



# Bridgwater Town Council

## BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

### Risk Management Scheme

**Reviewed and amended: Full Council 10 March 2022**

Key	a = Severity of Hazard if it were to occur					
	b = Likelihood of occurrence / probability after control					
No.	Subject	Risks Identified	a. L/M/H	Management & Control of Risk	b. L/M/H	Review / Re- assessment
	<b>FINANCIAL</b>					
1.	Payments: invoices	Cheque written in incorrect amount or payee incorrect	L	Rarely use cheques. If cheque is used: robust Internal controls: RFO and member check invoice; 2 members initial cheque stubs & invoice.	L	Governed by Financial Regulations. subject to annual review
		Blank cheques signed	H	Blank/incomplete cheques never signed	L	Governed by Financial Regulations. subject to annual review
		Security of cheque books	M	Finance Assistant retains in locked cabinet	L	
		BACS payment set-up in incorrect amount or payee	M	Finance Assistant creates payments and RFO checks invoice and signs invoice	L	Governed by Financial Regulations. subject to annual review

		incorrect		and then approves payment and signs payment sheet.		
2.	Payments: wages and salaries	Incorrect numbers of hours paid	M	Robust recording system: hours worked are recorded via BlipHR by way off clocking in and out. Finance Officer checks and then signed for and checked by RFO each pay run.	L	Governed by Financial Regulations. subject to annual review
		Incorrect calculation/wrong deductions	M	Reputable payroll software used and updates automatic as part of the annual licence payment. Finance Assistant runs the payroll and RFO performs random checks	L	Governed by Financial Regulations. subject to annual review
		Late / incorrect end of year PAYE return	M	Online filing, software generated reports	L	Annual - April
3.	Income: precept	Correct amount not received	H	Checked against Precept form & budget. SDC also controls payment to BTC	L	Received in two payments – April and September
	Grants	Correct amount not received	H	When notification received - Date flagged in diary/checked when received	L	
	VAT	Correct amount not received	H	VAT forms correctly completed by Finance Assistant and signed by RFO. Random checks by members. VAT payment checked against claim form	L	Completed either 6monthly or 12 monthly. Seeking advice on VAT registration and opt to tax.
	Other income	Correct amount not received	H	The Town Council receives income from various	L	Monthly

				sources other than the precept. Regular income agreements are reconciled against ledger to detect missed payments.		
	Bad debts	Invoices not paid	H	Robust contracts in place for tenanted properties. Commercial hirers must pay town hall invoices 14 days before event. First non-commercial hirers must also pay in advance. Credit is provided to funeral directors and memorial masons and this arrangement is regularly monitored.	L	
4.	Banking: reconciliation	Not balancing	H	Bank reconciliation carried out monthly and checked and initialled by non-cheque signatories' members. From April 2022, reported to Council and Finance Committee for inclusion in minutes	L	
	Investment Funds	Loss of interest or holding	H	Investment Policy to be adopted in May 2022	L	
5.	Financial records	Inadequate records masking irregularities	H	Adhere to the Council's Financial Regulations - clear guidance as to proper practice. Independent Internal auditor appointed and financial papers shared with members	L	

6.	Annual Governance Return	Late submission	H	Comply, complete and return as instructed by External Auditor. Report to full Council	L	Annual
7.	Employees/Appointees	Fraud & embezzlement	H	Robust internal controls strictly adhered to. All payments pass by two employees and presented to council or finance committee. Bank recs checked by two members. Fidelity guarantee in place with insurers.	L	Continual. Insurance-annual
		Incorrect hours contracted for the post	H	Finance and Policy Executive agrees all new staff posts. Finance officer prepares contracts and Town Clerk reviews before issuing.	L	Annual review
		Incorrect hours claimed	H	Town Clerk reviews and approve overtime hours in advance for special projects or circumstances only and informs Staffing Subcommittee.	L	
		Incorrect mileage claimed	H	Number and reason for journeys recorded on mileage record form. Checked by Finance Assistant and RFO/ Random checks of vehicle mileage by members	L	

8.	PO/RFO reimbursement	Incorrect claim / items not for Council	H	Payment only against invoices. No receipt and no evidence of purchase = no claim. Random check by members	L	Random checks
	Other reimbursements	Incorrect claims/maths	H	Maths checked by Finance Assistant and RFO.	L	Continuous
9.	RFO	Lack of impartially/evidence of bias. Post holder exerting undue influence over decisions	H	The post of Town Clerk and RFO are statutory posts with considerable authority. Currently they are held by the same person. The Council, as employer maintains knowledge & control of both areas of work and all that they entail. Members alert to possibility of bias	L	Ongoing involvement by members. Continuous scrutiny
10.	Contracts: (Fire and Intruder Alarms; Christmas Lights; Electrical work; emergency lighting; Heating etc.)	Not obtaining best value	M	Obtain quotes as per financial regulations.	L	Major contracts (over £10,000) are discussed by committee and over £30,000 by full council.
	Contracts	Work not up to standard	M	Carry out regular checks	L	RFO & members review quality & standards
11.	Cemetery fees	Fees too low to cover maintenance	H	Review annually and compare with other local cemeteries checked income against expenditure.	L	Report to Finance and Policy Committee for discussion and review annually
12.	Insurance	Inadequate cover	H	Review each year with specialist Local Council insurers. Obtain three quotes before renewal due	L	Annual

