CAISTOR TOWN COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT

Adopted by Caistor Town Council on 14th April 2022 Last reviewed – June 2023. Next review due April 2024

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 <mark>¹</mark>	Risk <mark>²</mark>	Method used to Minimise Risk ³	Person(s) Responsible ⁴	Status⁵ ● ● ●
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.	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	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
the requirements and interests of the local population.	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. 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	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
facilities.	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 preauthorised 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
6. To ensure that payments made from Council funds and	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.	All Councillors

the use of assets, represent value for money, are adequately managed, and comply generally with the wishes of the residents.	b. Use of funds or assts not giving value for money.c. Fund raising not properly controlled or not in accordance with regulations.	Item on the Annual Town Meeting agenda for the public to suggest items for the following year's budget. Effective budget planning processes and appropriate tendering. Creation of a rolling plan for projects and maintenance expenditure. All councillors to be aware of need to check regulations before commencing fund-raising activities. Effective financial management by RFO.	Clerk Clerk/ RFO All Councillors 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 at least 50% typical annual income or as otherwise advised by the RFO / Internal auditor.	All Councillors RFO Clerk

	d. Lack of funds to meet financial commitments	The general reserve (not earmarked) not to exceed 1x typical annual income or as otherwise advised by the RFO / Internal auditor. 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. b. Late or non- submission of annual accounts. c. Year end accounts not prepared, inaccurate, or not in accordance with Council requirements. d. Inadequate audit trail from records to final accounts. e. External audit not completed accurately or within timescales f. Exercise of public rights not completed correctly 	Compliance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Attend training seminars where available. Compliance with the instructions of the External auditor. RFO to monitor progress against timetable and report to councillors at meetings. Checks by RFO. RFO to be suitably qualified or attend appropriate training Internal audit checks. As at 10c above. RFO to follow JPGA regulations when completing AGAR and follow external auditor guidelines for completion and submission dates. See 10e above	Clerk/RFO All Councillors Clerk/RFO Internal auditor All Councillors Clerk/RFO Internal auditor All Councillors Clerk/RFO Internal auditor All Councillors Clerk/RFO
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. Ensure payments are adequately monitored.	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. All Tax and NI payments are submitted in the Inland Revenue in accordance with the Real Time Information (RTI) protocols. Internal audit checks.	RFO/Clerk Personnel & Finance Committee Internal audit

12. To identify, value, and maintain all the assets of the Town Council, and ensure that asset register is	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	•
complete, accurate and properly maintained.	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	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		•
which the council is responsible for.	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.		•
Buildings: Town Hall		Equipment to be inspected before use, any issues reported to the clerk, equipment serviced regularly and at least annually		
Land: Cemetery Allotments Millfield Park South St Park	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		•
Sports ground	d. Excessive utility bills caused by water leaks, excessive heating, electrical appliances	Regular property checks by Councillors and Officers. Regular monitoring of utility bills to assess consumption levels.		•
Street Furniture: Town council owned litter bins, grit bins, signs, benches, notice	unnecessarily left switched on. Property damage caused by leaks.	Prompt attention to minor repairs and leaks.		
boards etc	e. Theft from premises due to inadequate security measures	Regular checks by the Officers and Councillors.		
Council owned equipment:				

Mowers, strimmers, tools, market equipment,	f. Criminal damage to buildings and property owned by town council	Regular checks by the Officers and Councillors. Use of CCTV where appropriate		•
	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.		•
14. To comply with legislation regarding the health and safety as appropriate for all council activities	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.	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	
15. To carry out adequate safety checks on the children's play areas operated by the Council.	a. An inadequate programme of safety inspections and maintenance (or vandalism) results in an accident and/or an award of damages.	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 identified. Ongoing maintenance. Professional specification and installation of equipment. An ongoing programme of equipment replacement as necessary.	Councillors Clerk Estates Operative	•
	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)	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.	Councillors Clerk Estates Operative	•
16. To ensure business continuity in the event of a disaster, or loss of Clerk/RFC	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. Anti-virus software in place	Clerk	•
	c. Loss of clerks office due to fire/flood or other disaster	Business interruption insurance in place ¹¹	Clerk	•

	d. Council not being able to continue its business due to unexpected or tragic loss of Clerk/RFO	All paper files and records are kept in secure locked cabinet at the Clerk/RFO's home. Council maintains at least 3 cheque signatories. Protocol in place for short term/long tern illness or sudden loss of clerk/RFO	RFO Clerk 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 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.	Clerk
	b. Unsafe memorials	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.	Council/Clerk •

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

It's vitality 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 (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 five signatories on the account: -

- Michelle Moss
- Jayne Bowman
- Jacqui Hughes
- 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
- Chairman of the Council
- Vice Chairman of the Council

Email

The Councils email is clerk.caistortc@gmail.com.

The Councils email is caistortc@outlook.com. Emails here are forwarded to clerk.caistortc@gmail.com

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 bene 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 records are stored within the Clerk's Office at The Town Hall.

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.