Appleton Parish Council Risk Management Register

Adopted on 17th October 2023, confirmed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee 6th June 2024.

Proposed amendments in red.

The Purpose of Risk Management is to identify and address any risks that are associated with the Council's activities, assets and employees; to quantify the risk/impact level and to detail the controls in place to reduce the risk. Risks change over time therefore this document will be reviewed regularly, on an annual basis or earlier if required by a change in circumstances.

1. Process Risks including Procedural, Financial and Data Management

	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Control
1	**Procedural Risks**		
1.2	Loss of reputation to council if: decisions are not legally made; decisions cannot be made due to meetings not being quorate or through lack of public consultation; councillors breach standards	Low	Training of clerk and councillors is planned and budgeted for. Access to legal publications and information is available and additional material is budgeted for. Access to legal advice from the Society of Local Council Clerks is available and membership is renewed annually. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place and reviewed annually. Agendas are sent out in a timely manner and widely displayed to members of the public. Public participation is included as part of the meeting. A website, noticeboards and newsletters inform the electorate and encourage participation. Public consultation events are planned and held occasionally. Minutes are prepared monthly with individual page numbers for minute book, approved as a true record by all, signed by the Chair at the following Parish Council meeting. All councillors sign the Code of Conduct. A Register of Members' Interests is maintained and displayed on Parish Council website. An update reminder provided annually. Cover is in place for Libel, Slander and Personal Accident.
2.	**Financial Risks**		

2.1	Misappropriation and Fraud	Medium	Financial Regulations in place. Robust Internal Controls are undertaken and Internal Controls reviewed annually. Two Parish Councillors and either the clerk/assistant clerk authorise the internet banking. Any cheques need three authorised signatures. Bank reconciliation undertaken monthly. Financial information regarding receipts and payments detailed monthly to the Parish Council. Fidelity Cover of £500.000 – Adequacy reviewed annually. Annual Internal and External Audits. Monthly reports to Council on expenditure to date. Monthly expenditure approved at Council meetings. Standing orders and financial regulations reviewed periodically. Insurance in place.
2.2	Insufficient Precept	Low	Annually, in October, budget projections are made by each Committee, with reference to the budget to date and previous year's budget. The Finance and General Purposes Committee consider the calculation of the required precept and recommend to full parish council by December. Full council consider proposed budget and precept during December and January meetings. Timely notification is sent to Warrington Borough Council Budgets against provision/projections monitored quarterly and expenditure adjusted accordingly. Earmarked monies are maintained for periodic expenditure such as major maintenance to assets or for four-yearly elections.
2.3	Insufficient Insurance	Low	Asset register is maintained and reviewed annually. Annual insurance renewal takes place and any new assets are advised to the insurance company as soon as possible after purchase and delivery and appropriate insurance advice taken.
2.4	Improper contracting procedures	Medium	Financial regulations outline the tendering process. Financial regulations outline the process for considering quotations and the levels of expenditure appropriate to the quotation process. Established/recommended contractors used wherever possible.

2.5	Failure to meet the requirements of HMRC	Low	A Payroll system is used and entries made each month with details of employee salaries; employer's tax liability and national Insurance contribution is detailed. Remittance of Income Tax and National Insurance is made monthly by bacs. Year end P35/P60s completed online. Employees receive wage slips monthly and P60s yearly.
2.6	Failure to comply with VAT legislation	Low	VAT records are maintained and checked and refunds claimed quarterly. Parish Council does not need to be VAT registered.
2.7	Unexpected expenditure		Risk of insufficient funds Contingencies built into budgets.
2.8	Risks of supplier (procurement) fraud.	High	Bank details must be included on any invoice for payment. NatWest internet banking cross checks the sort code and account number to ensure that this an exact match with the supplier's name before the payment can be authorised. There is an authorisation limit on the payments. Three sample payments are checked each month before the payment schedule is made. The sample payments are matched with the invoice and payment account against the payment details on the internet banking. Prints showing the payments match the invoices are taken and are signed and dated by the Chair of the Parish Council monthly. These are then scanned and retained for audit purposes. The sample payments are checked by the person who has not input the payments for banking so there is separation of duties and independent checks on the payments being made on an ongoing monthly basis. All debit card payments have all relevant paperwork. No paperwork results in the amount being paid by the individual who uses the debit card. No personal purchases are allowed on the debit card as this is for Parish Council use only. All purchases are authorised by the relevant committee or Parish Council in accordance with the financial regulations to prevent procurement fraud. The clerk/assistant clerk have received cyber security training to alert them to the potential risks of providing sensitive company information by phone or other means, especially contract and account information. There is a rigorous change of supplier details procedure especially in relation to bank payment details. The supplier is always called by telephone to check the request using the details held rather than those taken from the invoice provided. NatWest internet banking cross checks the sort code and account number to ensure that this is an exact match with the supplier's name before any payment is authorised. Any banking details held on NatWest

