

Buckden Parish Council

Risk Management

April 2025 to March 2026



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 2024/25	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 widely known creating significant demand	There may be very high demand within local organisations leading to uncertainty in budget setting	3	3	L	Availability of Grants and Donations needs to be effectively managed within available budget. Limits of amounts available will be considered each year. Expenditure permitted by S137 of LGA1972 is calculated annually and records kept separately.
F3	Council fails to ensure Finance Regulations are current and updated	BPC not legally compliant	1	4	L	BPC is a member of NALC and CAPALC so national revisions are advised. Finance regulations regularly reviewed. Chair of Finance group and Clerk as RFO to make any necessary revisions presentation to full Council.
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 BPC 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. 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 BPC responsibilities	1	5	L	All expenditure is itemised for review by Councillors at full Council. Also checked through bank account reconciliation and monitoring by Clerk. Clerk/RFO is qualified & has updated training by CAPALC and Edge IT and refers to them for guidance as necessary. Investment Strategy reviewed regularly.
F6	Loss of Council funds through theft or dishonesty	Reputational damage and inability to discharge BPC 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 annually.
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. Supported by weekly inspection by handymen. 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 Committee 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. Specifically in 2025-26 the implications resulting from Local Government reorganisation	Reputational damage and inability to discharge BPC responsibilities	5	4	H	RFO to raise such issues with Council Chairman and Chair of FAG within 4 weeks of un-anticipated expenditure being identified. Ensure Parish Council General Reserves are maintained at recommended levels in relation to Precept and appropriate contingency funds in Earmarked Reserves to protect priority service delivery. Council to be advised of externally driven cost pressures through Finance Reports. Maintain regular communication with District and County Councillors to understand progress and potential issues as plans progress. Ensure effective communication to residents in relation to accountability and any changes e.g. between Councils.
F9	Budget exceeded by failure to identify other unexpected cost pressures	Reputational damage and inability to discharge BPC responsibilities	5	3	M	Ensure mechanisms in place to report unplanned expenditure in-year and document risk assessments when significant cost pressures are identified.
F10	Budget pressure through inadequate insurance cover	Reputational damage and inability to discharge BPC responsibilities	1	4	L	Ensure Asset Register updated, and level of insurance cover reviewed whenever Council makes a purchase. Review Council Assets Register annually. 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 discharge BPC responsibilities	1	4	L	RFO and Chair of Finance group to review annually, Wages payments reviewed monthly by Chair, Vice Chair and Finance lead. Review of spending limits in Finance Regulations. Sufficient Councillors to be available to efficiently manage on-line bank payments in a timely manner.

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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 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 views of Parish residents Ensure Councillors are aware of time limit to spend CIL. RFO to give "spend by dates" at April FAG

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Legal risks managed by Compliance Advisory Group and Village Maintenance Committee (Legal risks L)						
L1	Council fails to ensure Standing Orders are current and updated	BPC not legally compliant	3	4	M	Standing Orders revised fully in 2018 and delegated authority given to Clerk to incorporate updates. Reviewed regularly. BPC 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.
L2	Failure to meet requirements under: - Employment Law - HMRC tax/NI regulations - VAT regulations	BPC is non-compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Re-establish Staffing AG. All employees to have written contracts of employment. Contract with Worknest will support this. RFO and re-established Staffing AG to monitor contracts and update to ensure Statutory requirements for employer's NI and pension contributions met. IR return made annually by BPC payroll provider. Records to be audited annually.
L3	Failure to provide the required proper, timely and accurate reporting of Council business in the Minutes of the meetings	BPC is non-compliant Reputational damage	1	4	L	Council minutes to be prepared by Clerk and, 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

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L4	Failure to ensure proper document provision and control including loss of documents	BPC 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 BPC website and back-up maintained by website provider. Archives stored in County Records Office. Previous minutes to be archived by Clerk after year-end; each Council year to be archived in County Archives separately in May each year.
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 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, NALC and HDC and take specialist and/or legal advice in case of concerns raised by residents.

