

WEST KEAL AND KEAL COTES PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

Mission Statement of West Keal and Keal Cotes Parish Council:

To provide services for, and manage and maintain the assets of, the village of West Keal and Keal Cotes, within the resources provided by the annual precept and other incomes, taking into account the wishes of the residents and obtaining value for money.

This Risk Assessment shall be reviewed regularly at Council Meetings.

Aim	Risk	Method used to Minimise Risk	Person(s) Responsible
1. To ensure compliance with the Acts of Parliament, Council's financial regulations and code of conduct (2007)	1. Lack of knowledge of regulations and codes.	Ensure that all Councillors have copies of relative Acts, Code of Conduct, and Standing Orders. Highlight essential parts and provide training where necessary.	Clerk Councillors
	2. Absence of standing orders	Ensure that Standing Orders are produced, understood by councillors, and reviewed at Annual meeting.	Clerk Councillors
	3. Actions by the PC outside its powers laid down by Parliament.	As at 1 above, but ensure that powers are highlighted or extracted into effective summary.	Clerk Councillors
	4. Lack of commitment to regulations and procedures.	Regular reference to appropriate regulations in agenda items. Delegation of responsibilities to individual councillors.	Clerk Chairman Councillors
	5. Items purchased without proper tendering procedures, resulting in accusations of commercial favoritism.	Ensure that all councillors are aware of regulations regarding estimates and full tender procedures. Introduce practice of estimates for all purchases over an agreed figure.	Clerk Councillors
	6. Payments made without prior approval and adequate control.	Ensure all payments are approved in Council meetings and recorded in minutes. Keep cash payments to a minimum and avoid where possible.	Clerk Councillors
	7. Lack of control of signatories to cheques.	Two from four signatories will sign cheques, three Councillors and the Clerk, to ensure cheques being signed at meetings.	Clerk
	8. VAT not properly accounted for, resulting in over claims and large demands from C&E.	Ensure appropriate publications are held and that the Clerk has good knowledge of regulations.	Clerk Councillors
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.	Clerk Councillors
	2. Lack of commitment by council members	Add risk assessment to agenda when necessary to review particular items and results against those items.	Chairman

	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	Clerk Councillors
	4. No steps taken to combat identified risks.	As at 2 above.	Chairman
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.	Clerk
	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 Parish Council and to request parishioner’s views. Add social event to occasional meeting. Create Annual Parish Council plan and put to parishioners for comment.	Clerk & all Councillors.
	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.	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	
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 Councillors
	2. Lack of education of Councillors regarding culpability.	As at 1 above. Delegate responsibility to one or two Councillors to assist newcomers to understand capability. Attend any training courses available.	Councillors
	3. Inadequate insurance cover taken out – property, personal liability, employer’s liability.	Review risk assessment by including on agenda of PC meetings at least quarterly. Delegate responsibility for keeping up-to-date with insurance requirements to individual councillos.	Clerk Chairman Councillors

<p>5. To keep appropriate books of account accurately and up-to-date through out the financial year.</p>	1. Lack of knowledge of accounting requirements	<p>Ensure that all councillors are familiar with current financial regulations and include them in standing orders. Regularly review standing orders. Appoint a councillor as the RFO to take overall responsibility for financial management.</p>	Clerk Councillors.
	2. Lack of commitment to accounting requirements.	<p>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. RFO to carry out regular inspection of books of account.</p>	Clerk Councillors
	3. Bank charges unnecessarily incurred	<p>Internal audit to be undertaken periodically during the current financial year. RFO to ensure that books of account are formatted in such a way that internal controls are included and activated. Yearly internal audits to advise on internal controls required.</p>	Clerk Councillors
	4. Inaccuracies in recording amounts, totals in books of account, and bank reconciliations.	<p>Keep number of accounts to a minimum but ensure that any large credit balances are deposited in an interest bearing account.</p>	Clerk Councillors
	5. Inaccuracies and interest losses caused by account transfers.	<p>Ensure that favorable interest rate is obtained in deposit accounts and review against alternatives, but bearing in mind the risks in changing accounts.</p>	Clerk Councillors
	6. The most beneficial interest terms not being employed.	<p>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.</p>	Clerk Councillors
	7. Inadequate control of cash receipts and payments.	<p>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.</p>	Clerk Councillors
	8. Books of account not kept up to date, invoices not posted properly.	<p>Regular checks by RFO and internal auditor. Financial reports at all PC meetings.</p>	Clerk Councillors