			bankline which have not used within 18 months are deleted. Details on any invoice which request a change of bank details are cross checked with the Companies House website to ensure that they match.
3	**Data Risks**		
3.1	Non-compliance with data protection legislation and regulation	Low	Data Protection policies in place and reviewed annually. The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioners Office and this is renewed annually. Staff and Parish Councillor training available.
3.2	Loss of written information files or computer data	Medium	All documentation included the accounts are computerised and the clerk's and assistant clerk's laptops are backed up continuously to the cloud for security storage. Appleton Parish Hall is registered with the land register and the copy of the land registry documentation is kept in a locked safe with a locked room at the hall.
4.	**Liability**		
4.1	Individuals, property or third party	Medium	Regular inspections and checks of building. Risk assessments carried out. Insurance cover in place. Safety checks undertaken on an annual basis.
4.2	Employer Liability	Low	Compliance with employment law Membership of SLCC Training.
	Compliance with Revenue and Customs	Low	Regular advice from HM Revenue and Customs. Advice from providers of payroll software. Staff Training.
4.3	Legal Liability		
4.4	Disability Discrimination Act	Low	Disabled toilet provided, disabled car park spaces.
4.5	Data Protection Act	Medium	Policies and procedures in place and Parish Council registered with the Information Commissioners Office.
4.6	Freedom of Information Act	Low	Complaint with any requests.
4.7	Ensuring activities within legal power	Low	Advice from SLCC. Training.

			Attendance of Parish Council Liaison Meeting. Standing Orders. Code of Conduct.
4.8	Proper and timely reporting	Low	Draft minutes reviewed and adopted by Full Council. Minutes on the website. All documents available to press and public.
4.9	Document control	Medium	Day to day documents and correspondence filed securely in the Parish Council office. Key documents reviewed periodically. Electronic records backed up a daily basis to the cloud. Document management procedure in place.

5 . People Risks including Parish Councillors, Employees, Contractors, Visitors, Parish Hall hirers and users.

	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Control
5	**Councillors**		
5.1	Risk to health and safety whilst carrying out duties	Medium	Appropriate training and Health and Safety Policy in place. Staff undertaken Health and Safety training which includes induction training. Parish Ranger provided with induction training for the post from the Environmental Dept of Warrington Borough Council.
5.2	Councillors acting alone; breaching Code of Conduct; conflict of interest;	Medium	Training for councillors is planned and budgeted for. Good councillor guide is made available to new councillors and available to all. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place and reviewed annually. All councillors sign the Code of Conduct. A Register of Members' Interests is maintained and displayed on Parish Council's website. An update reminder provided annually. Interests are declared at the beginning of meetings. Insurance cover is in place for Libel, Slander and Personal Accident.
5.3	Risk of fraud carried out by councillor	Low	Financial regulations and internal control measures in place that require two councillor signatures for any financial transaction or banking change or transfer of funds. No petty cash held – expenses incurred are reimbursed monthly by cheque on presentation of relevant receipts. No expenses reimbursed without receipts/VAT invoices. Fidelity Cover of £500,000 – Adequacy reviewed annually. Annual Internal and External Audits
5.4	Risk of insufficient candidates for election or vacancies	Low	Actively publicise Council activities through noticeboards, newsletters, websites, press and social media. Publicise elections and vacancies on notice boards, newsletters, websites, press and social media.
6	**Employees**		
6.1	Risk to health and safety whilst carrying out duties	Medium	Health and Safety and Fire Assessment policies in place and reviewed annually. Budget for Staff training including Lone Working policy and manual handling policy. First Aid box available in office and Insurance policy with Employers Liability cover and Personal Accident in place.

