

West Coker Parish Council Risk Assessment Policy

1. Introduction

The West Coker Parish Council (WCPC) is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all members of the community, staff, and visitors. This policy outlines the approach taken by WCPC to manage and mitigate risks across its operations.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this Risk Assessment Policy are to:

- Identify potential risks associated with the Council's activities and responsibilities.
- Evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of these risks.
- Implement measures to manage and mitigate identified risks.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and best practices.
- Promote a culture of risk awareness and proactive management.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by WCPC, including but not limited to:

- Parish council meetings and events.
- Management of council-owned or managed facilities and assets.
- Interactions with the public and external organizations.
- Employment and volunteer activities.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Parish Council:

- Ensure the implementation of this policy.
- Review and approve risk assessments and mitigation measures.
- Allocate resources for risk management activities.

4.2 Parish Clerk:

- Lead the risk assessment process.
- Maintain records of all risk assessments and associated actions.
- Report to the Parish Council on risk management issues.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of and comply with the policy.

4.3 Staff and Volunteers:

- Participate in risk assessments as required.
- Follow risk management procedures and report any identified risks.
- Undertake training as necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.

5. Risk Assessment Process

5.1 Identification of Risks:

- Review all activities, operations, and services to identify potential hazards.
- Consult with stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, and community members, to identify risks.

5.2 Evaluation of Risks:

- Assess the likelihood of each identified risk occurring (e.g., unlikely, possible, likely).
- Assess the potential impact of each identified risk (e.g., minor, moderate, major).
- Use a risk matrix to categorize risks based on their likelihood and impact.

5.3 Mitigation Measures:

- Develop and implement actions to manage and mitigate identified risks.
- Prioritize risks and focus resources on those with the highest potential impact.

5.4 Monitoring and Review:

- Regularly review and update risk assessments to reflect changes in activities or operations.
- Monitor the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures and adjust as necessary.
- Conduct an annual review of the risk assessment process and report findings to the Parish Council.

6. Specific Risk Areas

6.1 Health and Safety:

- Conduct regular health and safety audits.
- Ensure compliance with health and safety regulations.
- Provide training for staff and volunteers on health and safety practices.

6.2 Financial Management:

- Implement internal controls to safeguard council finances.
- Conduct regular financial audits and reviews.
- Ensure transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

6.3 Environmental Risks:

- Assess and mitigate environmental impacts of council activities.
- Promote sustainable practices within council operations.

6.4 Operational Risks:

- Ensure continuity of essential services.
- Develop contingency plans for emergencies and disruptions.

7. Training and Communication

- Provide training for staff and volunteers on risk management practices.
- Communicate this policy and related procedures to all relevant parties.
- Encourage an open culture where risks can be discussed and addressed promptly.

8. Documentation and Record-Keeping

- Maintain comprehensive records of all risk assessments, mitigation measures, and reviews.
- Ensure documentation is accessible and up-to-date.

9. Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Parish Council to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.
- Updates and amendments will be made as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, best practices, or council activities.

10. Approval and Implementation

This Risk Assessment Policy was approved by the West Coker Parish Council on 6th June 2024. It is effective from this date and will be reviewed annually or as required.

By ensuring a structured and proactive approach to risk management, the West Coker Parish Council aims to protect its community, assets, and operations, fostering a safe and resilient environment for all.

Signatories:

Chair, West Coker Parish Council

Parish Clerk, West Coker Parish Council

Date