



NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL and BURIAL AUTHORITY

RISK ASSESSMENT

(Adopted on 26th September 2016; to be reviewed annually)

Reviewed on 22nd January 2018, 29th February 2019, 10th February 2020, 14th March 2022, 27th February 2023 & 26th February 2024

Newent Town Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employees, assets, liabilities and community against potential losses.

The Town Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document has been produced to enable Newent Town Council to assess the risks that it faces and to implement adequate steps to minimise them.

SUBJECT	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	LEVEL H/M/L	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE
FINANCE				
Budget & Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its statutory duties	L	<p>The Council receives monthly budget reports. A DRAFT budget is presented to Full Council for review and consideration. The report includes actual and projected position to the end of the year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk.</p> <p>The Precept is derived directly from this information and is considered and approved by Full Council and the request submitted to the Forest of Dean District Council within the specified deadline.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
Financial controls and records	Inadequate records	L	<p>The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements and is reviewed on an annual basis. Rialtas financial software is used to prepare accounts and Council subscribes to the support services. Invoices are checked and initialled by staff before being presented to Council. And the payment list is signed. All payments are approved at Full Council and minuted for transparency. Cheques require two Councillor signatures and stubs and invoices are initialled by signatories. BACS payments are authorised by two signatories. Accounts are internally checked by at least one Councillor on a quarterly basis. Annual internal and external audits.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
Banking	Inadequate checks	L	<p>The Council has Financial Regulations which set out banking requirements. Money is regularly paid into bank.</p> <p>Accounts are reconciled on a monthly basis and recorded. Earmarked reserves are in a separate account.</p>	Existing procedures adequate

Receipt and payment of grants	<p>Monies ringfenced and accurately managed</p> <p>Power to pay and authorisation of Council to pay</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>The Town Council does not presently receive any regular grants. Any transactions from a grant received are itemised separately.</p> <p>All grant requests are made following the Grant Awarding Policy and a specific application form.</p> <p>All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, it is minuted and listed accordingly under the S137 expenditure heading.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
Salaries and associated costs	<p>Salary paid incorrectly</p> <p>Unpaid Tax and Pension payments</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>Financial controls in place to pay staff salaries agreed in line with NALC pay scales.</p> <p>Makinson Payroll Services, an external company, is used for payroll services and the Council subscribes to support services.</p> <p>BACS payments for PAYE & Pensions made monthly.</p> <p>Internal check carried out by 2 Councillors on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Annual internal and external audits.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
VAT	Reclaiming	L	<p>VAT claims are completed electronically on HMRC website and acknowledgement printed and kept in office.</p> <p>Internally reviewed by at least 1 Councillor on quarterly basis.</p> <p>Rialtas financial software produces VAT reports.</p> <p>Financial Regulations set out the requirements.</p> <p>Annual internal and external audits.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
Employees	Fraud by staff	L	<p>Insurance in place.</p> <p>Receipts issued for income.</p> <p>Cash is kept in a safe.</p> <p>All payments require two Councillor signatures.</p> <p>Petty cash float of up to £200, only accessible by Town Clerk and internal check completed quarterly.</p>	Existing procedures adequate

Best value accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L L	Town Council practice is to seek, if possible, three quotations for any substantial work undertaken. For major work, competitive tenders would be sought in line with the rules for contracts in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. If problems encountered with contract, the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	Existing procedures adequate
Loans	High interest rates and non recognised lenders	L	Full Council to approve any loans. Loans to be taken out via PWLB and two signatures required.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Return	Not submitted within time limits	L	Annual return completed and submitted to Internal Auditor for final completion and signing. Placed on Full Council agenda for completing and signing by the Council and then checked and sent to External Auditor within time frame. Council could ask for an extension to the deadline.	Existing procedure adequate
Election	Mid-term election costs	M	Some monies are earmarked if a mid-term election is called. Measures cannot be adopted to minimise risk of a contested election.	Ensure monies are earmarked for elections costs when setting budget

