

CAISTOR TOWN COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT

Adopted by Caistor Town Council on 14th April 2022

Last reviewed – 8th May 2025. Next review due May 2026

Risk Status Indications

The adopted risk management methodology uses a traffic light colour against each risk item to confirm its current status. The colour coding is defined as follows:

- This identified risk is being effectively managed with adequate reviews, processes and/or documentation as appropriate.

- *As applicable, either*

This identified risk is being managed. However, there are aspects of risk management, which ought to be improved to achieve a green status. It is recognised that sometimes improvements may be difficult to achieve and remedial work may take time (e.g. a need for Councillor training).

or

This identified risk is not under adequate management. However, if this risk arises, it will have a minimal impact upon the Council. Whilst attempts can be made over time to improve the management of this risk, there may be occasions where the cost of mitigation is not warranted (e.g. holding spare parts or equipment).

- This identified risk, which has a serious potential impact upon the Council is not under adequate management. This represents a key risk, which will be highlighted to meetings of the Council until such time that it is adequately managed or mitigated. Certain key risks with a low probability may be entirely beyond the management control capability of the Council – such risks may retain a red status upon the agreement of Council.

Aim ¹	Risk ²	Method used to Minimise Risk ³	Person(s) Responsible ⁴	Status ⁵ ● ● ●
1. To ensure compliance with Acts of Parliament, Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct.	a. Lack of knowledge of regulations and codes leading to actions by the council outside its powers.	Ensure that all Councillors have copies of or access to relevant Acts Members provided with the Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, and a copy of the latest edition of the Good Councillors Guide. Highlight essential parts and provide specific training where possible.	Chair Clerk / RFO All councillors LALC	●
	b. Absence of Standing Orders or standing orders not followed	Ensure that Standing Orders are produced, understood by councillors, and reviewed at least once per year.	Chair Clerk	●
	c. Items purchased without proper tendering procedures, resulting in accusations of commercial favouritism.	Ensure that all councillors are aware of regulations regarding estimates and full tender procedures. Financial Regulations are complied with on all purchases.	Chair Clerk/RFO	●
	d. Payments made without prior approval and adequate control.	Ensure all payments are approved in accordance with the Financial Regulations and properly recorded.	Clerk/ RFO	●
	e. VAT not properly accounted for, resulting in over-claims and demands from HMRC.	Ensure appropriate publications held and that RFO has a good knowledge of regulations.	RFO	●
	f. Data protection regulations not properly followed	DP policy in place and regularly reviewed by council. Staff to undertake DPA training and training made available to councillors. Out of date information is confidentially disposed of annually. No information is kept unnecessarily. Registration with ICO for support	Councillors and Staff	●
2. To identify and regularly review the Council's priorities and risks.	a. Lack of knowledge of setting objectives, setting priorities, and identifying risks to their achievement.	All councillors to be made aware of need for objectives and identification of risk. Attend training sessions and refresher training if necessary.	Clerk/RFO All Councillors	●
	b. Steps not taken to combat risks	Add risk assessment to agenda at least annually, reviewing particular items, and results against those items. Allocate actions to Councillors as well as Clerk/RFO and follow up at meetings	Chair All Councillors Clerk/RFO	●
	c. No risk analysis carried out.	As at 2a above. Ensure that completion of the risk assessment is given high priority, as a requirement of the Audit Commission	All Councillors Clerk/RFO	●

	d. An inadequate complement of councillors to manage the business of the council	Ensure all councillor vacancies are filled promptly. All councillors to strive to work in a constructive manner in accordance with the Code of Conduct and to welcome and encourage new councillors. All councillors to cooperate to share the workload.	All Councillors Clerk	●
3. To influence others, such as Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey District Council and other Government organisations to recognise the requirements and interests of the local population.	a. Lack of effective lines of communication with other organisations.	Maintain good working relationships with officers from outside organisations, respect the work they do. Note all communication lines which are essential or beneficial and establish/maintain contacts by name and where possible face-to-face.	Chair Clerk	●
	b. Lack of preparation on subjects requiring influence.	Ensure all councillors are aware of need for careful research and are guided as to where to obtain relevant information.	All Councillors Clerk	●
	c. Lack of confidence of Town Councillors.	Experienced councillors and Clerk/RFO to assist newcomers to understand roles and responsibilities, to establish essential contacts and to gain procedural awareness.	All Councillors Clerk	●
	d. Lack of effective lines of communication with parishioners	Take every opportunity to publicise the role of the town council using notice boards, website, Facebook and Annual Town meeting. Use key issues to raise the profile.	All Councillors Clerk	●

