

## **Risk Management Policy**

### **Introduction – Understanding Risk Management**

A risk is any situation, event or action that could adversely affect the Council's ability to deliver its services, fulfil its legal duties, protect public money or manage its assets responsibly. Risk management is the structured, ongoing process by which such risks are identified, analysed, controlled and reviewed.

Clipstone Parish Council has a duty to safeguard its employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors, residents, visitors and the physical and natural environment for which it is responsible. The Council owns and manages several community assets, including the cemetery, village hall, former squash and sauna centre and multiple land holdings. It is recognised that each carries specific operational and financial risks.

Recognising that not every risk can be eliminated, the Council adopts a proportionate and consistent approach to risk management, supported by clear internal controls, insurance cover and specialist external advice.

### **Purpose of This Policy**

This policy ensures the Council:

- Complies with recognised risk management standards and legal requirements
- Minimises harm, financial loss, service disruption and damage to community assets
- Makes informed decisions based on an awareness of risk and its implications
- Has a culture where risk management is shared by all involved in Council activities

These aims are supported through:

- Identifying risks across all areas of operation and asset management
- Conducting risk assessments, including event specific assessments for every Council organised activity
- Recording risks and mitigation measures
- Integrating risk management into day to day decision making and planning
- Providing relevant training for staff, councillors and volunteers
- Establishing clear roles and reporting lines
- Encouraging open communication between those working with or on behalf of the Council

### **Use of External Health & Safety Expertise**

To ensure robust compliance with legislation and best practice, the Council engages an external specialist company to undertake:

- Health and safety audits

- Fire risk assessments
- General risk assessments for Council assets and operations
- Specialist advice as required

This professional support strengthens safety arrangements and supports the Council's duty of care.

### **Risk Management Approach**

Clipstone Parish Council manages non-financial risks through continuous assessment and monitoring. Risks relating to assets, staffing, operations, events, general health and safety and compliance are identified and considered as part of routine Council business. This includes project planning, staff management, policy review, inspections and specialist external assessments.

These risks are evaluated according to their likelihood and potential impact and appropriate mitigating actions are applied. These may include:

- Accepting risks where they are minor, inherent, or unavoidable
- Reducing risks through controls, procedures, training or maintenance
- Transferring risks to third parties through insurance or specialist contractors
- Avoiding or ceasing activities where risks cannot be reduced to an acceptable level

Insurance is used as a major mitigation tool and includes cover for public liability, employer liability, financial loss, data protection, property and asset damage and other areas relevant to Council operations.

Non-financial risks are reviewed informally throughout the year and brought to Council as required, particularly when changes in activities, assets, legislation or staffing occur.

### **Key Staffing Risks**

Clipstone Parish Council recognises the operational impact caused by the loss or long term absence of the Clerk, RFO or other essential staff. Mitigation includes:

- Documented key procedures and handover notes
- Support from councillors and administrative staff
- Access to temporary or locum professional support
- Use of sector bodies for continuity and guidance
- Secondary staff access to systems and files

### **Staff, Councillors and Volunteers**

People involved in Council activities - employees, councillors and volunteers, represent both an asset and a potential risk area. The Council mitigates these risks through:

- Training and induction
- Codes of Conduct and clear policies

- Accurate role descriptions
- Appropriate supervision and support
- Employer liability, public liability and volunteer insurance cover

### **Financial Risk Assessment (Separate Financial Risk Document)**

The Council maintains a separate Financial Risk Assessment, which is maintained by the RFO, reviewed annually and covers risks relating to:

- Precept planning and management
- Safeguarding public money
- Financial record keeping and retention
- Banking and electronic payment controls
- Members' interests and declarations
- VAT compliance
- Internal and external audits
- Invoice processing and authorisation
- Salaries, payroll, and employment related costs
- Protection of electronic records through security and backup measures
- Protection and retention of paper based records
- Insurance relevant to financial operations

This ensures that financial governance is managed thoroughly and transparently.

### **Reviewing Effectiveness**

Following the Internal Auditor's annual report, Clipstone Parish Council will:

- Review the effectiveness of its controls and risk management arrangements
- Assess whether existing mitigations remain suitable
- Reflect on emerging or changed risks
- Recommend updated measures to the full Council

### **Continuous Improvement and Recommendations**

When proposing improvements or actions, the Council will consider:

- The timeliness and accuracy of risk identification
- Prioritisation of high exposure risks

- Reliability of information used for decision making
- The speed with which control failures or new risks are identified
- Lessons learned from incidents and audit findings
- The organisation's responsiveness to implementing corrective actions

### **Adoption and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier when required by changes in legislation, best practice, circumstances, staffing, knowledge or experience, or Council operations.

Adopted date: 28.01.2026

Minute reference: CPC25/26 153