

Queen's Park Community Council Risk Management Policy	Revised March 2023
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Definition of Risk Management

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives or to execute its strategies successfully. Risk Management is the process by which risks are identified and evaluated then avoided, mitigated or controlled.

Purpose of Document

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

- Identifies the key risks facing the council
- Evaluates the level of risk
- Assigns the management and control of the risk and records findings
- Reviews, assesses and revises procedures where required.

The details of these are contained in the Schedule to this document which categorises them into Management; Finance; Information and Data; Liability; Council Reputation, Propriety; and Assets.

The Council does not operate a separate Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery Plan but addresses these issues in this document.

Responsibility

Queen's Park Community Council is committed to identifying and managing risks. The Council will carry out any appropriate action necessary to reduce or eliminate risks.

The Director as Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer will work with Chairs and the Forward Planning Group to review risks on a regular basis, including any newly identified risks, and report findings to the Council. The review will include identification of any unacceptable levels of risk.

Councillors are ultimately responsible and must therefore:

- a) take steps to identify key risks facing the Council;
- b) evaluate the potential consequences if an event identified as a risk takes place;
- c) decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or consequences.

1 Management				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	High/ Medium/ Low	Management/Control of Risk	Review/ Assess/ Revise
1.1 Business continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	M/H	The Council uses a hosted service and all computer files are backed up on an ongoing basis onto Citrix. Remote working is now fully embedded with all staff, volunteers and contractors capable of working remotely. List of passwords and access procedures stored securely, the process for recovery being known to the Officers and the Chair. In the event of the Chief Officer being indisposed other staff have sufficient knowledge to secure continued operation. Senior councillors can assist, and staff can also contact SALC, NALC, and the former Locum Clerk for advice and support. Loss of Key Staff insurance and Business Continuity insurance is in place.	Review annually Assess ongoing to improve and document procedures. Dependent on other procedures being followed
1.2 Meeting location	Adequacy Health and Safety	M	During 2022/23 the use of alternative meeting locations was successfully piloted and will continue to be investigated. Greater use of online services for Working Groups will continue as permitted.	Review available meeting locations
1.3 Council records - paper	Loss through theft, fire, flood or other damage	L	Important documents are scanned and held electronically in backed up storage. Personnel documents and original minutes are kept in fireproof cabinets.	Likelihood is low Review bi-annually
1.4 Council records – electronic	Loss through damage, fire, flood, corruption of data	L	Remote secure back up through Microshade/Vision ICT.	Review annually

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	High/ Medium/ Low	Management/Control of Risk	Review/ Assess/ Revise
1.5 Staff	Loss of key staff	M	As at 1.1, systems are in place to provide cover for staff absence using our network to provide cover so that legal requirements and basic services can be met.	Review annually
	Fraud	L	An audit is undertaken of the Council's systems and their operation and the results reported to full Council. Fidelity guarantee in place via insurance.	Review Procedures regularly review with auditor.
	Actions carried out	L	A bank reconciliation is undertaken every month and a system put in place to have the outcome inspected by councillors..	
	Emergency response	L	An Action Log is in place with reporting of actions completed and outstanding via meetings with Chairs and reports to Council. And Committees Officers' personal contact details held by Officers and Chair with 'next of kin' contact details in the personnel files.	
1.6 Volunteers	Safeguarding	M	The Council adopted a Volunteer Policy in October 2021 and the Safeguarding Policy has been updated.	
	Accident	L	A task-specific Risk Assessment will be undertaken before any new activity is undertaken, or reviewed before any repeated activity, to ensure that safe practices are followed.	To be reviewed after each event
1.7 Covid-19 Response	Operations	L	All business processes were adjusted to meet both the letter and the spirit of Covid-19 regulations and guidance to ensure the safety of participants at all times.	To be reviewed continuously
	Events	L	Although the regulations have been paused and the guidance eased, the Events Coordinator is an expert on Covid-19 precautions and will undertake specific Risk Assessments and provide continuous advice.	To be reviewed continuously