4. To ensure that all councillors and staff are aware of their responsibilities, and possible liabilities, and to provide adequate insurance cover for all possible risks.	a. Lack of knowledge of possible culpability of councillors.	Creation of Standing Orders and Code of Conduct and familiarisation with those matters where greatest risk occurs. Social media policy in place. Libel and slander insurance in place. ⁶ Experienced councillors and Clerk/RFO to assist newcomers to understand culpability. To attend training courses and refresher training as available (see LALC annual training scheme).	Chair All Councillors Clerk	●
	b. Public or staff prosecution c. Risk or damage to third party property, or injury to members of the public d. Damage to council assets e. Loss due to dishonest or fraudulent acts by employees or Councillors	Review risk assessment by including on agenda at least annually. Clerk/RFO reviews insurance cover to ensure it is adequate and contacts insurance company when the Council carries out a new activity to ensure that the cover is adequate Council consider the insurance requirements at the renewal date, and review all the quotes before making decision Council reviews the insurance cover annually	Chair Clerk/RFO All councillors	●

		Insurance is arranged with a local government specialist company and includes Employers Liability Cover ⁷ , Public Liability Cover ⁸ , and covers loss or damage to appropriate assets ⁹ . References to be sought for all employees. Fidelity guarantee insurance ¹⁰ in place.		●
	f. Councillors fail to declare interests and participate in inappropriate decision making, which has a material impact upon the decisions taken and the public perception of the Council.	All councillors to be reminded to abide by the Code of Conduct and the register of interests and to be alert to potential breaches of both. As far as is possible, the Clerk to ensure the register of interests are complete and up to date. Declarations of interest on every agenda.	Clerk All Councillors	●
	g. Staff and councillors bringing the council into disrepute	Councillors understand and be offered training on the Code of Conduct. A professional approach is undertaken on all Town Council matters. Member officer protocol in place and reviewed regularly to ensure understanding	Clerk All councillors	●
5. To keep appropriate accounting records up-to-date throughout the financial year. To maintain secure banking facilities.	a. Lack of knowledge of accounting requirements	Ensure all councillors are familiar with current Financial Regulations. Regularly review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. RFO to be suitable qualified or attend appropriate training	All Councillors Clerk/RFO	●
	b. Inaccuracies in recording amounts and totals in accounting records	Bank reconciliations to be presented for review least every quarter and compared to bank statements. Internal audit to be carried out annually.	All Councillors RFO Internal Auditor	●
	c. Internal controls not in place or not operated, leading to out of date accounting records, missed or delayed payments, unpaid invoices, or loss through theft or dishonesty.	Only nominated signatories, the Clerk and the RFO have access to the Council's bank accounts. Standing orders and DD's are kept to a minimum and are pre-authorized by council at the annual meeting. Internet banking used as practical. Payments are authorised by two councillors. Schedule of payments and bank reconciliation are presented for approval each month at the scheduled full council meeting. Pre payment card is used for purchases where no account is held. Where cash receipts are unavoidable, the cash is kept securely until it is passed to the Clerk/RFO to and/or banked.	Clerk/RFO All Councillors	●
	d. RFO taken ill or leaves without replacement	The bank signatories have access to the Council's bank accounts and are able to access bank statements through the on-line banking facility.	Clerk All councillors	●

