

DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Approved March 2019

Dursley Town Council is committed to identifying and managing risks, using the following procedures, and to ensuring that risk potential is maintained at acceptable level. Dursley Town Council has taken the action believed necessary.

The Clerk reviews risks on a regular basis, including any newly identified risks, and will report to the Town Council. The review includes identification of any unacceptable level of risk.

Dursley Town Council:

- a) Take steps to identify key risks facing the Council.
- b) Evaluate the potential consequences to the Council when an event identified as a risk takes place.
- c) Decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

The Council consider:

- i) Areas where there may be scope to use insurance to help manage risk.
- ii) Areas where there may be scope to work with others to help manage risk
- iii) Areas where there may be need for self-managed risk

SECTION 1

AREAS WHERE THERE MAY BE SCOPE TO USE INSURANCE TO HELP MANAGE RISK

1 A RISK IDENTIFICATION

a) Protection of physical assets (e.g. Buildings, furniture, equipment)

The Council maintains insurance for physical assets.

b) Risk of damage to third party property or individuals.

Appropriate employers, public liability and legal insurance will be maintained and reviewed annually. Physical assets such as playground equipment will be insured against accidents and damage.

1 B RISK CONTROL

a) Maintain an up-to-date register of Assets and Investments

An Asset Register is updated as required by the Clerk.

b) Inspection and maintenance of physical assets

The Clerk and Councillors (through appropriate representatives where relevant), undertake inspection of tangible assets. This includes annual independent inspection of the play and sports equipment with faults rectified and remedial work undertaken as recommended.

1 C INTERNAL CONTROL

a) **Review of internal controls in place and their documentation**

Internal controls are reviewed as necessary by the Clerk and Council and are subject to review annually by an independent internal auditor.

SECTION 2

AREAS WHERE THERE MAY BE SCOPE TO WORK WITH OTHERS TO HELP MANAGE RISK

2 A RISK IDENTIFICATION

a) **Maintenance for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment**

All physical assets are adequately maintained.

b) **Banking Services**

All forms of payment/expenditure require two signatures from Councillors who have been approved as a signatory of the relevant bank/building society account. This includes online "BACS" payments by Councillors who have been approved by the relevant bank/building society for internet banking access.

c) **Third party providers**

The Council endeavours to ensure that wherever possible it has the opportunity to select from several providers any service it requires. Ideally, a short list of three is considered, however availability of specialised service providers and/or known service levels may mean this is not possible or practicable. All providers are referenced in the minutes to ensure transparency.

All contractors are informed that the Council expect them to be competent at the activities contracted for and that they complete safety/risk assessments. The Clerk is required to ensure that any contractor working on behalf of Dursley Town Council is adequately insured.

d) **Regular bank reconciliations, independently reviewed**

Bank statements are received by the Clerk. A reconciliation of the accounts are checked during the monthly internal control process and by the internal auditor.

The Councillors are requested to approve the current bank reconciliation at meetings of the Council. The approved bank reconciliation is signed by the Mayor and recorded in the minutes as being approved.

2 B EXTERNAL REVIEW

a) **Review of internal controls in place and their documentation**

Internal controls are reviewed as necessary by the Clerk and Internal Auditor. Recommendations from the Clerk and Internal Auditor are submitted to the Council as necessary.

b) Review of minutes to ensure legal powers are available and the basis of the powers are recorded and correctly applied

The Clerk undertakes to advise the Council so that it does not act ultra vires when a decision is taken. It is recorded if the Council decides against the Clerk's advice. Where appropriate, legal powers bestowed on the Council will be recorded in the minutes against decisions taken.

Dursley Town Council resolved to adopt the General Power of Competence at the Council meeting on the 6th September 2016. All expenditure is permitted using the General Power of Competence (The Localism Act 2011) Section 1(1). The eligibility criteria will be re-confirmed at the Council meeting following an election.

SECTION 3

AREAS WHERE THERE MAY BE A NEED TO SELF-MANAGE RISK

3 A RISK IDENTIFICATION

a) Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory regulations

Financial records kept in accordance with the statutory requirements, are reviewed as part of the audit process by the internal and external auditors.

b) Ensuring all business activities are within legal powers applicable to Town Councils

See section 2(b) Internal Review Assurance (b)

c) Complying with restrictions on borrowing

To ensure the Council is within the current borrowing parameters.

d) Ensuring all requirements are met under HM Revenue and Customs regulations (incl VAT)

All such requirements are met by the Clerk and checked by the internal auditor.

e) Ensuring the adequacy of the annual precept within sound budgeting arrangements

Council budgets are reviewed and approved by full Council in accordance with the Council's budget procedure.

f) Proper, timely and accurate reporting of the Council business in the minutes

Council minutes are prepared by the Clerk. They are distributed to members in advance of the subsequent meeting, verified as a correct record as one of the first items of business of that meeting and signed at the meeting. Failure to agree or any required amendments will be recorded.

- g) Responding to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection**
The right of inspection to electors is adhered to in accordance with current legislation. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, all relevant documents are available on request and in addition, meeting schedules and minutes, will be published on the Council's website.
- h) Meeting the laid down timetables when responding to consultation invitations**
Every effort is made to meet specified timetables when responding to consultation invitations.
- i) Proper document control**
Paperwork is retained in accordance with national guidelines and relevant documents are available for viewing on request. Incoming mail is recorded and stamped as appropriate.
- j) Register of members' interests, gifts and hospitality is in place, complete, accurate and up-to-date**
The members' register of interest is held by the Clerk and a copy is held by the Monitoring Officer at Stroud District Council. It is the responsibility of Members to notify the Clerk of changes.

3 B INTERNAL CONTROLS

- a) Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure**
Comprehensive measures are in place for the approval of expenditure as per the Standing Orders and Finance Regulations approved by council.
- b) Developing system of performance measurement**
In accordance with legislation, staff appraisal will be undertaken annually, by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor for the Town Clerk and the Mayor/Town Clerk for other members of staff. These are reported to Council on the recommendation of the Staffing Committee.
- c) Minutes with a master copy kept in safekeeping**
All Council and Committee minutes are correctly recorded. A signed hard copy is placed on file with each page duly initialled. An electronic copy is retained, and back-up copies are stored on the back-up server.
- d) Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public**
Calls, letters and e-mails are dealt with as soon as practicable.
- e) Documented procedures for document receipt, circulation, response, handling and filing**
The Clerk receives and delegates all mail. All relevant mail is listed with Council for consideration or information. Mail for action by Council is dealt with accordingly and action minuted.

f) Adoption of Codes of Conduct for members and employees

The Council review annually the Code of Conduct. The Employee Code of Conduct is in accordance with their individual contracts of employment.

g) Business Continuity

The council has provided for backup a system that allows the recovery of important documentation to be backed up and stored separately.