



Haslemere Town Council
Risk Management Assessment
Reviewed January 2023

Key: High Risk =H, Medium Risk = M, Low Risk = L

Risk	H	M	L	Action
Security of vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment.			*	<p>Town Hall offices are secured and separate from the Council Chamber. No access is allowed into the Council offices outside of normal office hours with the exception of staff and town hall cleaners. Cleaners are recruited by an external company who police check them prior to placement. Play equipment owned by the Council is inspected by a contractor on a weekly basis. Town Hall officers contact Play Safe to undertake works as required.</p> <p>From 2022 users of the Council Chamber will not be able to access the Town Hall kitchen as the main Council server is vulnerable to misuse. Anti virus software is installed to protect the computer systems and is kept up to date. Safe provided for valuable items such as stamps, cheques and cash awaiting banking. In 2019 a video entry system was introduced at the Town Hall for out of hours visitors.</p>
Data Security			*	<p>All important files held on Town Hall computers are backed up by an external company a daily basis and are stored securely. Computers and laptops are encrypted.</p>
Maintenance			*	<p>Maintenance contractors have been appointed to cut grass and maintain open spaces. The contracts are reviewed every 5 years.</p> <p>The Town Clerk has a maintenance budget and delegated authority to maintain the fabric of the Council's assets.</p>

Banking Arrangements and Expenditure Controls			*	<p>All cheque payments are signed by an officer and two Councillors as per bank mandate. All payments are approved retrospectively by Council.</p> <p>All online payments are made in accordance with the Council's standing orders and payments set up by either the Clerk or Deputy Clerk then signed off electronically by 2 authorised Members.</p> <p>All cash and cheques are paid into the bank on the day or first working day after receipt of money.</p> <p>Current and new cheque books are kept in the safe in the Clerk's office.</p> <p>Council has approved a credit card for use by Town Clerk to secure best value at all times. This has a limit of £5000 and is only for use by the Town Clerk. Council signs off all transactions.</p> <p>Monthly data entry and bank reconciliation on the Council's Omega software is currently done by the Deputy Clerk. A monthly report is produced which is checked by the Town Clerk. All transactions and expenditure against budget are reported to Council bi-monthly. At least quarterly the Chair of F&A verifies and countersigns the bank reconciliations against bank statements.</p> <p>The Council employs an internal auditor who reports twice yearly on the Council's financial procedures. The Town Clerk also uses the services of an independent qualified accountant/auditor to oversee the book-keeping done in house by Council staff.</p>
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<p>Health and safety, financial implications of accidents in premises and on play equipment</p>			<p>*</p>	<p>High risks are promptly dealt with.</p> <p>Reasonable practicable precautions are taken to prevent accidents. In particular an inspection regime in relation to play equipment occurs. A Town Hall officer inspects play area weekly. Where practicable interim repairs are conducted and warning notices placed where risks are evident. Equipment that is damaged / unsafe is removed where practicable.</p> <p>A tree maintenance programme is in place and the trees are regularly inspected by a qualified contractor in the course of their contract work. Interim measures are taken to protect the public when safety issues occur and a prompt repair process is adopted.</p> <p>Lifts and fire extinguishers are inspected regularly and remedial implemented when issues identified.</p> <p>Electrical items at the Town Hall are PAT tested annually.</p> <p>The Town Hall is surveyed every 4-5 years to identify and defects and produce a schedule of works for the following years.</p>
<p>Insurance</p>			<p>*</p>	<p>The Council holds all necessary employers, fidelity and public liability insurances. The Town Clerk requires copies of contractor liability insurance before work can be undertaken.</p>

Internal Controls		*	<p>The Council's adopted Financial Regulations adhere to best practice guidelines.</p> <p>Monthly lists of expenditure are taken to Council for approval and to exercise financial control. There is dual officer and member involvement in the financial business of the Council.</p> <p>The Council's standing orders, Financial Regulations and other procedure documents are reviewed on a scheduled basis to ensure they are in line with the best practice.</p> <p>Councillor attendance at Committee is crucial in order to avoid a by election. A resolution accepting reasons for councillor absence at meetings is passed at each Full Council meeting to ensure that councillors are not 'timed out'. All minutes record attendance and apologies as a record. This action is taken in order to avoid unnecessary Council expenditure on interim elections.</p>
Grant Applications		*	<p>The notification of large grant applications has to be with the Council by September at the latest otherwise they are not considered in the budget process. All grant applications, of whatever type, go through the same level of scrutiny and financial control.</p> <p>A grant register is maintained to monitor and avoid duplicate claims for grants. This also serves to assess unclaimed grants that need to be budgeted for in future years. Grants have to be claimed within six months of full council approval or within the budgeted financial year for Revenue or Specified Grants, this can be extended at the discretion of the Clerk.</p>

Budgeting			*	<p>A new budget setting procedure was adopted in 2019 and updated in 2020. A budget working party is appointed at September Council and the process is managed by the Town Clerk. Budget is agreed at January Full Council.</p> <p>Council reserves are taken into account as part of the budget process.</p> <p>Monthly accounts information given at each Council meeting shows actual spend against budget in all areas.</p> <p>Significant budget overspends are highlighted to Council.</p>
Councillor's Interests			*	<p>HTC reviews its Code of Conduct regularly and updates as necessary. A new code was adopted in January 2022. Councillors must comply with the code and are obliged to declare Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Registrable Interests at every Council meeting.</p> <p>The Council complies fully with the revised Code of Conduct procedures. All Councillors have a copy of the Good Councillor's Guide.</p> <p>New Councillors receive a full briefing and money is budgeted for ongoing Councillor training.</p>
Minutes			*	<p>All minutes are properly recorded / signed with reference numbers.</p>
Fraud and Corruption			*	<p>There is triple handling of all payments. Two Councillor signatures are required for all cheques. This must also be countersigned by the RFO. All payments are verified by the bi monthly Council Committees.</p> <p>The Finance & Governance Committee investigate any perceived anomalies or areas of concern and report back to full Council.</p>
Outsourcing Services			*	<p>The bills for contractors' work are routinely checked against the contract. Where reasonably practicable site visits are made to ensure that work is complete prior to payment. Town Clerk monitors expenditure and budget control.</p>
Activities outside legal powers			*	<p>Council adopted the Power of General Competence on 17th January 2013, as per statute, this was re-adopted at Council in May 2019.</p>

Electors Rights		*	<p>The Council will keep their electorate properly informed as to their rights by displaying information on their notice board also advertising in local newspapers and using social media as required. Council Newsletter, Haslemere Happenings, is sent to all households as required.</p> <p>Revised Freedom of Information policy was adopted by Council in 2022.</p> <p>The model publication scheme was re-adopted by Council in 2022.</p>
Qualified Staff		*	<p>The Town Clerk became CILCA qualified in January 2012 obtained her CertHE in Community Governance and Local Council Management (the Advanced Clerk's qualification) in 2016. The Deputy Clerk passed CiLCA in 2020.</p>
General Data Protection Regulation		*	<p>The Council acknowledges the increased responsibility the implementation of the GDPR in May 2018 confers. To assist it in this matter, the Council has retained the services of an external DPO who assists the council to meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018</p>
COVID-19 / pandemic		*	<p>A similar situation to the pandemic experienced in 2020 has a potentially dramatic effect on the Council and its ability to deliver services. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff – sickness / inability to access the office Finances – loss of income Services – contractors unable to operate meaning groundwork not completed, public toilets closing. <p>In light of the Covid pandemic, the Council's emergency plan was updated in 2021 and adopted by Council in March 2021.</p>