



RISK ASSESSMENT

This document has been produced to enable Horsforth Town Council to assess the risks inherent to its activities and satisfy itself that it has taken all reasonable steps to minimise them.

AREA	IDENTIFIED RISK	LEVEL OF RISK	CONTROLS	ACTION REQUIRED
Budget/ Precept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequacy of precept in order for Council to carry out Statutory duties. • Ensures the Town Council has enough funds for expenses and projects. • Ensures the Town Council does not go over budget. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual budget is produced before the precept is considered. • The Finance and General Purposes Committee/Full Council receives a quarterly budget report and budget monitoring allows the Council to estimate standing costs and costs of projects for the subsequent years. • The Town Council shall consider and agree the Precept demand annually at a Full Council meeting no later than January. • The RFO shall issue the precept to Leeds City Council before the deadline and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget. • The Full Council is informed when the precept is received. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Financial Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate records leading to financial irregularities 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Financial Regulations are reviewed annually. • There are systems of internal control in place. • The Full Council reviews the financial systems as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). • The Internal Audit report is presented to a Full Council meeting. • All accounts are available for public 	Adequate control measures in place.

			<p>inspection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RFO maintains proper records, overseen by Councillors who undertake regular checks in accordance with the Council's Audit Plan including an Interim Internal Audit, Risk Management review, Internal Audit Review and Internal Control Check. • Payments are authorised by the Full Council or F&GP Committee and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. • The Council has a prudent approach to its financial management and ensures it has sufficient reserves to meet any known risk. 	
Invoice payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect payment. Payment made of goods/services not received or authorised 	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All invoices are paid after the service or goods have been received. • The Clerk verifies all invoices received for accuracy and ensures all information is entered in the cashbook. • Invoices are allocated to purchase orders where necessary. • A schedule of all payments is prepared by the RFO and presented to the Full Council/F&GP Committee for approval. • The approved schedule is signed by the Chairman. • Wherever possible, payments will be made using online banking. • There are 4 signatories, and 2 signatories have to approve a payment. • The following paragraphs set out the principles and procedures of operation of the online account with particular attention to the raising of payment requests and their authorisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Clerk saves the invoice and uses an authorisation form which includes information such as invoice details, amount, date of invoice, minute 	Adequate control measures in place.

			<p>reference, budget allocation, date submitted and name of Cllrs authorised. This is saved in the TO BE PAID folder.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once approved the Clerk submits the payments and emails the signatories to make them aware along with copies of the invoices. - The signatories then make the Clerk aware when the payments have been approved. - The Clerk then updates the authorisation form with the names of the signatories that approved the payments and saves the invoices in the PAID folder and prints the invoices and files in the Finance folder. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a payment is to be made by cheque, the cheque will be signed by two authorised Councillors who shall also initial the counterfoil and invoice. • Where payments are required in between meetings, the Clerk will use delegated powers in line with the financial regulations or delegated powers approved at a Full Council/Committee meeting. 	
Bank and banking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate checks/ bank mistakes 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Financial Regulations set out the requirements for banking, cheques, online banking and reconciliation of accounts. • The bank accounts are reconciled monthly and presented to the Council quarterly. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss/misappropriation of cash. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council does not handle cash on a daily basis. The only regular income is precept, bank interest and annual VAT return. All of these are paid directly into the Council's bank account. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to manage and account for grant income. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant income is accounted for separately and in line with the requirements of the grant provider. All associated paperwork is in the 	Adequate control measures in place.

			finance file under income/expenditure.	
Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the Council's policies and standard documents are up to date and meet best practice guidelines. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council uses an appropriate insurance provider, who specialises in providing cover to Local Councils. The Council responds to issues raised through the Internal Audit. The Council is a member of YLCA, SLCC and uses their templates as a basis for its documents. The Clerk ensures that relevant policies are drafted and put to Council for adoption. The Council reviews all policies and documents annually or when required. The Clerk advises the Council as to whether proposed actions are within adopted policies. Documents are displayed on the Council's website. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Reporting and Auditing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication of information 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council has a Finance and General Purposes Committee that gives recommendations to the Full Council. Financial matters are a standing item on the Agenda of the Full Council meeting. Quarterly checks by Councillors 	Adequate control measures in place.
Wages and associated costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salaries paid incorrectly Incorrect HMRC NI and PAYE payments Non-compliance with HMRC regulations leading to financial penalties Over payment of wages for hours worked 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council authorises the employment of all employees. Salary rates are reviewed annually following annual appraisals and authorised by the Council. A bookkeeper provides a managed payroll service and deals with all NI, Taxation and pension matters. Salaries are paid monthly in arrears. This salary is based on an agreed number of hours per week. The Internal Auditor conducts a full check of expenses at the end of each financial year Salary payments included in monthly invoices listed for payment checked by designated 	Adequate control measures in place.

