parish Council meeting.
	3. Lack of commitment to carrying out safety checks.	As at 2 above. Delegate responsibility to individual councillors.	Clerk)

	4. Complete a review of all trees that are under the control of the Parish Council	Ensure that a safety check is conducted at least once a year.	Clerk	<p>A resident advised that some branches on some of the trees on Watsons Field had been damaged and asked the Parish Council to investigate.</p> <p><u>Clerk has requested our Tree Contractor to inspect the trees and is waiting for a response.</u></p> <p>Roundacre Field</p> <p><u>Overhanging Tree to be monitored. Clerk to ask our Tree Contractor to inspect.</u></p> 
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	<p>5. Complete a review of any Bus Shelters under the ownership of the Parish Council.</p>	<p>Ensure that this is checked at least on a six-monthly basis.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>	<p><u>Need a repair and could do with re-staining.</u></p> 
	<p>6. Ensure that MKC carry out safety checks on the Play Equipment on the Recreation Ground.</p>	<p>Ensure that these are checked annually.</p>	<p>Clerk.</p>	<p><u>No problems as at 24/02/2025.</u></p>
	<p>7. Complete a review of any benches under the ownership of the Parish Council.</p>	<p>Ensure that these are checked at least on a six-monthly basis.</p>	<p>Clerk.</p>	<p><u>There is some moss where the basketball is located. To be monitored.</u></p> <p><u>The three benches on Watsons Field require staining.</u></p>  <p><u>There is an old bench in Wyness Avenue that could do with replacing.</u></p>

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	8. Undertake regular safety checks to the 2 Notice Boards.	Ensure that these are checked on a six-monthly basis.	Clerk.	<u>No problems as at 24/02/2025.</u>
	9. Undertake regular checks to the boundary fences on the Recreation Ground.	Ensure that these are checked on a six-monthly basis.	Clerk	<u>Minor damage to be repaired.</u> 
	10. Pavements	Ensure that these are checked on a six-monthly basis.	Clerk.	The Pavement on Great Brickhill Lane from the flats to the entrance of Wyness Avenue requires a safety check / repair by MKCC. <u>Clerk has reported this again to MKCC on the 28/02/25 under reference Number FS691615500.</u>
	11. Overhanging Bushes / Shrubs	Ensure that these are checked on a regular basis.	Clerk.	<u>No problems as at 24/02/2025.</u>
	12. Damaged Road Surfaces	Ensure that these are checked on a regular basis.	Clerk	<u>Two issues on Watling Street Clerk to report these to MKCC.</u> 

				 <p>A Resident raised a concern with a pothole at the Watling Street / Great Brickhill junction and asked if the Parish Council would report this to MKCC for inspection / repair.</p> <p><u><i>Clerk has reported this to MKCC under reference number FS691216447.</i></u></p>
	13. Defibrillators	To be checked on a regular basis.	Clerk / Resident	<p>Village Hall. The battery requires changing every 4 years – next date is? <u>Clerk to check</u> and the PAD'S every 2 years – next date is January 2026.</p>

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	14. Other Issue		Clerk	<p><u>Steps on the footpath require monitorin behind Watsons Field.</u></p>  
	15. Other Issues		Clerk	<p>Between Greystones and The Court House on Watling Street in Little Brickhill there is damage to the wall.</p> <p><u>Clerk has reported the this to Woburn Estates on the 28 February 2025.</u></p>