		All property not identified	M	Keep accurate Asset Register	L	When changes occur & annual
		Inadequate employer/public liability	H	Check when insurance renewed	L	Annual
		Asset register inaccurate for insurance	H	Maintain accurate register and review	L	Annual
13.	Budgets	Allocation categories and amounts are insufficient	H	Examine trends and forecasts. Estimated expenditure needed for next financial year is discussed in Oct/Nov and budget set in January	L	Annual
		Unforeseen expenses	H	Contingency allowed in each allocation plus separate contingency sum for unforeseen expenditure	L	
		Ear-marked reserves not clearly identified	M	Identify/adjust when setting budget	L	Annual
14.	Internal audit	Check list not comprehensive	H	Ensure all financial controls and procedures are in place	M	Continual
				Review internal audit programme		Annual
15.	Fines	Fine by data Protection Office – non-registration	H	Register and pay promptly. Reminder in diary	L	Annual
	<b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b>					
16.	Member working as RFO/PO	A member in this position could try to exert undue influence	M	RFO abstains from discussion and vote over budget and other major financial decisions. RFO is	M	Continual

		particularly in matters relating to budgeting and expenditure		mindful at all times of the widest interpretation of the Code of Conduct particularly integrity and impartially. This is a member's own responsibility and s/he should declare an interest if in doubt		
	Member with portfolio responsibility	Such a member could favour their own contacts and influence decision making	M	Members are mindful at all time of the widest interpretation of the Code of Conduct re: integrity and impartially. Declare an interest if in doubt	L	Ongoing
	All members	A member with special area of interest also has business interest with the Council		No member with special area of interest has business registered with the Council		Annual
	All members	Members who own businesses failing to declare	H	Members have received Code of Conduct training	L	
17.	Dispensations re. code of conduct	Town Clerk in too difficult a position to grant dispensations particularly if involved as a member (NALC Code)	N/A	Dispensations re Code of Conduct heard and issued in accordance with Localism Act 2011. Only issued to maintain quorum and political balance.	N/A	When conflicts are identified
	<b>POLICIES</b>					
18.	Standing orders	Inadequate/out of date	H	Customise from NALC Model and members become	L	Annually in May

				familiar with them. Update annually		
	Financial regulations	Inadequate/out of date	H	Customise from NALC Model and members become familiar with them. Update annually	L	Annually in May
	Risk Assessment	Significant risk not identified	M	Continual awareness and recording of possible new areas of risk	L	Annually in May
	All other policies	Outdated, inadequate policies that do not serve their purpose	H	Ensure all Council policies function properly in practice and are fit for purpose	M	Annually in May
	<b>GENERAL RISKS</b>					
19.	Business continuity	Absence of Town Clerk/RFO due illness or accident	H	Finance Assistant is appointed to act as a short-term deputy and shadows work of Town Clerk/RFO. Contact SLCC for locum support if need be.	L	Continuous sharing of work, knowledge and practices
	Legal powers	Making ultra vires decisions	H	Town Clerk and staff trained to seek/give advice	L	
	Maintenance	No regular programme. Could result in neglect	H	Diverse written programme and budget for maintenance	L	Review prior to budgeting
	Records – paper	Inaccurate filing – poor storage conditions	L	Stored in box files in clean dry conditions	L	Ongoing
	Records – electronic	Loss of data through computer failure	H	Cloud storage – robust. Payroll software is the only data stored on the desktop. Weekly back-ups taken.	L	



	Security	Insecure confidential records	H	Secure fireproof safe. Key holding restricted	L	
	Town office	Insecure area	H	Only staff members have keys to office. All confidential documents locked away with restricted access	L	
	<b>CEMETERIES</b>					
20.	Quantock Road Cemetery & Bristol Road Cemetery	Leaning/unstable headstones and sunken graves	H	Cemetery inspection by cemeteries administrator and cemeteries supervisor as well as conducting regular visual inspection and act to repair	L	Regular programme commencing in 2022.
	Fees and charges	Fees and charges insufficient to cover costs. Fees lower than neighbouring cemeteries which encourages non-residents to use this cemetery	M	Fees are reviewed annually and increased by rate of inflation or increase in maintenance costs whichever is greater. Fees are doubled for non-parishioners.	L	
	Trees and seats	Unstable trees, broken public seats	M	Cemetery inspection carried out regularly. Cemeteries Administrator and Cemeteries Supervisor do visual inspections when visiting the cemetery	L	Ongoing. Act on complaints
	Plots	Plots allocated for interments when already been purchased	M	The Cemetery Administrator checks registers before allocating plots. A firm policy that only our own trained staff digs the plot.	L	Ongoing

				An updated plan is sent to the ground staff regularly. Measures to mark reserved plots on rows in current are in place.		
	Interments	Interment in incorrect plot	M	Up to date plans issued to ground staff. Plot checked as above. New plots are marked on request	L	
	Graves or unsafe memorials	Graves collapsed or sunk. Headstones unstable and dangerous	M	Regular inspections rapidly identify new risks. Ground staff are instructed to repair sunken graves within the first two years. After that the family is contacted and asked to effect necessary repairs.	L	ongoing
	Burial records	Lost or destroyed	H	Burial records are kept in a fire proof safe.	L	Ongoing
	Contracts	Service not at competitive cost or not up to required standard	M	The Clerk conducts regular inspections and has full delegated authority to act on problems and to obtain extra help, if required.	M	Ongoing
	Emergencies	Emergency in cemetery	M	Name and address of Town Council in the notice board and on a sign	L	
	Carpark	Damage caused by flooding or wear and tear	H	Drains and channels are cleared regularly. Repairs undertaken if required.	M	In heavy weather
	Cemetery layout	Visitors and memorial masons	H	Layout plan is on the notice board and office window.		

		unable to identify graves		Plans sent out and graves marked on request		
	Cemetery long-term	Cemetery becoming full	M	Burial rates over the past 5 years would indicate there will be burial spaces for approximately 5 years for Bristol Road and 8 years for Quantock Road. Consider any new legislation on re-use of graves when deed of grant periods expire.	M/L	