

Buckden Parish Council

Risk Management

April 2024 to March 2025



Risk Rating 1-11 Low 12-15 Medium 16-25 High						
Risk no	Description (The risk is that...)	Impact (The impact on the authority would be)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Impact score (1-5)	Risk rating (H,M,L)	Response (What actions have been taken)
Finance and Budget Risks managed by Finance Group (Financial Risks – F)						
F1	Residents are concerned about increase in Parish Council Precept for 2023/24	Reputational damage, residents concerned about rationale for change of finances	1	3	L	Rationale for rise in Precept put in Roundabout Chair, Chair of Finance Advisory Group (FAG) or Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to respond to residents' concerns.
F2	Availability of grants or donations by BPC availability widely known	There may be very high demand within local organisations leading to uncertainty in budget setting	3	3	L	Operational arrangements for 2024-25 and future years may need to be flexible to accommodate unexpected cost pressures on activities and financial commitments. Information about grants to be highlighted in Roundabout and on website
F3	Council fails to ensure Finance Regulations are current and updated	PC not legally compliant	1	4	L	PC member of NALC and CAPALC so national revisions are advised. Finance regulations regularly reviewed. Chair of Finance group, Clerk as RFO and Chairs on FAG to agree any necessary revisions at April FAG, for May Council meeting
F4	Failure to ensure the adequacy of the Annual Precept and sound budgeting arrangements to provide for the necessary expenditure	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	5	L	Annual budget prepared by RFO and Finance Advisory Group and debated and approved in Council as the basis for the Precept. Statements of Income and Expenditure prepared at the end of each quarter and provided to the Council. Budget setting involves all Committees and Advisory Group chairs; contingency funds put in place. Finance Advisory Group meets regularly and monitors expenditure and forecast. Further training for Councillors as required.

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F5	Council sued or surcharged because of improper or illegal use funds and/or failing to keep financial records in accordance with statutory requirements	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	5	L	All expenditure itemised for review by Councillors in PC meeting and through bank account reconciliation and monitored by Clerk. Clerk/RFO is qualified & has updated training by CAPALC and Edge IT and refers to them for guidance as necessary. Expenditure permitted by S137 of LGA1972 is listed separately Investment Strategy to be reviewed annually in April by FAG.
F6	Loss of Council funds though theft or dishonesty	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	5	L	Financial systems controlled under Financial Regulations that are reviewed annually by Council and administered by Clerk as RFO. Quarterly reconciliation against bank statements and PFS lists by Councillor independent of RFO and Finance AG Fidelity guarantee - assessed annually. Reviewed regularly by RFO to ensure it is in line with increased income. increased figure submitted .
F7	Extra expenditure incurred through unnecessary deterioration due to neglect of physical assets owned by council	Reputational damage Injuries to residents	1	5	L	Playground equipment to have annual safety inspection by specialists with a report Regular and responsible maintenance of assets to be carried out whenever inspection reveals it is necessary Street lighting maintenance regularly carried out by qualified contractors Respond promptly to any resident sightings of damage. Village Maintenance AG to review annually all assets, their location and their ongoing maintenance and safety.

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F8	Extra expenditure incurred through delegation of accountability for services previously funded by other local authorities	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	5	3	M	RFO to raise such issues with Council Chairman and Finance AG Chairman within 4 weeks of the un-anticipated expenditure being identified. Ensure Parish Council General Reserves are maintained at recommended levels in relation to Precept. Ensure appropriate contingency funds in Earmarked Reserves to protect priority service delivery Council to be advised of externally-driven cost pressures through Finance Reports. Ensure effective communication to residents in relation to accountability and any changes e.g. between Councils. Maintain close working relationships with District and County Councillors to influence decisions.
F9	Budget exceeded by failure to identify other unexpected cost pressures	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	3	3	L	Ensure mechanisms in place to report unplanned expenditure in-year and document risk assessments when significant cost pressures are identified. Prioritise important and urgent expenditure for consideration by Council within overall budget
F10	Budget pressure through inadequate insurance cover	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	4	L	Ensure Asset Register updated, and level of insurance cover reviewed whenever Council makes a purchase. Review Council Assets Register yearly. Maintain accurate information on type, numbers and locations of all BPC assets.
F11	Critical omissions from Financial Risk Management Procedures	Reputational damage and inability to	1	4	L	RFO and Chair of Finance group to review annually, as per BPC annual plan. Wages payments reviewed monthly by Chair, Vice

