

Buckworth Parish Council, Risk Assessments, Health & Safety, Asset Register and Controls (Revised May 2014)

1) Financial Risk Assessment- Accounting Errors due to lack of financial Controls

To Address Risk.....

- a. Each Cllr has a copy of the Financial Regulations along with Standing Orders.
- b. A Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is appointed by the Parish Council
- c. The Chairman and Councillors of the Parish Council oversee accounting procedures.
- d. All Financial documentation held by the RFO or Parish Clerk are open to inspection on request basis.
- e. Monies received are receipted and banked promptly.
- f. Cheques are prepared by the RFO and signed by the 2 designated Cllrs, usually at Council meetings.
- g. Cheque stubs are initialled by Cllrs signing the cheques.
- h. Cheque number and date written on invoice.
- i. All payments are approved at meetings of the Full Council.
- j. No petty cash is held.
- k. Payments are itemised on the agenda presented to Council meetings and whenever possible cheques are signed at Council meetings.
- l. Receipts and payments entered on computerised system as soon as practicable.
- m. Cashbook is printed off and bank statements reconciled on receipt, ready for production of the balance sheet and receipts & payments at each parish council meeting.
- n. VAT is reclaimed 6 monthly or whenever a large enough amount is due.

2) BUDGET

i) Potential risk - Wrong Amount Precepted resulting in too much\too little money to meet councils commitments; excess reserves; spending beyond Council's resources.

To address risk.....

- a. Budget is prepared in Oct\Nov with Items for inclusion are fully discussed and financially assessed.
- b. A precept is then suggested to Council for decision at the December meeting.
- c. Report on budget progress is given at each Council meeting.
- d. An adequate reserve has been achieved and will be maintained against any unforeseen commitment including non-scheduled election costs.
- e. All major recurring expenditure will be reviewed annually and reasonable adjustments made.
- f. The Clerk and Cllrs to attend regular courses on finance and administration.

ii) Loss of Funds due to Misappropriation of Public Money

To Address Risk.....

- a. No expenditure to be incurred by an individual member of the Council.
- b. All orders for goods and payments are made through the RFO and with prior authorisation, except in the case of emergency when the Chairman and Vice Chairman must be consulted.
- c. All invoices and cheques are approved and cheques signed by the two members of the Council, one of which must be the Chairman or the RFO.
- d. A copy of the Register of Interests of All Cllrs will be maintained. Cllrs are regularly reminded of their obligations in this regard...District Council issues regular reminder.
- e. Salaries and wages calculated and paid 3 monthly.....Tax & National Insurance sent to the Inland Revenue 3 monthly.
- f. Year-end accounts prepared by the RFO as soon after the end of March as possible.
- g. The Asset Register will be reviewed annually and an inspection of assets regularly made.
- h. An Independent Internal Auditor appointed to carry out a full audit at the end of every financial year before audit by appointed External Audit.

iii) Risk..... Under Insurance, Public Liability, Employee Liability

To Address Risk.....

- a. Adequate insurance cover will be maintained to cover Cllrs and their agents against any potential liabilities arising from loss of assets, public liability and financial liability .
- b. Insurance cover will be reviewed in April \May each year prior to renewal in October, this to be done in conjunction with Asset Register review. Assets to be added and removed promptly as changes occur.
- c. **Health & Safety** of premises and venues used by the council or Cllrs will be reviewed regularly with risk assessments done. This will include studies or other areas in private houses where council work is conducted.
- d. Property regularly inspected (see above). See also policy statement and schedule below.