	e. Potential investment loss	Ensure no more than £85000 is held with any bank; open additional accounts to manage reserves;	P&F / all councillors/Clerk	●
6. To ensure that payments made from Council funds and the use of assets, represent value for money, are adequately managed, and comply generally with the wishes of the residents.	a. Lack of knowledge of wishes of residents.	Ensure residents and other stakeholders (i.e. local organisations) are consulted on major financial issues, which impact upon them. Item on the Annual Town Meeting agenda for the public to suggest items for the following year's budget.	All Councillors Clerk	●
	b. Use of funds or assts not giving value for money.	Effective budget planning processes and appropriate tendering. Creation of a rolling plan for projects and maintenance expenditure.	Clerk/ RFO All Councillors	●
	c. Fund raising not properly controlled or not in accordance with regulations.	All councillors to be aware of need to check regulations before commencing fund-raising activities. Effective financial management by RFO.	All Councillors Clerk	●
	d. Perceived lack of transparency regarding council finances and activities	Advertisement of Exercise of Electors rights carried out correctly per audit regulations All meetings open to the public with the exception of items of a sensitive nature (salaries, contract discussions etc). Publication of financial information on website per transparency code	All Councillors Clerk RFO	●
	Charges (e.g. for leases, cemetery & allotment) are inadequate or excessive	Comparisons made with other local councils. Internal audit checks.	Clek/RFO	●
7. To ensure that the annual precept requirement results from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget is regularly monitored; reserves are appropriate and adequate; financial records are maintained.	a. Lack of knowledge of or commitment to budgetary process, and of financial regulations.	Ensure financial regulations are issued to all councillors. Place item on agenda early in year to remind councillors of budget process and actions required. Encourage councillor training. Delegate responsibility for managing the initial budgetary process to the RFO & the Clerk. Involve all councillors in budgetary process, not solely the Clerk/RFO. Encourage all councillors to actively participate in meetings when the budget is being discussed.	All Councillors RFO Clerk	●
	b. Inadequate consideration of requirements for annual precept.	Comparison against the previous year's actual income/expenditure, and this year's projected, to ensure that all items are included Town Council approves the annual budget and sets the precept at the December Council meeting Clerk/RFO aware of the deadline for the submission of the precept and ensure that the precept is received on time.	All Councillors Chair	●

	c. Reserves too low or too high	Checks by RFO and Internal Auditor. Financial and budget progress reported to Council on a quarterly basis. The general reserve (not earmarked) to be 3-6 months annual income or as otherwise advised by the RFO / Internal auditor. The general reserve (not earmarked) not to exceed 1x typical annual income or as otherwise advised by the RFO / Internal auditor.	All Councillors RFO Clerk	●
	d. Lack of funds to meet financial commitments	Actual spend compared to planned spend at least quarterly Proposed projects planned for when calculating the precept required Maintain appropriate levels of reserves	All Councillors RFO Clerk	●
10. To ensure that year end accounts are prepared on the correct accounting basis, on time, and supported by an adequate audit trail and meet the AGAR requirements.	a. Lack of knowledge of Council regulations and procedures.	Compliance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Attend training seminars where available.	Clerk/RFO All Councillors	●
	b. Late or non- submission of annual accounts.	Compliance with the instructions of the External auditor. RFO to monitor progress against timetable and report to councillors at meetings.	Clerk/RFO Internal auditor All Councillors	●
	c. Year end accounts not prepared, inaccurate, or not in accordance with Council requirements.	Checks by RFO. RFO to be suitably qualified or attend appropriate training Internal audit checks.	Clerk/RFO Internal auditor All Councillors	●
	d. Inadequate audit trail from records to final accounts.	As at 10c above.	Clerk/RFO Internal auditor All Councillors	●
	e. External audit not completed accurately or within timescales	RFO to follow JPGA regulations when completing AGAR and follow external auditor guidelines for completion and submission dates.	Clerk/RFO	●
	f. Exercise of public rights not completed correctly	See 10e above		●
11. To ensure that salaries paid to employees and amounts paid to contractors are paid in line with Council regulations and budget and statutory legislation.	a. Inappropriate rate of pay to employees, wrong hours paid, wrong rate of pay applied or NI/Tax incorrectly applied.	Ensure employee regulations are available and understood by Clerk and RFO. The Town Council authorises the appointment of all employees at Council meetings. Salary rates are assessed annually by the Council and applied on 1st April each year. Salary is paid monthly by BACS. The payroll is administered using accredited payroll software.	RFO/Clerk Personnel & Finance Committee Internal audit	●

