

Yarnfield and Cold Meece
Parish Council

Risk Register
April 2024

PREFACE

The Risk Register provides details of the strategic and operational risks faced by the Parish Council and the measures that are in place to limit their impact.

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Author	Parish Clerk		
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	Review Approved No 6	15/05/24	24-21
Next review date	April 2025		
<p>Review Purpose</p> <p>No. 1 - The July 2020 review identified two changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to reflect changes needed to address Covid-19 restrictions and the impact on the Parish Council. - to enhance controls in relation to the Ground Maintenance Contract. <p>No. 2 - Operational Risk 2: Damage to/accident Greenside Play Equipment, amended to take account of recent damage to the village green.</p> <p>No. 3 - The inclusion of a strategic risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dealing with the Meecebrook Garden Settlement. - Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer absence cover added. <p>Typographic and formatting improvements made to the document.</p> <p>No 4 - Strategic risk 1 reduced. Individual risks reviewed, amended and new controls added.</p> <p>No 5 - No change to risk rating scores.</p> <p>Strategic risk 1 and 3 revised to incorporate work being done by the parish council.</p> <p>No 6 - Risk register updated to reflect administrative changes and add a note justifying the retention of strategic risk No 2 - HS2</p>			

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Assessment of risk

Risk is an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, will have an effect on the achievement of the Council's objectives. Risk management is the process by which the Council methodically addresses the risks associated with their work and the services they provide.

The focus of this Risk Register is to identify what can go wrong, put in place controls to minimise the likelihood of a risk event happening or to reduce its consequence.

Each risk has been assigned a score between 1 - 9 (1 = Low - 9 = High)

The risk assessment enables the Council to decide which risks it should pay most attention to when considering what measures to take to manage them.

Policy Statement

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employee, assets, liabilities and community against potential losses; to minimise uncertainty in achieving its aims and objectives and to maximise

the opportunities to achieve its vision. The Parish Council is aware that some risks can never be eliminated fully and it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focussed approach to managing risk.

Roles and Responsibilities

Councillors: risk management is seen as a key part of councillors' stewardship role and there is an expectation that councillors will lead and monitor the approach adopted through the approval of the Risk Management Strategy and thereafter by being involved in the assessment of risks associated with major projects.

Parish Clerk/ Responsible Finance Officer (RFO): responsible for overseeing the implementation of the detail of the Risk Management Strategy:

- provide advice as to the legality of policy and service delivery choices;
- provide advice on the implications for service areas of the Council's aims and objectives;
- update the Council on the implications of new or revised legislation;
- report progress to the Council;
- Assess and implement the Council's insurance requirements;
- Assess the financial implications of strategic policy options;
- Provide assistance and advice on budgetary planning and control;
- Ensure that the financial information system allows effective budgetary control.

Likelihood	Highly likely (3)	Medium (3)	High (6)	High (9)
	Possible (2)	Low (2)	Medium (4)	High (6)
	Unlikely (1)	Low (1)	Low (1)	Medium (3)
		Negligible (1)	Moderate (2)	Severe (3)
	Impact			

↓ = better than the last assessment

↑ = worst than the last assessment

↔ = No change

Strategic Risk 1: Closure of commercial premises in the parish							
	Responsibility	Councillors/Clerk	Likelihood	2	Impact	2	Total Score = 4 (Medium) ↓
<p>Consequence of Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure of commercial premises in the parish resulting in the parish becoming less viable. • Loss of Key Service Village status • Significant increase in problems of rural isolation for residents of the parish • Increased reliance on public transport links 							
<p>Key Controls in Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open lines of communication with the businesses concerned • Maintain dialogue with business • Work with Staffordshire County Council to identify grant/business opportunities • Asset of Community Value listing for the Labour in Vain. 							

Strategic Risk 2: HS2 – Railhead and Infrastructure Maintenance Base - Rail

Responsibility	Councillors/clerk	Likelihood	3	Impact	3	Total Score = 9 (High) ⇔
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Consequence of Risk

- Extensive disruption to village life
- Travel arrangements to and from the parish severely limited resulting in delayed travel time for school, work, emergency services and other users that need to travel on Yarnfield Lane
- Risk of environmental disruption; noise, dust, due to construction work

Key Controls in Place

- Work with Stone Rail Head Campaign Group to challenge the HS2 Ltd proposals
- Work with Chebsey Parish Council and Stone Town Council
- Work with HS2 contractors - to minimise risk to the parish
- Work with Staffordshire County Council to minimise risk to the parish
- Work with Stafford Borough Council to minimise risk to the parish

Note - The Government announced on 4 October 2023 that HS2 Phase 2a and b had been cancelled. HS2 Ltd were instructed to work with the Department for Transport to develop a programme of activity to close down Phase 2a in a safe, respectful, orderly and efficient manner. It was also instructed to dispose of the land acquired by HS2 Ltd. The parish council is concerned that until the disposal of this land has been completed there is a significant risk to the parish and that this Strategic Risk, and its associated controls, should remain in place.