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		discharge PC responsibilities				Chair and Finance lead. Review of spending limits in Finance Regulations Other PFS reviewed monthly by councillors prior to review and authorisation at full Council meeting Sufficient Councillors to be available to efficiently manage on-line bank payments in a timely manner. Number of Councillors who can approve payments increased in 2023
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F12	Failure to account in budget plan for nationally-decided staff pay uplifts	Payments to staff would exceed budget	4	3	M	All BPC employees are on LGA national pay scales RFO to seek advice in October each year, as part of budget-setting, from payroll providers and CAPALC on any known changes. Review after November Chancellor's budget/statement the effect, if any, of changes e.g. in national minimum/living wage. Pay negotiations may be settled very late in the year, affecting both current and following year costs; estimated impact used in budget setting to try to mitigate this external cost pressure.
F13	Failure to spend CIL payments from HDC in accordance with legislative requirements and within the powers of BPC	Principal Authority requires BPC to return CIL funds spent in contravention of statutory requirements	3	5	M	RFO to ensure that Councillors are made aware of national rules and requirements for spending and reporting on use of CIL. CIL expenditure priorities to be agreed by full Council in line with NP and CAP and after consultation with Parish residents Deliverability of identified priorities to be assessed using agreed matrix including need for cooperation with, and potential CIL funds transfer to, an authority/Council with appropriate 'powers' if CIL priorities cannot be delivered directly by BPC

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Legal risks managed by Compliance Advisory Group and Village Maintenance AG (Legal risks L)						
L1	Council fails to ensure Standing Orders are current and updated	PC not legally compliant	3	4	M	Standing Orders revised fully in 2018 and delegated authority given to Clerk to incorporate updates. Latest review date: 12 December 2023 Minute No 12-156/1 PC member of NALC and CAPALC so national revisions are advised. Clerk and Compliance AG Chair to note and implement any changes required through revision of Regulations. New Auditor appointed for 2023 -24.
L2	Failure to meet requirements under: - Employment Law - HMRC tax/NI regulations - VAT regulations	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	All employees to have written contracts of employment; contracts reviewed and updated July 2021. RFO and Village Maintenance AG monitor contracts and need for updating Statutory requirements for employer's NI and pension contributions to be monitored and met. IR return made annually. Check receipt of P60s annually in May. VAT return made quarterly if required (April, July, Oct, Jan). Internal and External audit of accounts to be carried out annually.

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L3	Failure to provide the required proper, timely and accurate reporting of Council business in the Minutes of the meetings	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	1	4	L	Council minutes to be prepared by Clerk and, after being checked for correctness and approved by Councillors at a subsequent ordinary meeting. They are signed by the Chairman and published on website within one month, with all associated non-confidential papers and Agenda attached.
L4	Failure to ensure proper document provision and control including loss of documents	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	2	4	L	Signed minutes of meetings to be continuously page numbered and retained within the parish by the Clerk. Only current minute book to be retained in the Office as advised by CAPALC. Cloud back-up used for all current documentation from July 2019 Meeting agendas and minutes are added to PC website and back-up maintained by website provider. Archives stored in County Records Office, taking account of GDPR requirements and 'right to erasure' under data protection legislation. Previous minutes to be archived by Clerk after year-end; each Council year to be archived in County Archives separately in May each year. Historic document storage to be investigated and rationalised during 2024-25

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L5	Failure to meet the requirements of best practice for a Parish Council to ensure the confidence and trust of the electorate	Inability to improve and develop using the framework of the Local Council Award Scheme Reputational Damage	3	3	L	Parish Council accounts subject to both internal and external annual audit A minimum of 10 ordinary meetings are held each year. Agenda to be published on notice boards and website. Minutes available on website Monthly news page published in the Parish magazine, delivered to every house in the village and on line and put on website. Chairman to present a report of the Council's activities to the Annual Parish Meeting (Assembly) Elections held when required under the direction of the HDC Returning Officer. If elections are not required, the documented process for co-opting to be complied with. If required consult with CAPALC and HDC and take specialist and/or legal advice in case of concerns raised by residents.
L6	Failure to meet the laid-down timetable when responding to Consultations	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	1	5	L	Clerk to ensure that the Council does not miss deadlines.
L7	Failure to respond to Electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	1	3	L	Clerk ensures that all Minutes/Agendas and any required financial audit papers are available on website with the exclusion of personal data. Clerk to provide facility for Electors to inspect all of the Council's Public documents by request Clerk to advertise statutory period of inspection of accounts.

