

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL



RISK STRATEGY

1. Introduction

The Council delegates the carrying out of its risks assessments to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee under Local Government Act 1972 (S101). The risk assessment is reviewed in January each year.

Where a committee considers the risk assessment under delegated powers, the full Council must specifically review, and minute the review, of the risk assessment (rather than simply adopting the minutes of that Committee including all recommendations).

2. Risk Management Strategy

Yeovil Town Council is committed to identifying and managing risks, using the following procedures, and to ensuring that risks are maintained at an acceptable level. The Town Council will take any action that is deemed necessary.

The Town Clerk reviews risks on a regular basis, including any newly identified risks, and will report on such matters to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. The review will include identification of any unacceptable levels of risk.

The Guidance on Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in England (published by the Joint Practitioners' Advisory Group) makes the following observations regarding risk management:

- Risk management is not just about financial management: it is about ensuring the achievement of objectives set by the council to deliver high quality public services; and
- The local council audit approach seeks to encourage local councils to address these issues by placing emphasis on the need to keep under review and, if necessary, to strengthen their own corporate governance arrangements, thereby improving their stewardship of public funds and providing positive and continuing assurance to taxpayers

Members are ultimately responsible for risk management because risks threaten the achievement of policy objectives. Therefore, each year Members should:

- take steps to identify and update their record of key risks facing the Council;

- evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place (in terms of likelihood and impact);
- decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences; and
- record any conclusions or decisions reached.

3. Assessment of Risk

Each risk will be assessed in terms of its likelihood and impact on the Council.

Likelihood

		Probability	Possible Indicators
4	Almost Certain	> 90%	Frequent occurrence
3	Likely	> 60%	Regular occurrence
2	Possible	> 10%	Occasional occurrence
1	Unlikely	< 10%	Has never occurred


Impact

		Risk Threat
4	Major	Financial Impact > £500,000 Fatality/disabling injuries to public or staff / adverse national media attention / external intervention / total service disruption / extensive legal action against the Council
3	Serious	Financial Impact > £250,000 Adverse local media attention / extensive public complaints / adverse comments by regulators or auditors / significant service disruption / failure to deliver projects or targets / service disruptions / injuries to public or staff / legal action against the Council
2	Significant	Financial Impact > £50,000 Adverse service users complaints / service disruption / minor injuries and near misses to staff and public
1	Minor	Financial impact less than £5,000 / isolated complaints / minor service disruption

4. Risk Matrix

	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
Likelihood		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4

Impact



The legend shows three risk levels: High (Red), Medium (Yellow), and Low (Green). The risk matrix cells are colored based on these levels: High (Red) for values 8, 12, 16, 9, and 8; Medium (Yellow) for values 4, 6, 3, 4, 3, and 4; and Low (Green) for values 2, 1, 2, 1, and 2.

The key risks for the Council are assessed for impact and likelihood (using the criteria listed above); so that risks are identified as low, medium or high.

Controls are then identified in order to mitigate the risk. It is anticipated that the risk will be reviewed annually unless there is a change in intelligence. The table also assigns responsibility to the relevant people.

5. Risk Register

Ref	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Level	Controls	Review	Responsibility
ASSETS							
1	Protection of physical assets	3	2	Medium	Asset Register updated annually, with any changes through additions and disposals updated on an adhoc basis. This is presented to Council annually with Annual Accounts. Regular inspection of properties under the Council's direct management. Maintenance of buildings, sites and equipment is undertaken on a planned and responsive basis. Playground equipment is checked and maintained independently by Somerset Council on a weekly basis. Yeovil Cemetery is checked and maintained by Cemetery workforce. Insurance cover reviewed annually, with any changes through additions and disposals updated on an adhoc basis. Currently insured with Zurich Municipal. Recommendations as necessary to Policy, Resources and Finance Committee to update cover.	January 2024	Town Clerk/ Relevant Committees
2	Security for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment	3	2	Medium	Appropriate security devices are fitted to all of the Council's buildings and linked as necessary to a central control station. CCTV at both Milford Hall and Town House. Atlas Security first point of contact for any breaches, for quick response and safety of staff. Designated staff are responsible for the security of these buildings. Fobs required to enter the back offices of Town House. In the event of any breaches of security, appropriate measures are taken as soon as practicable to re-secure the property. Crime reports are obtained for all breaches of security by contacting Avon and Somerset Constabulary.	January 2024	Town Clerk/ Relevant Committees