Strategic Risk 3: SBC – Meecebrook - New Garden Settlement

	Responsibility	Councillors/clerk	Likelihood	3	Impact	3	Total Score = 9 (High) ⇔
<p>Consequence of Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive disruption to village life • Loss of rural nature of the parish • Increase through traffic in Yarnfield and Cold Meece • Residents, particularly those living on Cold Meece, affected by noise, dust vibration associated with the construction of the development • Disruption to services 							
<p>Key Controls in Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough Council to provide full details of environmental impact assessment and associated development proposals • Proposed parish council Neighbourhood Plan • Working with borough councillors and planning officer • Parish Council submission on Stafford Borough Council preferred options paper • Support from Urban Vision Planning Consultants 							

Financial Risk 1: Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer absence cover

	Responsibility	Parish clerk/RFO	Likelihood	2	Impact	1	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇔
<p>Consequence of Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comply with statutory requirements • Inability to hold meetings, pay creditors • Inability to undertake day to day functions of the council. 							
<p>Key Controls in Place</p>							

- Membership of the National Association of Parish Councils
- Membership of the Staffordshire Branch of Parish Councils
- BHIB insurance policy - Endorsement 3 - Clerk Absence Cover

Financial Risk 2: Misappropriation of Council Funds/Financial loss

	Responsibility	RFO	Likelihood	1	Impact	2	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇔
Consequence of Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability of council to perform its statutory functions • Reputational risk to the parish council 							
Key Controls in Place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking Arrangements and changes to banking services approved by the council and recorded in the minutes • Pay invoices BACS using a 2 signature Bankline system • Monthly bank reconciliation - reported to the council • Accounts to be signed by the Chairperson at each meeting • Annual scrutiny of all financial records by a councillor & internal auditor. • Annual auditors (internal and external) reports to council 							

Financial Risk 3: Lack of Funds

	Responsibility	RFO	Likelihood	1	Impact	2	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇔
Consequence of Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to meet financial demands arising from unplanned activity • Loss of reputation 							

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inability to respond quickly to demand
<p>Key Controls in Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual transfer of funds to reserve account to increase level of parish council reserves Monthly finance report Commitment accounting system in place to monitor financial expenditure against committed expenditure. Half yearly review of budget Annual budget set by council based on key priorities

Financial Risk 4: Inadequate Insurance Cover							
	Responsibility	RFO	Likelihood	1	Impact	2	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇔
<p>Consequence of Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate cover Loss of reputation Financial risk to the council 							
<p>Key Controls in Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of the insurance policy Cover requirements review in the light of changes to the list register Novel activities drawn to the attention of Clear Insurance Management and their advice taken Risk assessment of activity undertaken and reported to the council. 							

Governance Risk 1: Failure on the part of the council/councillors to maintain standards							
	Responsibility	Council	Likelihood	1	Impact	2	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇔

<p>Consequence of Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation • Lack of transparency • Legal Action • Allegations of libel or slander • Internal/External audit compromised • Members Personal risk
<p>Key Controls in Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain adequate internal controls/support for councillors • Adoption of the Stafford Borough Council Code of Conduct for Member • Regular reporting to councillors • Councillor training/ Good Councillor Guide • Parish Clerk CILCA qualified • Annual AGAR • Membership of National Association of Local Councils

<p>Governance Risk 2: Failure to comply with GDPR/Freedom of Information</p>							
	Responsibility	Council	Likelihood	1	Impact	2	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇄
<p>Consequence of Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation • Lack of transparency • Legal Action 							
<p>Key Controls in Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate internal controls 							

- Response systems in place to manage requests
- Regular reporting to members
- Clerk and member trailing

Operational Risk 1: Data loss cause due to IT failure							
	Responsibility	Parish clerk	Likelihood	2	Impact	1	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇔
Consequence of Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comply with statutory requirements • Running of council business compromised • Financial systems lost 							
Key Controls in Place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All data automatically backed up to Microsoft OneDrive • Manual of key systems and procedures developed 							

Operational Risk 2: Damage to/accident Greenside Play Equipment							
	Responsibility	Parish clerk	Likelihood	2	Impact	2	Total Score = 4 (Low) ⇔
Consequence of Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury to third party • Loss or damage of equipment • Unplanned for cost • Loss of valuable play facility for children in the parish • Spread of infection 							

Key Controls in Place

- Monthly safety inspection of play equipment
- Annual safety audit undertaken by independent inspector
- Insurance policy maintained
- All Parish Council contractors are banned from taking road vehicles onto any part of the village green

Operational Risk 3: Loss of Grounds Maintenance contractor

	Responsibility	Parish clerk	Likelihood	1	Impact	2	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇄
Consequence of Risk							
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintenance of the village green put at risk• Loss of reputation• Budget risk due to increased cost							
Key Controls in Place							
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Robust tendering process• Regular liaison with grounds maintenance contractor• Liaison with neighbouring parish councils							

Operational Risk 4: Loss of council website

	Responsibility	Parish clerk	Likelihood	2	Impact	1	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇄
Consequence of Risk							
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inability to comply with statutory requirements• Communication compromised							

- Loss of ability to publish minutes and agenda
- Loss of reputation

Key Controls in Place

- Service level agreement with Staffordshire County Council Digital team
- Website hosted by Staffordshire County Council
- Training in maintenance and use of the website

Operational Risk 5: Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer absence cover

	Responsibility	Parish clerk	Likelihood	2	Impact	1	Total Score = 2 (Low) ⇄
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Consequence of Risk

- Inability to comply with statutory requirements
- Inability to hold meetings, pay creditors
- Inability to undertake day to day functions of the council.

Key Controls in Place

- Membership of the National Association of Parish Councils
- Membership of the Staffordshire Branch of Parish Councils
- BHIB insurance policy - Endorsement 3 - Clerk Absence Cover

Operational Risk 5: Protection of physical assets/vandalism

	Responsibility	Parish clerk	Likelihood	1	Impact	1	Total Score = 1 (Low) ⇄
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Consequence of Risk

- Disruption to services

- Risk, damage to third party
- Closure of playground

Key Controls in Place

- Weekly inspection of outdoor assets
- Property insured to reflect procurement of new assets.
- Annual review of Asset Register
- Clear Insurance Management public liability insurance policy