Ensure payments are adequately monitored.		All Tax and NI payments are submitted in the Inland Revenue in accordance with the Real Time Information (RTI) protocols. Internal audit checks.		
12. To identify, value, and maintain all the assets of the Town Council, and ensure that asset register is complete, accurate and properly maintained.	a. Lack of knowledge of assets of Town Council.	Ascertain and record all significant assets for which the Town council is responsible. Create and maintain a permanent asset register.	RFO/Clerk Councillors	●
	b. Assets lost or misappropriated	Regular monitoring of location and use of assets by councillors and any issues reported immediately to Clerk Adequate insurance provision in place to cover assets	Clerk/RFO	●
	c. Asset register not established or inadequately maintained.	Create asset register in accordance with Audit Commission requirements. Review register at least annually	Clerk/ RFO Councillors	●
	d. Lack of adequate programme of maintenance/regular safety checks for street furniture	Regular checks by the Clerk/Councillors. Prompt attention to hazards/problems once identified. Prompt attention to issues raised by all users. Engagement of suitable contractors to conduct ongoing maintenance works where appropriate.	Clerk Councillors	●
13. To minimise the risk of injury damage or liability on all buildings, land, property, equipment and street furniture which the council is responsible for. Buildings: Town Hall Land: Cemetery Allotments Millfield Park South St Park Sports ground Street Furniture:	a. Lack of information on council owned properties, buildings and equipment	Include in asset register all properties for which the Town Council is responsible. Lease agreements in place with all organisations leasing council owned property	Clerk/Cllrs	●
	b. Damage, equipment failure, potential injury due to lack of knowledge of safety requirements	Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by the Clerk Place subject as item on Estates Management Committee meetings at regular intervals. Equipment to be inspected before use, any issues reported to the clerk, equipment serviced regularly and at least annually		●
	c. Lack of adequate programme of maintenance/regular safety checks	Regular checks by the Officers and Councillors. Prompt attention to hazards/problems once identified. Prompt attention to issues raised by all users. Engagement of suitable contractors to conduct ongoing maintenance works.		●
	d. Excessive utility bills caused by water leaks, excessive heating, electrical appliances unnecessarily left switched on. Property damage caused by leaks.	Regular property checks by Councillors and Officers. Regular monitoring of utility bills to assess consumption levels. Prompt attention to minor repairs and leaks.		●

<p>Town council owned litter bins, grit bins, signs, benches, notice boards etc</p> <p>Council owned equipment: Mowers, strimmers, tools, market equipment</p>	e. Theft from premises due to inadequate security measures	Regular checks by the Officers and Councillors.		●
	f. Criminal damage to buildings and property owned by town council	Regular checks by the Officers and Councillors. Use of CCTV where appropriate. Store building alarmed		●
	g. Damage caused by wear and tear to council owned buildings and property	Regular reviews of property and maintenance schedules implemented. Work carried out on property in a timely manner to minimise costs and further damage.		●
	h. Damage caused by trees to property and persons	Liability insurance to cover damage from trees falling on property/persons; tree inspection completed periodically by a qualified arborist; recommendations in tree survey/report adhered to		●
<p>14. To comply with legislation regarding the health and safety as appropriate for all council activities</p>	a. Lack of knowledge of applicable legislation	Clerk/RFO to have all appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at Town Council meetings. Training to be attended as appropriate. Health and safety expert appointed to support CTC in all H&S activities	Councillors /Clerk	●
	b. Injury or death due to poorly maintained equipment/assets	Maintain a register of assets and complete at least annual test for health and safety. Where issue are identified, employ a suitable qualified contractor to repair or remove Maintain appropriate level of public liability and employers liability insurance	Councillors/Clerk	●
	c. Volume of work required to ensure adherence to H&S legislation	Appoint an external organisation to undertake a Risk assessment; form a Health and safety working group to progress H&S agenda (in progress)	Councillors/Clerk	●
	d. Health and safety considerations for events and external users of CTC property	Details of events submitted to CTC for approval; Individual risk assessments completed for every event; Conformation of adherence to CTC TC's completed for every casual user of sports ground; licence or lease agreements in place for all primary users of CTC property (in progress)	Councillors/Clerk	●
<p>15. To carry out adequate safety checks on the children's play areas operated by the Council.</p>	a. An inadequate programme of safety inspections and maintenance (or vandalism)	Regular safety inspections by Estates operative/other officers or councillors backed up by an annual inspection by an accredited playground inspector. Prompt attention to hazards/problems once	Councillors Clerk Estates Operative	●

