

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

STATEMENT

The Council accepts its responsibility for risk management, appropriate to its scale and operations, and taking account of best practice as embodied in 'Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales, a Practitioner's Guide'.

KEY RISKS

The key risks faced by the Council are: -

- Acting illegally.
- Acting in a way that damages the Council's reputation and ability to achieve desired targets.
- Third party claims (including injury to staff).
- Reputational Damage because of mis information
- Theft or fraud by external persons, staff, associated persons (including Councillors); acting individually or in collusion.
- Default of debtors.
- Loss/reduction in value of investments and cash deposits.
- Damage/loss through fire and external events.
- Incorrect accounting and budgetary control.
- Incorrect application of financial and other related legislation e.g., VAT, HMRC
- Waste and lack of value for money
- Destruction or loss of statutory/key records.

KEY DOCUMENTS

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations.
- Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales, a Practitioner's Guide
- Procurement Policy
- Scheme of Delegation
- Business Continuity Plan
- GDPR
- Data Management & Audit Policy
- FOI Model Publication Scheme
- Health & Safety Policy
- Transparency Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Councillor Officer Protocol
- Staff Handbook
- Volunteer Policy
- Lone Worker Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

- Communications Policy
- Risk Management Policy & Risk Register
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Tree Policy
- Benches & Tables Policy

KEY PROCESSES

- The appointment of a suitably qualified internal auditor.
- Adherence to the declarations and principles of the Annual Return.
- Proper maintenance of equipment.
- Staff awareness and training.
- Taking advice from external bodies e.g., NSDC, NCC, NALC, Professional Bodies, and the Clerk as appropriate.
- Maintenance of accurate and accessible finance/payroll/budget systems and records.
- Provision of secure storage for documents

RISK PANEL

- A Risk Panel, a Working Group of the Governance and Finance Committee, will be appointed annually in May and comprise four Councillors.
- The Risk Panel will undertake a minimum of two major audits per year, normally on a pre-arranged basis in September and November, in the interests of office efficiency. Additionally, unannounced audits may be undertaken to audit certain limited areas.
- Results and recommendations will be reported in writing to the Full Council by February each year. Where the Panel considers time is of the essence, a special meeting of the Committee may be called; the Chairman of the Council will also be informed of such meeting. If an audit matter is urgent and a quorum of the Committee cannot be assembled in the time deemed appropriate, emergency action may be taken by any three of: Chairman and/or Vice Chairman of the Council, Chairman and/or Vice Chairman of the Governance and Finance Committee, and any other Councillor.
- The overall scope of the audit is given in the attached document 'Risk Assessment- Detailed Process'.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Where any Councillor or member of staff has reason to believe that the Council faces any risk per the contents of this policy, it is their duty to report such concern to both the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Governance & Finance Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- Any concerns of risk and probity expressed to any Councillor or member of staff by the public, or any other source must similarly be passed on to both the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Governance and Finance Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- All concerns are to be treated with due gravitas and without recrimination towards the person reporting the concern.

REVIEW

Risk assessment policy and procedures will be reviewed every two years by the August meeting of the Governance and Finance Committee, with the recommendations to the September meeting of the full Council, or more frequently as circumstances require.