3	Maintenance for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment	3	2	Medium	All premises are maintained within the approved budget. Maintenance is undertaken in-house where possible and external contractors used as required. Issues found are addressed as appropriate. Inspections for equipment and safety features programmed as required. Legislation and best practice reviewed on a regular basis.	January 2024	Town Clerk/ Relevant Committees
4	Provision of amenities/facilities for local community groups	3	2	Medium	The council has approved the hire of Milford Community Hall, and the Town House on an hourly charge basis. Conditions of hire have been reviewed that will assist in safeguarding the Council's assets	January 2024	Town Clerk/ Relevant Committees
5	Security and safety of defibrillators	4	1	Medium	Monthly visual checks carried out on all defibrillator cabinets. Defibrillators connect via 3G and will send warnings if there are any problems with the defibrillator. Defibrillators registered with the Circuit which sends notifications if the defibrillator is accessed.	January 2024	Town Clerk / BCM

FINANCE

6	Banking arrangements	2	1	Low	Reviewed periodically by Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. All cheques require two Members' signatures. The Policy, Resources and Finance Committee review all payments and income following their consideration by the service committees. Suppliers paid by BACS where appropriate.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
7	Protection of Investments	2	1	Low	An investment register is reviewed on a monthly basis.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
8	Consequential loss of income	2	1	Low	Insurance cover (to cover loss of income and relocating office). Computers backed up periodically through the day; data saved in house on server and to the cloud. IT support quickly accessed and data can be restored if/when appropriate.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
9	Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty	1	1	Low	Fidelity Guarantee cover up to £2 million for employees and members. Minimal cash kept on premises, and	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F

					segregation of duty for all non-cash payments made. Bank Reconciliations conducted on a monthly basis.		
10	Financial controls and records	3	1	Medium	Financial Regulations in place and reviewed annually. Two signatories on cheques, and segregation of duty for BACs payments. Internal and external audit.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
11	Comply with HMRC Regulations	2	1	Low	VAT payments and claims calculated by Finance Officer and checked by RFO. Internal and external auditor to provide assurance.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
12	Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept	3	2	Medium	Budget workshop held annually. Inflationary increases applied to costs of goods and services. Committees consulted. Policy, Resources and Finance Committee recommend budget to Council. Expenditure against budget reported to Policy, Resources and Finance Committee on a regular basis, with material variations explained and considered. Outturn report at the end of the financial year.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
13	Complying with borrowing restrictions	1	1	Low	No new borrowing likely at present.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
14	Ensuring robustness of insurance providers	4	1	Medium	The Council currently insures with Zurich Municipal on a 3-year basis. A tender process is conducted at the end of each 3 years to ensure best value and to ensure that the Council is adequately covered. Insurance company informed of any additions and disposals.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
15	Clear statements of management responsibility for each service	2	1	Low	Under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, each of the service committees and the Policy, Resource and Finance Committee have delegated management responsibility for their own budget. Expenditure and income reported to each committee meeting with an Outturn report at the end of the financial year.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F

16	Inappropriate use of Procurement Card	2	1	Low	There is one procurement card which is the responsibility of; and kept secure by the Town Clerk. Records are kept and reconciled with the statement on a monthly basis. Credit limit £2,000.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
PROCUREMENT							
17	Awarding of contracts for services and the purchase of capital equipment	3	1	Medium	The Financial Procedures are reviewed every year to ensure they are fit for purpose. Best value is sought for all purchases of services, equipment and assets. For larger contracts, the Council utilises Contract Finder and will seek references where appropriate for those organisations awarded contracts. Relevant expertise sought for complex specifications.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
18	Professional services and contractors	3	1	Medium	The Council endeavours to ensure that wherever possible it has the opportunity to select (from several) the provider of any professional services it requires. Where necessary, all prospective contractors are required to provide references for which they have recently undertaken similar work and adequate insurances. Due diligence is given where the number of prospective contractors are limited	January 2024	Town Clerk/ Relevant Committees
LIABILITY							
19	Risk of damage to third party property or individuals/Legal liability	3	2	Medium	Public Liability Insurance £15 million – covering personal accident liability for employees and members. Open spaces checked regularly. Risk assessments of individual events such as Christmas lights, Super Saturday conducted as necessary. Advice is sought and consideration given for any new event added.	January 2024	Town Clerk/ Relevant Committees

