



# **BLEDLOW-CUM-SAUNDERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **RISK ASSESSMENT 2024/2025**

Date Adopted: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Date to be Reviewed: Annually – May Annual Meeting of the Council



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### Bledlow cum Saunderton Parish Council Financial Risk Assessment 2024/2025

This Risk Assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable Bledlow cum Saunderton Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate risks, in so far as practically possible.

As recommend in The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) The Joint Practitioners' Guide the following matrix system has been used:

|            |                   | Priority of Risk Management |                     |                        |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|            |                   | Medium (L3xI1)<br>3         | High (L3xI2)<br>6   | Very High (L3xI3)<br>9 |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Likelihood | Highly Likely (3) | Medium (L3xI1)<br>3         | High (L3xI2)<br>6   | Very High (L3xI3)<br>9 | Very High<br>High<br>Medium<br>Low<br>Very Low | – Immediate Action Required<br>– Action Required within 1 week<br>– Action Required within 1 month<br>– Action Required within 6 months<br>– No Action Required |
|            | Possible (2)      | Low (L2xI1)<br>2            | Medium (L2xI2)<br>4 | High (L2xI3)<br>6      |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|            | Unlikely (1)      | Very Low (L1xI1)<br>1       | Low (L1xI2)<br>2    | Medium (L1xI3)<br>3    |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|            |                   | Negligible (1)              | Moderate (2)        | Severe (3)             |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|            |                   | Impact                      |                     |                        |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                 |



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| Reference | Subject             | Risk (s) Identified                                                                               | Impact Score | Likelihood Score | Total Score | Management / Control of Risk                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Review / Assess / Revise                                                                                    |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RA/1      | Business Continuity | Council not being able to continue its administration due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All files and recent records (both paper and electronic) are kept in a secure location in the Parish Clerk's office.</li> <li>• The Clerk has a laptop which is backed up to Dropbox.</li> <li>• Dropbox and email files can be accessed from any computer / laptop.</li> <li>• Chairman to hold in a sealed envelope the Clerk's log in details for laptop, email, Dropbox and any other necessary passwords in case the Clerk is absent for an extended period of time.</li> <li>• Continue to maintain effective communication with the Clerk and Councillors</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/2      | Precept             | Ensure adequate precept is requested in order for the Council to carry out its statutory duties   | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council determines the precept by reviewing and approving a budget. At the meeting where the precept is agreed the clerk prepares a budget report for the Council which includes projections to year end and indicative figures, or costings obtained by the Clerk. The precept figure requested is submitted via email by the Clerk to Buckinghamshire Council.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |



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|-----------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RA/3      | Financial Records              | Inadequate records and Financial Irregularities          | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Clerk is CiLCA qualified and competent with the financial records.</li> <li>The Clerk and Council adhere to the adopted Financial Regulations which set out requirements.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing procedure is adequate.</li> <li>Review Financial Regulations after any changes issued and then re-assess Management / Control of Risk.</li> </ul> |
| RA/4      | Bank and Banking               | Inadequate checks, bank mistakes and loss of signatories | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly bank reconciliation checks are completed with the quarterly reconciliation presented at a Parish Council meeting.</li> <li>Budget reports are submitted to Parish Council Meetings.</li> <li>A Councillor carries out a check of the accounts on a quarterly basis and signs of the bank statement and reconciliations.</li> <li>Accounts are presented to full council on a quarterly basis and noted within the minutes.</li> <li>The Parish Council has four bank signatories.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul>                                                                                         |
| RA/5      | Financial Controls and Records | Inadequate Records / Financial Irregularities            | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A payment schedule is produced and presented on a monthly basis to Council for approval.</li> <li>Payments are recorded in the Parish Council minutes.</li> <li>Payments are entered by the Clerk on the online banking system with two Councillors approving the payment.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul>                                                                                         |



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| RA/6      | Insurance                           | Adequacy<br>Cost<br>Compliance<br>Fidelity Guarantee                                 | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements.</li> <li>Employers Liability, Public Liability and Fidelity Guarantee are a statutory requirement.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/7      | Annual Return                       | Submit within time limits                                                            | 1            | 1                | 1           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AGAR is completed by the Clerk, submitted to the Internal Auditor for completion and signing, approved by Full Council and sent to External Auditor within time frame.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/8      | VAT                                 | Re-claiming                                                                          | 1            | 1                | 1           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HMRC returns are submitted annually.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/9      | Salaries and associated clerk costs | Salaries paid incorrectly, wrong hours paid, wrong rate paid, wrong PAYE deductions. | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salaries are set annually by the NJC pay scales.</li> <li>Figures are incorporated in budget calculations.</li> <li>Payroll is outsourced.</li> <li>Clerk salary is checked as part of the control check by a Councillor.</li> <li>Chairman will be copied in all emails regarding adjustment of salaries with the external payroll provider.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |