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L8	Failure to meet the requirements of the Principal Authority's Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles	Inability to improve and develop using the framework of the Local Council Award Scheme Reputational Damage	3	2	L	Register of Councillors Interests, gifts and hospitality to be kept by Clerk and copied to HDC Monitoring Officer Hunts DC Code of Conduct formally adopted, and observation of practice recorded at each meeting. Clerk to remind all councillors of all Declaration of Pecuniary Interest obligations. All new Councillors to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office which requires Councillors to undertake to observe the Code of Conduct and complete Register of 'Members Interests. Code of Conduct to be reviewed yearly and all councillors to check their returns. Councillors can choose not to include their addresses this can be looked at through annual update Dispensation policy and process in place. All Councillors to be advised that training on Code of Conduct is essential , with updating no less often than when Code is changed. This training to be added to Councillor' records by Clerk.

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L9	Failure to effectively manage Council employees resulting in poor productivity or potential tribunal challenge.	Council funds not used effectively. PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	On going dialogue with staff. Effective performance management. Maintaining up to date understanding of employment legislation.
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Data Risks managed by Communications Advisory Group (Data Risks – D)						
D1	PC does not put in place policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with the Data Protection legislation and UK GDPR	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	PC approved recommended GDPR documents. June 2020 Minute number (20-21) 06-11, CAPALC Advice sought as required Councillors to do GDPR training
D2	The PC does not fully understand cyber risks and does not put in place sufficient safeguards	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Cyber Security Policy adopted in October 2022 Minute No 10-101/1. Cyber risks insurance and RRADAR support through insurers
D3	Systems for approval of bank payments are secure and data compliant	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	2	5	L	Copies of PINS and Passwords to be held in hard copy by Chairman. Use of new Nat West Bank account to be made only when two Councillors who are signatories and the Clerk present Sealed details – tamper evident.

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Reputational Risks managed by Full Council, Communications AG and Compliance AG (Reputational Risks – R)						
R1	Relationships with local organisations are damaged through lack of or inaccurate communication	Reputational damage	2	4	L	All key organisations are listed, and lead contacts identified. Relevant communication agreed Communication is standing agenda item on BPC Agenda Formal meetings with organisations held if required
R2	Residents are concerned that they are not being fully kept informed	Reputational damage	2	4	L	Respond in a timely and considered way to all communications Keep the website updated Facebook and Instagram accounts used to keep residents informed Review the processes through the Communications Advisory Group
R3	Use of social media and digital communication to share PC business leads to information being shared inappropriately	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Clear guidelines given to Councillors on posting and responding to digital communication in line with the Code of Conduct. Media Communications policy approved on 11 Feb 2020 and will be reviewed as part of the annual cycle of policy reviews. Expectation that all Councillors will attend training
R4	The criteria and process for allocation of CIL money is not transparent, leading to residents' loss of trust and confidence in Parish Council	Reputational damage	2	5	L	Full Council agree process and criteria and involve residents in further identifying and prioritising CIL projects. Criteria for allocation of CIL projects and Deliverability Grid agreed by BPC; in place from September 2020. Consultation undertaken 2021 Timed & Costed Operational Plan to include CIL-funded items Silver Street outline application approved by Hunts District Council. Review effect on CIL and also of S106 as required

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R5	Residents are concerned about BPC response to local events	Reputational damage	3	5	M	Councillors maintain awareness of resident's concerns and put in place emergency procedures. (See Business Continuity risks) Raise issues with CCC Councillors and HDC Parish Council Flood group established. Flood resilience equipment purchased and systems for accessing it agreed
Health and Safety and Safeguarding Risks managed by Clerk, Village Maintenance AG (Health and Safety Risks – HS&S)						
HS&S 1	Liability for injury or disease to Council employee(s) arising from their employment	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Risk assessments in place for hazardous activities – link to tools that employees are permitted to use. Ensure Employer's Liability Insurance cover of £10,000,000 is maintained Recorded training for job role. Risk Assessments for employees' hazardous activities to be in place. Note: Contractors required to provide RAMS as part of contract Formal accident book in place and entries monitored at least quarterly by Staffing AG Include in Annual Plan Follow national guidance on working practices when available Staff sign annually to say they have read and agree to comply with H&S policies and RAMS and inform line manager of need for any changes e.g. in response to change of circumstances of work. Records of this to be kept in personnel files