2 Finance				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	High/ Medium/ Low	Management/Control of Risk	Review/ Assess/ Revise
2.1 Precept	Adequacy	L	Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept. Council receives regular budget updates. Precept is an agenda item at January meeting and the process is reviewed by Internal audit.	Existing procedure adequate. Annual review of Financial Regulations.
2.2 Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L	Cost reviewed and cover assessed annually at renewal date and checked for every major event. No additional measures required.	Reviewed annually
2.3 Banking	Inadequate procedures	L	Control identified in a Financial Regulations, process via sign off by councillors, review by internal audit and internal controls.	Review via Financial Regulations annually
2.4 Cash	Loss via theft or dishonesty	L	Limited cash transactions and petty cash system discontinued. Income receipted and banked in accordance with Financial Regulations. All card payments are reported to the next council meeting.	Review via Financial Regulations annually
2.5 Financial controls and records	Inadequate checks	L	Bank account reconciled to accounting system monthly and independently audited. All transactions and summary reports are reported to each meeting of the Council.	Reviewed annually
2.6 Salaries	Incorrect payment or process	L	Payroll software now in use, system being now in place for Chair and vice-chair of HR to have closer involvement in staffing matters.	Review as part of Financial Regulations.
2.7 VAT	Reclaim not processed	L	The Council is enrolled in 'Making Tax Digital' whereby returns are submitted automatically by the RBS system.	Review as part of Financial Regulations.
2.8 Annual Return	Not submitted in time	L	Council aware of timing process. Monitored through internal audit who are booked for 24 April 2023. Annual return to be completed and signed by the Council at the meeting on 17 May 2023.	Existing procedures adequate

3 Information and Data				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	High/ Medium/ Low	Management/Control of Risk	Review/ Assess/ Revise
3.1 Freedom of information	Non-compliance with act	L	Documented procedure for dealing with requests approved in May 2016. Occasional requests received and answered promptly.	Review annually.
3.2 Data protection	Non-compliance with act	L	The Council registered with the Information Commissioner's Office in April 2018 and renews this annually. GDPR procedures documented May 2018	Review annually.

4 Liability				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	High/ Medium/ Low	Management/Control of Risk	Review/ Assess/ Revise
4.1 Legal powers	Illegal activity or payments. Working Groups taking decisions	L L	All activities and payments made within the powers of the council, resolved and clearly reported in the minutes. Working Group coordinators clearly briefed, reporting regularly to Director and council. Quarterly meetings held with the monitoring Officer at WCC.	Ongoing review Ongoing review
4.2 Minutes, agendas and standing documents	Accuracy and legality Non-compliance with statutory requirements	L L	Minutes and agendas are produced in prescribed method; approved and signed off at next meeting; and published according to legal requirements. Business conducted at council is managed by the Chair with advice from Director. Standing Orders & Financial Regulations based on NALC models.	Review on regular basis
4.3 Public liability	Risk to third party property or individuals	L	Insurance is in place, risk assessments of individual events to be undertaken, monitored by WCC.	Written risk assessments for major public events.
4.4 Employers' liability	Non-compliance with legal requirements	L	Insurance in place. Ensure adequate training & procedures for councillors and Officers.	Employment law training to be considered.
4.5 Legal liability	Legality of activities	L	Director has access to advice via SALC and SLCC membership and is undertaking study leading to a qualification in this area.	Maintain membership Associations

5 Council Reputation				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	High/ Medium/ Low	Management/Control of Risk	Review/ Assess/ Revise
5.1 Code of conduct	Non-compliance	L	The current Code was adopted 2016 and the Director provides advice. Support is available for the Monitoring Officer at WCC who also is assisting with the implementation of a new national code together with online recording and reporting	Review annually
5.2 Members' interests	Conflict of interest. Failure to register interests.	L L	Agenda item on every meeting and a mechanism introduced for dispensations for specific agenda items. Register updated regularly, now via an online portal. Director to give advice.	Monitored by internal auditor. Review annually
5.3 Elector Challenge	Council taxpayers petitions for the Council to be abolished.	L	Continuous promotion of the good work undertaken by the Council, and the development of partnerships with other stakeholder organisations working in the area.	Monitored generally and reviewed annually.
5.4 Council Independence	Electors unable to distinguish between QPCC and the City Council.	M	Although the increases support from the City Council is welcome, there is a risk that the council will lose its identity and be seen as no more than a 'department'. Officers will ensure that QPCC events and initiatives are clearly identified as such.	Reviewed annually

6 Assets				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	High/ Medium/ Low	Management/Control of Risk	Review/ Assess/ Revise
6.1 Asset Register	Assets not recorded	L	Council has agreed a <i>de minimus</i> threshold of £1,000 so holds no assets.	Review annually
First draft prepared: November 2016 Revised: March 2021, March 2022, March 2023				
Approved by Council: 15 March 2023 (062 – 22/23) Next Review: March 2024				