			<p>Councillor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMRC payments are made quarterly and included in schedule of payments. • The Employers Annual Return to HMRC is completed and submitted online by the bookkeeper within the required HMRC time limits. • Council/Line Manager has responsibility for monitoring of hours worked for all employees. • Time sheets submitted by all staff. • Bookkeeper prepares the amount that should be paid into the pension and the Clerk prepares the payment and submits the monthly report to WYPF. 	
Best Value Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work awarded incorrectly. • Overspend on services 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Councils procedure (as per Financial Regulations) is to seek 3 quotes for all work where possible. • For major projects, competitive tendering process would be initiated (as per Financial Regulations) • The Town Council has a standing order in place for contract, which is mandatory. (See Council's Standing Orders on business). 	Adequate control measures in place.
<u>VAT</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclaimed VAT refunds • Compliance with HMRC regulations • Unclaimed VAT refunds 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A VAT claim is completed annually after year end. • The refund from HMRC for reclaimed VAT is noted when received. • VAT incurred is displayed in separate column in cash book. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss or absence of Clerk/RFO. • Fraud by Clerk • Actions undertaken by Clerk 	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment would take place as soon as the member of staff gives notice. • Financial systems for authorising expenditure, reducing cash transactions and control of the bank account all contribute to a system which minimises the risk of fraud. • Monthly bank reconciliations provide 	Adequate control measures in place.

			<p>further assurance and protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is Fidelity insurance in place. • Regular checks and internal controls on financial activity. • Staff are employed under the terms of a version of the Model Contract agreed by NALC and SLCC. These organisations will offer assistance with employment issues. 	
Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate cover 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual review is undertaken prior to the renewal of the insurance policy to ensure the cover meets the Council's needs. • Public Liability, Employers Liability and Fidelity guarantee are all included. • All Council members, employees and volunteers of the Council are covered under the Personal Accident section. • The cost of the Council's insurance policy is included in its annual budget. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Employee insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential claims 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Liability insurance in place 	Adequate control measures in place.
Working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council non-compliant with contractual obligations; leading to discontented workforce. 	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are regular reviews of staff performance and working relationship with the Council 	Ensure all staff have access to reviews, etc
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury to staff in the working environment • Injury to councillors 	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is provision of regular reviews of staff working procedures, risks involved and adequate direction on the safe use of any equipment required to undertake roles. • Risk assessments are carried out including lone working, fire, relevant equipment and events. • Approved Health and Safety Policy. 	Provide extensive health and safety guidance to all staff on a regular basis in conjunction with regular reviews of working practices and risk assessments.
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unauthorised use of funds. • Use of funds without declaring an interest. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No expenditure can take place without authorisation of the full Council. • Declaration of interest is a standing item on all agendas and all Councillors complete and sign a Register of Interests. • Two signatures are required for payments. 	Adequate control measures in place.

Freedom of information provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-compliance with Freedom of Information Act statutory requirements • Not responding to requests for information in a timely manner or failing to meet the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act & Failure to meet the requirements of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council has a Publication scheme available on the website and a hard copy from the Clerk. • There is a Freedom of Information Request Policy • The Council can request a fee for any information requested to cover the cost of consumables or the Clerk's time. • The Clerk is experienced in dealing with requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. • Information (e.g., re. audit) is published in accordance with statutory guidance. • The Clerk shall post relevant information on the Council's web site in a timely manner. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Data protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-compliance with Data Protection Act and GDPR statutory requirements for registration as data controller 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk/RFO and members undertaken training. • Council registered with ICO as a Data Controller • Data/information audit complete and reviewed regularly. • Privacy notices available on website • Retention and disposal policy adopted. • Security Incident Procedure/policy in place • The Council follows the relevant adopted policies on this matter. • Staff and Councillors attend training on the subject to ensure the correct procedures are being followed. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Annual return (to external auditors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission within time limits to avoid financial penalties 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figures for the Annual return is presented to Council/F&GP Committee for approval and signing. • It is then sent to the internal auditor for completion and signing before being sent for External Audit in required timeframe once the AGAR has been approved at a Full Council meeting. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Legal powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegal activity and/or payments 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions of the Town Council/Committees are noted in Minutes presented to all 	Adequate control measures in place.