	<p>9. Internal controls not in place or not operated.</p> <p>10. Payments missed or delayed due to inadequate filing of invoices.</p> <p>12. Clerk taken ill or leaves without replacement</p>	<p>As at 8 above.</p> <p>As at 8 above.</p> <p>Appoint a councillor as RFO to be familiar with all aspects of financial matters.</p>	<p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p>
<p>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>	<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 Finance Committee 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>Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p> <p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Clerk Councillors.</p>
<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>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</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Clerk Chairman Councillors</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>Councillor appointed as RFO. Start consideration of calculation at least 3 months prior submission date. Create annual and 2/3 year plan 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.</p> <p>As at 5 above.</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Clerk Councillors</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>5. VAT claims not made promptly or made incorrectly.</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>Ensure Clerk has appropriate and up-to-date VAT official publications. Regular checks by Councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks.</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Councillor</p> <p>Councillors</p>
<p>9. To ensure that salaries paid to employees and amounts paid to contractors are paid in accordance with council regulations and adequately monitored.</p>	<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>Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p>

10. To ensure that year end accounts are prepared on the correct accounting basis, on time, and supported by an adequate audit trail.	1. Lack of knowledge of Council regulations and procedures. 2. Late or non- submission of annual accounts. 3. Year end accounts not prepared, inaccurate, or not in accordance with Council requirements. 4. Inadequate audit trail from records to final accounts.	Include financial regulations in Standing Orders. Attend training seminars where available. Include a timetable in Standing Orders. Councillor appointed as RFO to monitor progress against timetable and report to PC meetings. Checks by councillor appointed as RFO Internal audit checks As at 3 above.	Clerk Councillors Clerk Councillors Clerk Councillors
11. To identify, value, and maintain all the assets of the Parish Council, and ensure that asset and investment registers are complete, accurate and properly maintained.	1. Lack of knowledge of assets of Parish Council. 2. Assets lost or misappropriated 3. Inadequate or inaccurate valuation of the council's assets. 4. Asset register not established or inadequately maintained.	Ascertain and record all assets for which Parish council is responsible. Create permanent asset register. Establish who is responsible for security and maintenance of each asset. Appoint councillor responsible for regular monitoring of location and use of assets. Arrange for periodic review of valuations and arrange for professional valuation where necessary. Internal audit checks. Create asset register in accordance with Audit Commission requirements.	Clerk Councillors Councillors Clerk Councillors. Clerk Councillors
12. To comply with appropriate Government legislation regarding disability, racial equality, safeguarding children etc.	1. Lack of knowledge of applicable legislation 2. Lack of public awareness of applicable legislation. 3. Failure to comply with applicable legislation.	Clerk to have all appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at PC meetings. Include, as appropriate, in any public consultations. As at 1 above	Clerk Councillors Clerk Councillors
13. To carry out adequate safety checks on all buildings, properties, and equipment for which the council is	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.	Councillors Councillors

responsible.	<p>2. Lack of knowledge of safety requirements.</p> <p>3. Lack of commitment to carrying out safety checks.</p>	<p>Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by Clerk. Place subject as item on PC meeting agenda at regular intervals.</p> <p>As at 2. Above. Delegate responsibility for particular properties to individual councillors.</p>	Councillors
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Risk Assessment created by Deborah Money 4 February 2026