Whitbourne Parish Council

Risk Management Policy

Guiding Principles

The following key principles outline Whitbourne Parish Council's approach to risk management and internal control:

- The elected Councillors have responsibility for overseeing risk management within the Council as a whole
- An open and receptive approach to solving risk problems is adopted by the Council
- Key risk indicators will be identified and closely monitored on a regular basis.

1. Policy Statement

Whitbourne Parish Council recognises its responsibility to identify and manage risks that may prevent the Council from achieving its objectives or complying with its legal and financial duties.

The Council will maintain proportionate systems of internal control and risk management appropriate to the size and activities of the authority.

Risk management will include consideration of financial, governance, operational, legal, reputational, health and safety, data protection and cyber-security risks.

The Council will comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, proper practices guidance and its adopted Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

2. Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the elected Councillors

The elected Councillors have a fundamental role to play in the management of risk. Their role is to:

2.1. Set the tone and influence the culture of risk management within the Council. This includes:

2.1.1. determining whether the Council is 'risk taking' or 'risk adverse' as a whole or on any relevant individual issue

2.1.2. determining what types of risk are acceptable and which are not

2.2. Monitor the management of significant risks to reduce the likelihood of unwelcome surprises.

2.3. Satisfy itself that the less significant risks are being actively managed, with the appropriate controls in place and working effectively.

2.4. Annually review the Council's Risk Management Policy, Risk Assessment Schedule and associated internal control arrangements and determine whether any amendments are required.

2.5. The Council shall maintain a Risk Assessment Schedule identifying significant risks, existing controls and review arrangements.

3. Roles of the elected Councillors, Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

3.1. Identify, evaluate and monitor significant risks faced by the Council and report them to Council as appropriate.

3.2. Provide adequate information in a timely manner to the Council on the status of risks and controls.

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3.3. Undertake an annual review of effectiveness of the system of internal control.

3.4. The Clerk shall maintain secure and appropriate electronic and paper records relating to the Council's business, finances, governance and statutory publication requirements.

3.5. The Responsible Finance Officer shall maintain accurate accounting records, complete bank reconciliations, prepare annual accounting statements and ensure compliance with AGAR and proper practices requirements.

3.6. The annual precept request is the result of proper budgetary control

3.7. Payments shall be authorised in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and may be made by cheque or approved electronic banking arrangements. Dual authorisation arrangements shall be maintained wherever practicable.

3.8. Payments shall normally be approved by resolution of the Council and properly recorded in the minutes, except where authority has been delegated under the Council's Financial Regulations or Scheme of Delegation.

3.9. Ensure that appropriate insurance cover is maintained and reviewed annually for the Council's activities, assets, liabilities and responsibilities.

3.10. The Council shall take reasonable steps to protect electronic information, banking systems and communications from fraud, cyber attack and unauthorised access.

3.11. The Council shall comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Council's adopted GDPR policies.

3.12. Appropriate arrangements shall be maintained for the secure backup, retention and recovery of electronic and paper records to support continuity of Council operations.

3.13. The Council shall maintain and periodically review its Asset Register and undertake reasonable inspection and maintenance of Council-owned assets and facilities.

Signed: ________________________________
Chairman of Whitbourne Parish Council

Adopted on: May 2026