	<p>results in an accident and/or an award of damages.</p> <p>b. The lack of or an inadequate programme of maintenance of the immediate surrounding area allows the persistence of a safety hazard (e.g. trip hazard, sharp object, faulty gate)</p>	<p>identified. Ongoing maintenance. Professional specification and installation of equipment. An ongoing programme of equipment replacement as necessary.</p> <p>Regular checks by the Estates operative, other Officers and Councillors. Prompt attention to hazards/problems once identified. Prompt attention to issues raised by all users. Engagement of suitable contractors to conduct ongoing maintenance works. Purchase of electronic play area software management program to better manage issues.</p>	Councillors Clerk Estates Operative	●
16. To ensure business continuity in the event of a disaster, or loss of Clerk/RFC or loss of computer records	a. Loss, fire or theft of council records (paper)	All paper documents to be stored in a lockable cabinet. Historic documents archived. Back up copies of Deeds and TPO's to be stored electronically. Cemetery records held in a fire proof facility	Clerk	●
	b. Loss or theft of council records (electronic)	Electronic records are stored on the Caistor TC one drive. Council laptop to be encrypted. Business one drive to be purchased Anti-virus software in place	Clerk	●
	c. Loss of clerks office due to fire/flood or other disaster	Business interruption insurance in place ¹¹ All paper files and records are kept in secure locked cabinet at the office. Electronic copies made of everything and stored on a shared drive.	Clerk RFO Clerk	●
	d. Council not being able to continue its business due to unexpected or tragic loss of Clerk/RFO	Council maintains at least 3 cheque signatories. Protocol in place for short term/long term illness or sudden loss of clerk/RFO	Councillors	●
	e. Clerk/RFO give notice to leave	Undertake regular reviews and annual appraisal with Clerk/RFO to identify and issues Ensure Clerk/RFO have all necessary tools to effectively complete the role expected of them. Notice period of at least 3 months (after probationary period) to allow time to recruit	Council	●
17. To maintain accurate and up to date cemetery burial and memorial records. To ensure the safety of all memorials.	a. Loss of, incorrect or lack of burial records	Records kept in fire proof bag and electronic back up. Records updated within 24 hours of an interment All interments must give 7 days' notice. Clerk checks plans against computer records upon receipt of interment request.	Clerk	●

	b. Unsafe memorials	<p>Clerk re-checks plan 48 hrs prior to interment to mark grave. Grave marked with spray paint including the plot number. Photo of marked grave sent to funeral director Clerk endeavours to make himself available on day of interment and checks grave on the morning. Clerk checks grave after interment.</p> <p>Memorial safety inspection testing completed for each memorial in line with current legislation. Policy in place and adhered to for handling unsafe memorials. Those undertaking safety checks have received the relevant training.</p>	Council/Clerk	●
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BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

It's vital important that in the sudden incapacity of the Clerk that business can continue without hinderance. In addition, it's important that any new Clerk should be able to step into the role and take over pretty much instantly.

This document is a summary of the Business Continuity Plan and a folder will be made available, easily accessible, within the Clerk's Office at The Town Hall to enable anybody to quickly assume the role. The Council Handbook should also be referred to.

This document should be reviewed on a regular basis and forms part of the Risk Management / Register.

Administration

Paper files are kept for the following: -

- Minutes
- Sales & purchase invoices
- Deeds / Assets
- Annual audit paperwork
- Register of Interests
- Acceptance of Office Declarations
- Dispensations

In addition, the above paper files and all other documentation is stored electronically in a real time triple backup system.:-

- Clerks Laptop Computer (real time)
- Microsoft OneDrive cloud system for businesses (real time)
- Secure Portable Hard Drive (real time)

In the event of the Clerks immediate inability to work: -

- Laptop is always fully up to date and available in the Councils office at The Town Hall.
- Any Councillor can access the cloud directory on OneDrive using the log in provided to the Chairman.