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L7	Failure to respond to Electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection	BPC 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.
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, Clerk to remind all councillors of all Declaration of Pecuniary Interest obligations. All new Councillors to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office (DPI) which requires Councillors to undertake to observe the Code of Conduct and complete Register of 'Members Interests. DPI and Code of Conduct to be reviewed annually and all councillors to check their returns. Councillors can choose not to include their addresses. Dispensation policy and process in place. All Councillors to be advised that training on Code of Conduct is essential , 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. BPC 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. Contract with Worknest supports this.

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Data Risks managed by Communications Advisory Group (Data Risks – D)						
D1	BPC does not put in place policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with the Data Protection legislation and UK GDPR	BPC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	BPC approved recommended GDPR documents. June 2020 Minute number (20-21) 06-11, CAPALC Advice sought as required Review requirement for Councillors to do GDPR training in 2025.26 Use of personal emails for BPC business must be avoided.
D2	The BPC does not fully understand cyber risks and does not put in place sufficient safeguards	BPC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Cyber Security Policy adopted in October 2022 Minute No 10-101/, to be reviewed. Cyber risks insurance in place, review the need for further training and RRADAR support through insurers
D3	Systems for approval of bank payments are secure and data compliant	BPC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	2	5	L	Currently copies of PINS and Passwords to be held in hard copy by Chairman, to be reviewed 2025-26. Sealed details – tamper evident. Use of new Nat West Bank account to be made only when two Councillors who are signatories and the Clerk present Review the process for use of Natwest and Cambs Building Society

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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	Review list of all organisations and lead contacts . Communication is standing agenda item on BPC Agenda Formal meetings with organisations held if required and reported to the council.
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 used to keep residents informed Review the processes through the Communications AG
R3	Use of social media and digital communication to share BPC business leads to information being shared inappropriately	BPC 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.
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	Timed & Costed Operational Plan to include CIL-funded items
R5	Residents are concerned about BPC response to local events	Reputational damage	3	5	M	Councillors maintain awareness of resident's concerns and respond as appropriate. Raise issues with CCC Councillors and HDC and Anglian Water.

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Health and Safety and Safeguarding Risks managed by Clerk, Village Maintenance Committee (Health and Safety Risks – HS&S)						
HS&S 1	Liability for injury or disease to Councillors, volunteers or Council employee(s) arising from their employment	BPC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Council employees Risk assessments in place for hazardous activities – link to tools that employees are permitted to use. Employer's Liability Insurance cover of £10,000,000 is maintained Recorded training for job role. Risk Assessments for employees' hazardous activities in place. Note: Contractors required to provide RAMS as part of contract Formal accident book in place and entries monitored annually Records of this to be kept in personnel files Councillors and volunteers Ensure with activities such as repair café, speed watch or footpath clearing that participants adhere to requirements outlined
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	BPC 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.

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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	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) recommendations implemented. Regular maintenance of assets to be carried out. Playground equipment visually inspected weekly, and recorded. Tree Survey outsourced to HDC. Cemetery Stability Testing to be carried out and recorded. Pavement and road condition survey carried out regularly problems reported to CCC. Footpath condition survey carried out annually and problems reported to CCC)
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 Defibrillators 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.

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HS&S 5	Safeguarding issues not dealt with appropriately	BPC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Safeguarding Policy in place Safeguarding training undertaken by Clerk, assistant Clerk and lead Councillors 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 Committee (Business Continuity Risks – BC)						
BC 1	Disruptive incidents or situations occur Residents seek guidance from BPC 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 BPC 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 constructively to residents' concerns. Recommend review process for emergency response in 2025-26.
BC2	Failure or loss of access to Clerk and Assistant Clerk laptops and 'tablets' to undertake tasks	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	Data held in the Cloud, with appropriate backup, not on hard drives 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 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	Updated to reflect changing risk scores as new mitigation measures implemented and 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
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 of 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 of risks reviewed and updated
Version 8	February 2025	Clerk, Councillors CU AHJ	Revised for Council Year 2025-26 Identified new risks which were added and mitigation for all risks reviewed and updated