			<p>members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All resolutions for payment are resolved at meetings. The Powers of the Council for actions/projects are noted by the Clerk. 	
Statutory obligations regarding documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accuracy and legality of notices, agendas, Minutes 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes produced in the prescribed manner and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved, signed and dated at the next meeting of the Council/Committee. Agendas and notices are produced in the prescribed manner and adhere to legal requirements. Agendas and notices are displayed according to legal requirements. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Asset Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss or damage. Risk damage to third party 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An annual review of assets is undertaken for both insurance provision and external audit requirements. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Assets including benches, electrical equipment, troughs, clock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor performance of assets 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All assets owned by Town Council are regularly checked. All repairs and relevant expenditure authorised in accordance with correct procedures. All assets are insured and reviewed annually. The Clerk possesses emergency powers to deal with urgent repairs. Public Liability insurance is in place. Inspections/services and tests are carried out when required including PAT testing, the Clock annual service. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss through theft, fire, damage or electronic corruption 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic documents are automatically backed up to OneDrive. Paper documents are kept in a secure place at the Town Council office. Staff members only take documents home when working from home and they are not stored there. The Council has agreed a retention of 	Adequate control measures in place.

			documents. and information policy which is reviewed annually.	
Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destroyed or lost / mismanagement by Clerk 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed copies are kept in a secure place at the Town Council office. Electronic copies are stored on the Council's website and OneDrive. Minutes are numbered and dated. Minutes are approved by the Council at the following meeting, signed by the Chairman of that meeting who also initials each page. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Meetings management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for illegal activity 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Clerk and Administration Assistant has completed relevant training. The Chairman and Councillors are advised of and encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities provided by YLCA and other institutions. The Council is kept updated of new procedural legislation by the Clerk. Standing Orders exist and are regularly reviewed to ensure all items are managed correctly. Council has access to support and information via YLCA. Ensuring that all activity and payments within the powers of the Council are resolved and minuted at Full Council meetings. It is only the Clerk who has emergency powers to take decisions or incur expenditure between meetings of the Council. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Meeting location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory health and safety of meetings / availability of venue. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council meetings are held in the Town Council office and The Parish Centre. The premises and facilities are kept in good order and are considered more than adequate for this purpose from a Health & Safety and comfort perspective. 	Adequate control measures in place.

Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption/negativity 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Clerk and Administration has full responsibility of the social media account, and a policy has been adopted. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to site & Lack of information on site. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website is hosted by a professional company. • Clerk keeps copies of all information posted on site. • The Clerk and Administration Assistant undertakes to post relevant information on the Council's website in a timely manner. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Members interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints about decisions because of members' interests. Sanctions against members who fail to declare, or incorrectly declare interests. • Conflicts of interest. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members complete a register of interests and are encouraged to ensure that this remains up to date. Registers are displayed on the Council's website. • Each meeting contains an item re. 'Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations" and the Chairman asks all members present to declare an interest if appropriate • If an interest is declared this is recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting. 	Adequate control measures in place.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent accidents and injury. • Ensures the Town Council has enough funds for event. • Failure to manage event correctly 	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and Councillors involved in planning any event has received relevant training. • Risk Assessments are carried. • Public liability is included in the insurance policy. • Liaise with authorities including Leeds City Council and the Police. • Each event has an approved budget. • Each event has a specific working group and an approved Terms of Reference. 	Provide extensive guidance to all staff/members on a regular basis in conjunction with regular reviews of working practices and risk assessments.
Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevents accidents and injury. 	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council office is managed by Leeds City Council. • LCC carry out all health and safety checks. • Any issues are raised with LCC. • The TC has adopted a Lone Working Policy. • Risk assessments are carried out. 	Adequate control measures in place.

Reviewed: 18th May 2023

Next review date: May 2024