20	Legal liability as consequence of assets ownership (especially burial ground, playgrounds etc.)	4	2	High	Insurance in place. Regular inspection of properties under the Council's direct management. Maintenance of buildings, sites and equipment is undertaken on a planned and responsive basis. Playground equipment is checked and maintained independently by Somerset Council on a weekly basis. Yeovil Cemetery is checked and maintained by Cemetery workforce.	January 2024	Town Clerk/ Relevant Committees
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EMPLOYER LIABILITY

21	Comply with Employment Law	1	2	Low	Yeovil Town Council is member of SALC. Town Clerk is a member of SLCC. Subscription to South West Councils. Policies reviewed and updated as necessary.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
22	Comply with Inland Revenue requirements	2	1	Low	Sage Payroll software which is IR compliant is used. Internal and External auditor carry out checks.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
23	Safety of Staff and visitors	2	1	Low	Visitors book to sign in and out. Camera fitted at front desk of Town House. Regular risk assessments.	January 2024	Town Clerk / Council
24	Recognise and accepts responsibility as employer	3	2	Medium	Policies and Procedures in place and regularly reviewed. Staff concerns treated as appropriate.	January 2024	Town Clerk / Council
25	Facilities Officer Safety	2	2	Medium	Lone working policy that all staff members are aware of. Key duties risk assessed.	January 2024	Town Clerk / Council
26	Remote working health and well-being	2	2	Medium	Regular check-ins with those working remotely.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
27	Protection of staff against malicious behaviour (both online and offline)	3	2	Medium	Dignity at Work Policy available. Notices on Facebook and within office that that Yeovil Town Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any of its employees, officials, members, contractors, visitors to the council or members of the public from the community. Any malicious behaviour reported to the police or other agency as appropriate.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F

STAFFING							
28	Staff Cover	3	2	Medium	All key duties can be covered. Annual Leave is co-ordinated to ensure the office can be covered at all times. If the office can not be covered, the office is closed to the public with notifications given on Facebook at the Notice Board outside Town House.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
29	Staff Retention	3	2	Medium	A learning and developmental organisation.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
LEGAL LIABILITY							
30	Ensuring activities are within legal powers	3	1	Medium	Clerk to clarify legal position of any new proposal and seek legal advice where necessary. The Council can utilise the General Power of Competence.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
31	Proper and timely reporting via the Minutes	1	1	Low	Council meets regularly, committees meet at least 6 times a year. Minutes are distributed in a timely fashion and approved and signed at following meeting (recognised that during periods of time when virtual meetings (informal meetings) are held, they will be signed at the next appropriate meeting). Minutes are made available to the press and public.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
32	Proper document control	2	1	Low	Land and buildings registered at Land Registry. Comprehensive filing system holding all relevant documents. Use of fireproof cabinet where relevant. Document Retention Policy	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
32	Breach of personal data	3	2	Medium	Data Protection Policy in place. Staff kept up to date with changes in legislation and requirements. Registered with Information Commissioners Office. Data only processed if there is a legal basis to do so.	January 2024	Town Clerk / PR&F
COUNCIL PROPREITY							
33	Register of Interests and gifts and hospitality in place	2	2	Low	Register of interest completed annually and amended throughout year as necessary. Gifts and hospitality register. Declarations of interests should be made when appropriate at all meetings (the onus is on Councillors to	January 2024	Town Clerk / Council

					identify when they should declare an interest, but advice is given when requested).		
LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION							
34	More phonecalls / e-mails / face to face with people asking about issues which do not fall under the remit of the Council	3	3	Low	Ensure the sharing of information via social media, website and notice boards. Signposting individuals to Somerset Council as appropriate	April 2023 onwards	Town Clerk / PR&F
35	Opportunity to take on services or assets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Each service/asset that the Council may wish to investigated will be considered and due diligence taken. The approach will be on a case-by-case basis. Awaiting dialogue with Somerset Council		

Yeovil Town Council
5th April 2023
To be reviewed: January 2024