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HS&S 2	Failure to ensure all employees meet their responsibilities for Health and Safety and contractors have qualifications required for effective and sufficient public liability insurance cover and safety arrangements	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Employees advised of their own responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act for the safety of themselves, their colleagues and the public, including safe working practices and use of Personal Protective Equipment. BPC adopted Lone Working Policy. Clerk requires all contractors to show their Public Liability insurance and provide Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) before contracts for work are agreed If there is a lack of compliance in any aspect of work Clerk to write to contractor and ensure corrective action is taken. In case of serious breach, contact Statutory Authority.
HS&S 3	Legal liability arising from damage to third party property or death/injury to individuals as a consequence of the council's asset ownership or provision of amenities including BPC-managed MVAS units	Financial loss Injury to residents	3	5	M	Public liability indemnity of £10,000,000 to be maintained including for equipment held/operated under an agreement e.g. with CCC. Annual safety inspection of playground equipment by a member of Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) and any recommendations implemented. Regular and responsible maintenance of assets to be carried out. Playground equipment visually inspected weekly, and recorded Tree Survey outsourced to HDC. All details contained in Tree Strategy approved by Council September 2020 amended on 9 Feb 21 Minute 02-175 – to reflect guidance from HDC Arboricultural Officer. Cemetery Stability Testing to be carried out and recorded.
H&S	Continued					

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3						Pavement and road condition survey carried out regularly problems reported to accountable organisation (CCC). Footpath condition survey carried out annually and problems reported to accountable organisation (CCC).
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HS&S 4	Damage to physical assets owned by the Council including but not limited to: - Street furniture - Playground equipment - MVAS UNITS - Defibrillator	Financial loss Injury to residents	3	5	M	Ensure all assets are covered by insurance for damage Lighting Earmarked Reserve available to meet cost of streetlight replacement in the event of unrecoverable replacement cost Defibrillators at Village Hall and The Vine checked weekly and records maintained; locations logged with Ambulance Service Street furniture asset problems reported to Clerk Playground equipment visually inspected to agreed schedule Moving asset records to Parish online system and copy to BPC financial records, backed up by the external contractors Contract in place for management of MVAS units including maintenance and monitoring of condition e.g. batteries and messaging and data downloads for onward sharing with Police. MVAS unit on Perry Road that we are unable to gather data from (provided by CCC) – seek to resolve the issue of data downloading, if needed to return the Unit to CCC.
HS&S 5	Safeguarding issues not dealt with appropriately	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Safeguarding Policy in place Safeguarding training undertaken by Clerk and lead Councillors Mentoring and further support for Clerk as Designated Safeguarding Lead

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						Awareness of National crime agency/CEOP online publications re on-line risks to young people and vulnerable adults Policy is in list of annually-signed documents
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H&S 6	Display Screen equipment (DSE) not configured in a manner suitable for individual staff	Back injury, RSI or impact on visual acuity of staff	3	5	M	DSE evaluation undertaken by all employees using such equipment. Actions required noted and acted on promptly to manage any identified risks DSE to be repeated following any changes to home or BPC office arrangements for employees.
Business Continuity Risks managed by Clerk, Chair, Chair of CAG and Village Maintenance AG (Business Continuity Risks – BC)						
BC 1	Disruptive incidents or situations occur Residents seek guidance from PC without receiving help they want or need	Normal council business unable to continue and/or council response not seen to be effective Reputational damage Not legally complaint Financial loss	3	4	M	The PC now has experience of responding to incidents such as COVID and Flooding. There are systems in place for remote working and attendance of meetings through Zoom and Owl. There are systems and equipment in place for flooding Follow national and local guidance Respond appropriately and constructively to residents' concerns Communications AG to monitor complaints & compliments from residents, identify trends and propose improvements to protect and support employees as well as managing BPC reputation. Parish Flood group established
BC2	Failure or loss of access to	Normal council business unable to continue	3	4	M	Data held in the Cloud, with appropriate backup, not on hard drives

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	Clerk and Assistant Clerk laptops and 'tablets' to undertake tasks	and/or council response not seen to be effective Reputational damage Not legally complaint Financial loss				Option to share access to laptops as necessary Emails hosted separately and backed up by provider
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Risk Summary

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Reason for update
Version 1	16 Apr 2019	Clerk and Compliance AG	Reviewed
Version 2	10 Mar 20 (Minute (2019-20)269	Clerk and Compliance AG	Approved
Version 3	April 2020	Cllrs SA and CU	To update in particular in response to COVID19
Version 4	2 Sep 2020	Clerk and Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	Reviewed and revised to reflect progress and new issues
Version 5	March 2021 Review Minute 04-217	Clerk and Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	To update to reflect changing risk scores as new mitigation measures have been implemented, along with impact of changes to data protection following exit from EU
Version 5.1	September 2021 Review Minute 09-082	Clerk & Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	To update and change information on additional mitigation measures

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Version 5.2	March 2022 after Compliance AG review January 2022	Clerk & Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	Revised for Council year 2022-23
Version 6	February/March 2023	Clerk & Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	Revised for Council Year 2023-24 Identified new risks added and mitigation for all risks reviewed and updated
Version 7	February/March 2024	Clerk Councillors CU AHJ	Revised for Council Year 2024-25 Identified new risks added and mitigation for all risks reviewed and updated