ADMINISTRATION & LIABILITY				
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments with the powers of the Town Council to be resolved at Full Council. The Town Council has adopted the General Power of Competence. The council has moved to a committee based structure in 2022/23 and those committees have power of expenditure, within their remit Advice to be sought when required.	Existing procedure adequate
Minutes/ Agendas/ Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next meetings. Agendas displayed according to legal requirements. Full Council meetings recorded and managed in accordance with policy. Business conducted at meetings should be managed by the Chair.	Existing procedures adequate
	Non compliances with statutory requirements	L		Members adhere to Code of Conduct and Member/Officers Relations Policy and undertake adequate training.
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	M	Insurance in place. Open spaces checked regularly. Trees investigated when damage reported. Tree survey carried out in 2022 and a maintenance programme in place. Risk assessments carried out on individual events e.g. Christmas Lights. All third party users of Council facilities have to complete a booking form and provide Public Liability insurance and a risk assessment. Health and safety services provided by Peninsula.	Existing procedures adequate

Legal liability	Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership (especially cemetery and playgrounds)	H	Insurance in place and new equipment added ad hoc. Weekly playground inspections undertaken and written records kept. Annual RoSPA inspection. Adequate Cemetery Rules in place. Yearly memorial inspections carried out. Health and safety services provided by Peninsula.	Existing procedures adequate
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with Employment Law	L	Membership of various national and regional bodies including South West Provincial Employers. Town Clerk is a member of SLCC and the Council is a member of GAPTC. Policies in place. Employer's Liability insurance in place. Health and safety services provided by Peninsula.	Existing procedures adequate
Employer Liability	Safety of staff and visitors	M/H	Employees are provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles. Staff training undertaken as required and appraisals in place. Lone work policy in place. Health and safety services provided by Peninsula. Risk assessments carried out. Radios issued to staff with panic button for lone working. Adequate office security. Limited security in building.	Existing procedures adequate
Freedom of Information	Policy provision	L	The Council has a Model Publication Scheme and Freedom of Information Policy in place. The Town Council can request a fee for substantial requests.	Monitor and report any impacts made under FOI
Data Protection	Mis-use of information	L	Town Council is registered with the Information Commissioner, expires 29 th April 2023 Policies in place.	Ensure annual renewal of registration

Council records - Paper	Loss through theft, fire, damage	L/M	<p>Historical minutes have been deposited at Gloucestershire Achieves (up to 2005). Burial records are stored in a fire proof safe and are in the process of being recorded electronically. All other records are stored in the Council office.</p> <p>Filing system is currently being updated. A fireproof box is kept at the Mayor's house and contains a set of all building keys. Land and buildings registered with Land Registry.</p>	Damage or theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate
Council records - electronic	Loss through theft, fire, damage, corruption	L/M	<p>The Town Council's electronic records are stored on external server. IT monthly plan is in place to check server and provide support services. Off-site daily back-up. Anti-virus protection annually renewed and installed by IT support services. A fireproof box is kept at the Mayor's house and contains passwords and a memory stick, which is backed up on a regular basis.</p>	Existing procedures adequate
Members Interests	Registers of Interests	M	<p>Councillors have a legal duty to complete a form for the Register of Members Interests and keep it up to date within 28 days of any changes and to withdraw from a meeting in the event of a pecuniary interest. Declaration of Interests is an agenda item for all meetings.</p>	<p>Existing procedures adequate</p> <p>Members have a personal responsibility to declare interests and update their register entries</p>

ASSETS				
Asset register	Asset register incomplete	L	An asset register is updated as required by the Town Clerk.	Existing procedures adequate
Buildings	Loss or damage	M	Buildings insured. Value increased annually by RPI. Regular checks by staff and reports from public investigated. Alarm system installed at The Lodge, which is currently boarded up. CCTV at the Lake and Recreation Ground. Annual Fire Safety and PAT Testing.	Existing procedure adequate
Buildings	Maintenance of buildings etc	M	Buildings currently maintained on an ad hoc basis. An estate management plan is in place.	Existing procedures adequate
Other assets e.g. litter bins, bus shelters	Loss or damage	L	Bins regularly emptied and checked. Replacement programme in place. Insurance in place.	Existing procedures adequate
Vehicles	Unable to use due to fire, theft, accident. Third party liability	L/M L/M	Two vehicles are leased. Comprehensive vehicle insurance in place. GAP insurance in place to cover payment if vehicle is written-off. Driver training undertaken on all new vehicles. Vehicle inspected in morning before vehicle driven. One vehicle stored in secure car park; one vehicle taken to staff residence.	Existing procedures adequate