

Wickford Town Council

RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

Definition of Risk Management

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements.

¹Practitioners' Guide 2025

This document has been produced to enable the Town Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. The Town Council is aware that although some risks can never be eliminated fully, it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk, which:

- Identifies the subject
- Identifies what the risk may be
- Identifies the level of risk
- Evaluates the management and control of the risk and records findings
- Reviews, assesses and revises procedures if required.

MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	All files and recent records (both paper and electronic) are kept at the Town Council office. The Town Council has a secure online backup system that backs up files as they are created or changed	Annual review- Ensure procedures below are undertaken
Meeting location	Adequacy Health and Safety	L	Meetings are generally held at the Town Council office and the Wick Community Centre All the premises and facilities are considered to be satisfactory from a health and safety, accessibility and comfort aspect for the Town Clerk, staff, Councillors and any Public who attend A Health and Safety leaflet	Existing procedure adequate
Council Records	Loss through theft, fire, damage	L	Papers, both current and archived will be held at the Town Council office	Damage or theft is unlikely and so provision adequate
Council Records electronic	Loss through damage	M	The Town Council's electronic records are stored on the Town Council's 365 software program. The Town Council has a secure online backup system that backs up files on a daily basis	Annual review

¹ Practitioners' Guide 2025 – Governance and accountability for smaller authorities in England

Wickford Town Council

FINANCE				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept	M	Sound budgeting to underline annual precept. Each Town Council Committee monitors their budget information and detailed budgets are prepared in late autumn. The precept is considered by the Finance and Resources Committee in November prior to making a recommendation to Council in November/December	Existing procedure adequate
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L L	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements in place Employers Liability, Public Liability and Fidelity Guarantee are a statutory requirement	Existing procedure adequate Review provision and compliance annually
Banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Town Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, the making of payments and internal audit	Existing procedures Adequate Annual Review of Financial Regulations
Online payments	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	Monthly bank reconciliation prepared by the Town Clerk and checked by the appointed member for verification purposes in accordance with Town Council written guidelines Internal and external audit undertaken The Town Clerk prepares a monthly Schedule of Payments Two signatories authorise all invoices prior to payment by the Town Clerk. The schedule of payments is verified at a Council or Committee meeting All payments are detailed in the Financial Reports presented to the Finance and Resources Committee. The Town Clerk has delegated authority to pay invoices up to £500 prior to meeting approval, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or Chair of the appropriate Committee. (Financial Regulation 5.15) Expenditure is reported to the next meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee The Town Council does not use LGAs137 as they have adopted the General Power of Competence	Existing procedures Adequate Annual review of Financial Regulations
Town Clerk	Loss of Town Clerk	M	In the event of the Town Clerk resigning, the services of a Locum Clerk would be sought	Membership of SLCC maintained. Monitor working

Wickford Town Council

	Fraud	L	The requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance must be adhered to. Internal procedures in place	Conditions
	Actions undertaken	L	Town Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice	Existing procedures adequate
	Salary paid incorrectly	L	Timesheets kept Payroll is outsourced	
Payroll	Breach of employment laws including NI and tax	L	Procedures in place. Members of NALC & EALC who provide updates for review by the Personnel Committee. Payroll is outsourced to a payroll company	Annual Audit carried out by Internal Auditor
Election Costs	Risk of election cost	M	Risk in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise risk of having a contested election Costs are met from General Reserves.	Existing procedures Adequate
	Election to fill a casual vacancy	M	Cost of the election would be met from General Reserves	Consideration of increase in budget to allow contingency
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Town Council has financial regulations which set out the requirements. The Town Council is not registered for VAT but submits an annual claim (Form 749) for VAT incurred on costs that relate to non-business activities	Reviewed annually
Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)	Not submitted within time limits	L	AGAR is completed and signed by the Town Council and the Internal Auditor. It is then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within time limit. Town Clerk prepares a timetable for submission	Existing procedures adequate

ASSETS

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Property and contents owned by the Council	Loss or damage	H	An up-to-date register of Assets	Reviewed annually by the Town Council and verified by the Internal Auditor