6.2	Disciplinary and Grievance issues	Medium	Signed employment contracts in place with Job Description. Disciplinary and Grievance policies in place.
6.3	Risk whilst Lone Working	High	Appropriate specific risk assessment and policy in place and reviewed annually. Training for staff on lone working.
6.4	Risk of fraud carried out by employee	Low	Financial regulations and internal control measures in place that require two councillor signatures for any financial transaction or banking change or transfer of funds. No petty cash held – expenses incurred are reimbursed monthly by cheque on presentation of relevant receipts. No expenses reimbursed without receipts/VAT invoices. Fidelity Cover of £500,000 – Adequacy reviewed annually. Annual Internal and External Audits
6.5	Loss of service due to Illness/Incapacity	Low	Replacement cover provided in short term by other employees. Ability to hire a locum clerk.
7	**Contractors**		
7.1	Risk to health and safety whilst carrying out duties	Medium	Appropriate specific risk assessments requested when contractors are awarded contracts. Copies of Public Liability insurance and Employers Liability insurance requested. Contractors advised on asbestos register before commencing work.
8.	**Visitors/Volunteers/Events Management**		

8.1	Risk to health and safety whilst visiting/volunteering	Medium	Appropriate specific risk assessments in place or prepared for specific events. Public Liability insurance in place. Specific Risk Assessment undertaken for each event. Dedicated events first aid kit and PCSO requested to attend as and when necessary.

	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Control
9.	**Partnerships**		
9.1	Agreed standards or service delivery not fulfilled by partnership. Current partnerships with: Veolia, waste disposal contract reviewed annually. **Livewire** – agreement for Parish Council to provide funding for continuation of the provision of library services at Stockton Heath Library. **Cheshire Constabulary** – Agreement for Parish Council to fund 50% cost of a PCSO	Medium	Written service level agreements/lease arrangements in place. Regular contact with service level providers/partnerships. Financial arrangements subject to annual audit regime.
9.2	**Rental Agreements for hall hire**		

	Appleton Parish hall is rented out to hall users from 8am until 10pm seven days a week.	Low	All new hirers are given a tour of the hall and written instructions on how to use the hall and fire safety measures. Training is given on the fire system. Each hall hirer must sign a tenancy agreement and comply with the terms and conditions of hire. Keys are issued and logged against individual hirers. The Parish Council have public liability insurance and each individual hirer as their own public liability insurance. Invoices issued to hall hirers and all invoices are paid within the month.

10. Asset Risks

	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Control
10.1	**Office electrical equipment** – risks associated with use; loss/damage/theft	Low	Appropriate risk assessment policy in place. Annual electrical safety test. Visual inspection when using. Budget for maintenance and replacement. Insurance in place.
10.2	**Chairman's chain** – risk of loss/damage/theft	Low	Kept in safe. Pinned in place when worn. Insurance in place.
10.3	**Noticeboards** – loss/damage/theft	Low	Visual inspection regularly carried out by Parish Ranger. Public liability insurance and general insurance in place.
10.4	**Cast Iron Planters**; barrier baskets – risk to pedestrians/vehicles; risk of loss/damage/theft	Low	Visual inspection regularly carried out by Parish Ranger. Public liability insurance and general insurance in place.
10.5	**Grit bins** - risk to pedestrians/vehicles; risk of loss/damage/theft	Medium	Visual inspection regularly carried out by Parish Ranger. Public liability insurance and general insurance in place.
10.6	**Benches** - risk to pedestrians/vehicles; risk of loss/damage/theft	Medium	Visual inspection regularly carried out by Parish Ranger. Public liability insurance and general insurance in place.
10.7	**Christmas string lights** placed in tree adjacent to the Parish Hall.	Medium	Visual inspection regularly carried out by Clerk/Parish Ranger. Lighting contractor contactable to deal with problems and undertake repairs. Public liability insurance and general insurance in place.