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| RA/10     | Clerk                         | Loss of Clerk                                                                     | 3            | 2                | 6           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for training provided.</li> <li>• As a lone worker the Clerk maintains the opportunity of interacting with other Clerks.</li> <li>• Ensure Councillors have adequate training on staffing matters.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/11     | Parish Council meetings       | Disabled access, health and safety risks associated from hosting Council meetings | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled access is available at both Village Halls.</li> <li>• The Village Halls have adequate fire escapes.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor</li> </ul>                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/12     | Council records               | Loss through theft, fire or flood damage                                          | 1            | 2                | 2           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate filing cabinets and cupboards for storage of files.</li> <li>• Use of County Offices for storing archived documents.</li> </ul>                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/13     | Electronic records            | Loss through backup                                                               | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All files are backed up to Dropbox.</li> <li>• An online accounting package is used.</li> <li>• Secure accessible website provides historic minutes and documents.</li> </ul>                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/14     | Play and recreation equipment | Loss / damage / injury to third party (ies)                                       | 3            | 2                | 6           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Clerk completed visual inspections of the play equipment and surrounding area on a monthly basis.</li> <li>• An annual inspection is carried out by RoSPA.</li> </ul>                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |



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|-----------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RA/15     | Street furniture | Damaged bins, noticeboards, bus shelters, benches etc | 2            | 3                | 6           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillors and members of the public can report any issues or concerns to the Parish Clerk.</li> <li>• Noticeboards are inspected monthly by the Clerk.</li> <li>• A report detailing the condition of Council Street furniture will be produced.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/16     | Legal powers     | Illegal activity or payments.                         | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All activity and payments are made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and the resolutions clearly minuted.</li> <li>• Terms of reference are in place for Committees and Working Groups.</li> <li>• The Clerk is CiLCA trained.</li> <li>• When required the Clerk will seek advice from BMKALC or SLCC.</li> <li>• Council to continue to support the Clerk in training.</li> <li>• Any new staff to be given the opportunity of training.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to utilise the services of professional bodies.</li> <li>• The Clerk should continue to provide Councillors with newsletters and bulletins from NALC and BMKALC.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |



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|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RA/16     | Members / agendas and Statutory documents                                | Accuracy and legibility.<br>Non-compliance with statutory requirements (risk of the Council being legally challenged)                  | 3            | 1                | 3           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements.</li> <li>Minutes are approved and signed at the next meeting.</li> <li>Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements.</li> <li>Business conducted complies with the Council's Standing Orders.</li> <li>The Clerk who is employed as the Proper Officer of the Council, is under a Statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law.</li> <li>The Clerk shall prepare the agendas for meetings in consultation with the appropriate members of the Council.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/17     | Employer Liability<br><br>Employee Liability<br><br>Councillor Liability | Non compliance with employment law.<br><br>Causing injury (damage) to employee property.<br><br>Causing injury (damage to Councillors) | 3            | 2                | 6           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has relevant insurance in place.</li> <li>Legal advice can be sought from the County Association.</li> <li>At insurance renewal check to ensure that adequate insurance cover provided.</li> <li>At subscription renewals check and information and training can be provided.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |





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|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RA/18     | Freedom of Information | Lack of transparency                                      | 1            | 1                | 1           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has adopted a Model Publication Scheme.</li> <li>The Council has recently updated its website to ensure its secure and accessible.</li> <li>Ensure website is kept up to date.</li> </ul>                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/19     | Members Interests      | Conflict of interest<br>Register of interests             | 2            | 2                | 4           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillors have a duty to declare any potential conflict of interest at the start of the meeting.</li> <li>Awareness of regulations with reference to Standards and Register of Interests and review any changes in relation to the Standards and the Code of Conduct.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |
| RA/20     | Council reputation     | Councillors and staff bringing the Council into disrepute | 3            | 2                | 6           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillors should all review the Code of Conduct and request training if applicable.</li> <li>Clerk to investigate Code of Conduct training for all Councillors.</li> </ul>                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures are adequate but are monitored and reviewed.</li> </ul> |