Wickford Town Council

LIABILITY				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments made within the powers of the Town Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted	Existing procedures Adequate
	Working Parties taking decisions	L	Ensure clear Terms of Reference are in place. Financial Regulations in place	Financial Regulations and Terms of Reference are reviewed annually
Minutes/ Agendas/ Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Non-compliance with statutory requirements	L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements	Existing procedures Adequate
			Minutes are approved and signed at next meeting unless there is a resolution made to defer approval until the following meeting	Undertake adequate training
			Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Town Council meetings is managed by the Chair according to Standing Orders	Members to adhere to Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. Standing Orders are reviewed annually
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	L	Property maintenance and insurance cover is in place Risk assessment of any individual event undertaken	Existing procedures Adequate Insurance policy is reviewed annually
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with employment law	L	Undertake ongoing training to ensure Personnel Committee is aware of current legislation Seek advice from the Town Council's insurance company where required Employer's Liability insurance in place.	Existing procedures Adequate Insurance policy is reviewed annually
Employee Liability	Causing injury (damage) to employee property	L	Insurance cover in place	Insurance policy and Risk Assessment is reviewed annually
Councillor Liability	Causing injury (damage to Councillors)	L	Insurance cover and risk assessment in place	
Legal Liability	Legality of activities	L	Town Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice if necessary	Existing procedures Adequate

Wickford Town Council

	Proper and timely reporting via Minutes	L	Town Council always receives and approves minutes at meetings. Where possible draft minutes are circulated shortly after the meeting	Existing procedures adequate
	Proper document Control	L	Retention of document policy in place	Existing procedures Adequate
Freedom of Information and Data Protection	Policy Provision	L-M	The Town Council has the following documents in place: • a model publication scheme • Privacy Data Notices • Privacy Policy • Data Protection Policy • Document Retention Policy	Monitor and report any impacts made under the freedom of information and data protection Regular policy reviews. (annually and bi-annually)

WORKING WITH OTHERS TO HELP MANAGE RISK

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
The provision of services being carried out under agency/partnership agreements with principal authorities	Lack or deterioration of services	L	Standing Orders and Financial Regulations dealing with the award of contracts	Reviewed annually
Ad hoc provision of amenities/facilities for events to local community groups		L	Public Liability	Ask for all contractors/vendors insurance details

COUNCILLORS PROPRIETY

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Members Interests	Conflict of interest	M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting or when a conflict becomes apparent during a meeting	Existing procedures Adequate
	Register of Members Interests	L	Register of Members Interests form to be reviewed at least on an annual basis	Members to take responsibility to update their register

COUNCIL REPUTATION

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Councillor and staff	Bringing the Council into disrepute	M	Councillors understand and receive training on the Code of Conduct A professional approach is undertaken on all Town Council matters	Not all Councillors have received training Members to identify any training needs

Wickford Town Council

RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION	
• Standing Orders • Financial Regulations • Code of Conduct • Disability Discrimination Act 1995 • Disability and Equality Act 2010 • Employments Rights Act 1996 • Data Protection Act 2018	• Local Government Act 1972 • Local Government Act 2000 • Audit Commission Act 1998 • Local Government & Rating Act 1997 • Local Government Act 2003 • Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 • Localism Act 2011

Wickford Town Council

RISK MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

RISK ASSESSMENT

1. PURPOSE

To provide guidance to the Town Council to enable them to control risks associated with their activities.

2. SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all notified risks of Wickford Town Council.

3. DEFINITIONS

- a. Risk – A risk is the likelihood that the potential for harm or loss posed by a hazard will materialise;
- b. Hazard – A hazard is a condition in the town, equipment, article, substance, machine, installation or situation that has the potential to cause harm or loss or both;
- c. Control Measures - Precautionary measures that reduce or eliminate the risk;
- d. Competent Person - A person who, by reason of their training, knowledge and experience, is considered capable of adequately assessing the health and safety risks associated with the operation being carried out;
- e. Residual Risk - The risk that remains after all the identified control measures have been put into place.

4. METHOD

The Town Council should follow the general principles of prevention

- 4.1** If possible, avoid risk altogether;
- 4.2** Evaluate the risks which cannot be avoided;
- 4.3** Combat risks at source;
- 4.4** Take advantage of technological and technical progress for improving working methods and making them safer;
- 4.5** Replacing the dangerous by the non-dangerous or the less dangerous;
- 4.6** Give appropriate instruction to Councillors and contractors.

Date effective from:	24 November 2022
Date of last review:	24 November 2025
Minute ref	25-487d
Next review:	November 2026