Agenda, minutes and tracking information are administered using a computerised system. This system is available on the Councils one drive and the councillor portal accessed via the website.

Accounts

The Councils accounts is administered using a computerised system called CouncilMate written by the previous Clerk. This system can be access via the cloud system or council's laptop or dongle. A user guide is available.

The data can easily be exported into a spreadsheet so anybody could access on a spreadsheet if preferred.

In the event of the Clerks immediate inability to work: -

- CouncilMate can be accessed from the cloud or laptop computer.
- The spreadsheet can be accessed on the cloud system or laptop computer.

Banking

There are presently four signatories on the account: -

- Michelle Moss
- Jayne Bowman
- Jon Wright
- Ron Lyus

At present the following have access to online banking: -

- Michelle Moss
- Jayne Bowman

In the event of the Clerks immediate inability to work: -

- Either could access online banking.

Website Administration

The clerk has access to the website administration console.

In the event of the Clerks immediate inability to work: -

- Anybody can access the administration console using the username/password provided to the Chairman.
- Alternatively contact Lincolnshire County Council for advice. Alison Hickie, Information Officer
T: 01522 553406 alison.hickie@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Facebook

There are multiple administers of the Caistor \Town Council Facebook page.

- Michelle Moss – Clerk
- Mark Stevenson Bramley - Deputy
- Jon Wright
- Jayne Bowman
- Johnathan Cox

Email

The Councillors and staff all have .gov.uk email addresses which are administered by the town clerk.

In the event of the Clerks immediate inability to work: -

- Anybody can access the email system by using the log in and password provided to the Chairman.

Notice Boards

A Notice board key is stored in the key cabinet in the Clerk's office at The Town Hall.

Letterbox

A Letterbox key is stored in the key cabinet in the Clerk's office at The Town Hall.

Defibrillators

The Council maintain one defibrillator at the Caistor Sports & Social Club. The code to access the box has been provided to the Chairman

Monthly Safety Checks

Visual and tests are completed monthly as follows: -

Defib	Every 3 months.
Notice Boards	Secure and no damage
Play Areas	Risk assessments undertaken (within Risk Assessment folder)
Cemetery	Risk assessments undertaken (within Risk Assessment folder)
Allotments	Risk assessments undertaken (within Risk Assessment folder)

Cemetery

All cemetery paper records are stored within the Clerk's Office at The Town Hall, the historic records are stored at Lincolnshire archives. Electronic copies of the documents will be made

A computerised system is operated together with a manual backup.

There is also a Cemetery Procedure Manual within the Councillors Handbook.

Allotments

Up to date allotment records are held both electronically and manually.

¹ The aim is what a good outcome/status should look like.

² The risks are the consequential actions of the aim being incorrectly managed

³ The method used to mitigate the risk lists the steps which are being taken to ensure the risk does not happen, or if it does, to minimise the impact.

⁴ The Council is ultimately responsible for the management of risk, but activities may be delegated to individuals to manage on a day to day basis

⁵ The status allows the council to determine whether additional action is required to mitigate, minimise or transfer the risk. A risk transfer mechanism would be, for example, to ensure adequate insurance cover is in place.

⁶ Libel and slander insurance covers the councils legal liability to pay compensation for verbal or written comments made by employees or councillors whilst carrying out their duties, which a member of the public considers incorrect, damaging or results in financial loss.

⁷ Employers Liability cover is compulsory if the council has employees, and covers the council for illness or injury claims by employees sustained whilst conducting council business

⁸ Public liability cover protects the council if someone suffers an injury or damage to their property which happens on land or assets which the council is responsible for

⁹ Property insurance provided replacement or reinstatement cover for council assets including street furniture, computer equipment and other equipment owned by the council. An asset register should list assets, and should record the cost, but insurance cover should record and cover the replacement value.

¹⁰ Fidelity guarantee insurance protects the council against loss due to fraud or dishonesty of staff, councillors or volunteers.

¹¹ Business interruption insurance covers the cost of alternative premises if the council office is unavailable due to fire or flood. It also covers loss of revenue, but this is less applicable to Asterby and Goulceby Parish Council.