

West Rainton Parish Council

Risk Assessment: 2015-2016

Area	Actual or potential issue	Risk	Risk cat.	Controls in place / action necessary
Physical Assets	Street furniture - Asset register does not include as currently unable to demarcate between PC	Potential for unnecessary expense to be incurred for repairs, maintenance or replacement of Insurance cover potentially inappropriate.	Low	Joint audit (through site visit) with DCC required to identify and log WRPC street furniture. Asset register to be updated and insurance cover reviewed.
Physical Assets	War Memorial – possible uncertainty of ownership.	Parish Council is incorrectly considered solely responsible for costs of repairs and maintenance.	Med	Investigation required to positively confirm ownership.
Physical Assets	Land and open space – ownership documentation not located amongst current Parish Council records.	Potential for encroachment and uncertainty over any liability.	Low	Further search to be made as part of review of PC records. If inconclusive, enquiries to be made with Land Registry and/or County Records Office.
Cemetery	Uncertainty over remaining burial space capacity.	Cemetery reaches capacity in short term and facility needs to close for new burials.	Med	All aspects:
Cemetery	Existing cemetery plans are obsolete.	Difficulty in identifying plots requiring re-opening for new burials.	Low	The engagement of specialist company "Cemetery Development Services" in Q4, 2015-16 will inform the Parish Council's actions to address the risks identified.
Cemetery	Existing records not fully up to date.	Shortfalls may adversely affect effective management of statutory responsibilities.	Med	

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Finance	Some reports circulating that Co-op Bank are closing certain categories of business accounts.	Unexpected closure of accounts will potentially cause short term difficulties in paying creditors.	Low	Banking sector trends to be monitored through SLCC / NALC updates. Preliminary research recommended to identify other possible banks.
Finance	Financial controls and records arrangements.	Any poor financial accountability will risk Parish Council funds.	Low	Accountability strengthened since Sept 2014. Comprehensive monthly finance report prepared by Parish Clerk for approval by full Council. Two authorised Member signatories required for cheque payments. Internal and external audits undertaken.
Finance	VAT reclaim for 14-15 outstanding	Parish Council will not receive due refund – adversely affecting finances.	Low	Dialogue in progress (Feb 16) with HMRC to trace VAT registration details and previous reclaim history. New reclaim to be submitted in Q4, 15-16.
Funding	Sound budgeting essential to inform annual precept.	Any weaknesses in budget control will lead to under/over spend with potentially disproportionate effect on precept amount.	Low	Quarterly budget reports are presented to Parish Council, with any actual or anticipated variances highlighted and explained. This informs budget discussion at January meeting where precept is determined.

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Funding	Uncertainty over level of future Council Tax Support Grant received from Durham County Council.	Continued reduction in CTSG will adversely affect Council funding.	High	Issue is outside of Parish Council's direct control. Await further communication on topic from DCC and/ or County Durham Association of Local Councils to assess impact.
Insurance cover	Adequate liability cover required.	Potential for insurance cover to be inadequate for Parish Council's liabilities.	Med	Insurance arrangements are in place with an established sector provider. Annual review required to ensure cover remains adequate for changing circumstance affecting the Parish Council.
Employer duties	Compliance with Employment Law.	Potential for industrial disputes, grievances and escalation to industrial tribunal.	Low	Membership of CDALC, NALC and SLCC provides regular source of information to keep Parish Clerk up to date. SLCC Advice Service utilised for specific queries. Contractual arrangements with current employees are under live review.
Employer duties	Compliance with Inland Revenue requirements.	Potential for legal action / fines in case of infringement.	Low	Regular advice received from HMRC via email updates. Internal and external auditor carry out annual checks.

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Employer duties	Relationships with third parties.	Need to ensure these are proper and sound to ensure legal compliance.	High	Review of third party working arrangements to be instigated to establish that arrangements with third parties providing routine services to aid cemetery operations are in line with best practice.
Legal Operation of Parish Council	Requirement to ensure operation and activities are carried out within legal powers.	Breaches of legislation governing the operation of the Parish Council may lead to challenges.	Med	Membership of CDALC, NALC and SLCC provides regular source of information to keep Parish Clerk up to date. SLCC Advice Service utilised for specific queries. Clerk and Project Officer each working towards achievement of formal qualification.
