	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Control
10.8	**Bridge Lane plot and Planters** Management and Maintenance not carried out adequately	Low	The Parish Council employs contractors to maintain the planters at Bridge Lane. The Parish Ranger cuts the grass at the Bridge Lane plot and regularly undertakes routine maintenance.
10.9	**Two BT phone boxes** - Management and Maintenance not carried out adequately	Low	The BT Phone Boxes is maintained and inspected by the Parish Ranger on a regular basis. The Parish Council has the phone boxes insured.
10.10	Two Defibrillators – Management and Maintenance not carried out adequately	Low	Both are checked on a weekly basis and reports sent to NW Ambulance to confirm that they are fully functional.
11.	**Appleton Parish Hall**		
11.1	Health and Safety Risk	High	Health and Safety Policy updated every year and signed by each member of staff Hall hirers sign tenancy agreements will conditions of hire and instructions for use these are updated once a year. Accident book on site which is reviewed, and any serious accidents reported by clerk to the Heath and Safety Executive. Staff training providing on Lone Working, Manual Handling and Fire Safety including Fire Safety Warden Training. All staff are first aid trained and have first aid certificate. All training is logged and copies of certificates kept. The Health and Safety law poster is displayed in a prominent position and there is a copy of the employer's liability insurance certificate displayed on the kitchen noticeboard. No smoking and first aid signs are clearly visible and emergency exits routes are signed. All contractors have to provide a risk assessment and a copy of their public liability insurance prior to any work commencing. They are also given a tour of the building and shown the asbestos register. All hazardous substances including paint are kept in a locked fire safety cupboard.

11.2	Housekeeping and hazards	High	The Parish Hall is regularly inspected throughout the day by the clerk, assistant clerk and Booking Secretary/Cleaner before and after every group which hires the hall. The bins are emptied on a daily basis and there is a locked waste disposal unit which is emptied on a weekly basis. The Parish Council employee a contractor to empty the sanitary bins on a routine basis. Floor coverings are kept clean and maintained and the hall is polished on a periodic basis. Warning floor cleaning in process signs. Heating and gas cooker is serviced on all annual basis. Emergency lighting is serviced on an annual basis. PAT Testing is serviced on all annual basis. Risk Assessment is undertaken on workstations and clerk and assistant clerk are eligible for free eye test every two years. Windows and gutters are cleaned periodically by window cleaner who is covered by his own public liability insurance. Locks fitted so they can be locked from the inside.
11.3	Fire Prevention	High	Parish hall is fitted with a fire alarm system and this is tested on a weekly basis. This is routinely maintained and checked by a contractor. All staff have fire safety training and the clerk and assistant clerk are fire wardens and have attended a fire warden course. The Parish hall has an annual Fire Risk Assessment. Staff have an annual fire drill. All hall hirers are responsible for their own fire safety and this in the hall hire agreement and conditions of hire. Fire Extinguishers are serviced on a annual basis. Fire exits are clearly marked and Fire doors are checked on a monthly basis to ensure that they are in good working order.
11.4	Electricity Safety	High	All plugs, sockets and switches are kept in good condition and all leads are kept tidy to prevent a trip hazard. Safety plugs are in all sockets when not in use. The PAT testing is undertaken on an annual basis by a qualified electrician. The fixed electrical installation is inspected every five years by a qualified electrician and is next due on 2023. RCD plugs are supplied for use for floor buffer and vacuum cleaner.
11.5	Chemical Safety	High	Cleaning products have COSH sheets.
11.6	First Aid	High	There is one First Aid box in the kitchen with the Accident book and another First Aid box for events. Both First Aid boxes are checked on a regular basis and refilled as and when necessary. All staff are first aid trained. Ladders are checked periodically for any faults.

11.7	Asbestos	Low	Appleton Parish Hall does contain asbestos and a surve y, report and register was produced on 15th December 2014 and was found only to present in the roof. Roof was retiled in August 2023 and asbestos was removed as part of this project.
11.8	Gas boiler could malfunction.	Low	Boiler is regularly serviced. Staff instructed in its use and instruction manual available.
11.9	Parish Hall car park	Low	Sign saying cars are parked at owner's risk. Lighting in the car park-Adequate lighting on car park on timer. There are lights in the car park and they are controlled by a timer so it is on between 4pm and 10pm via a sensor this ensures that the car park is lit for all users. Car park surfaces - Slips/Trips and falls – Surface condition regularly inspected and recorded. • Defects repaired according to risk they pose. • Unauthorised use (lorry parking) prohibited and monitored. • Inspected for glass and any hazardous conditions such as pot holes. • In adverse weather conditions the Parish Ranger grits the car park and walkways. • Ramp is provided to access the building and there is a handrail either side of the ramp. Drains are regularly cleaned Hedge Trimming • - Personal injury. Work carried out by Parish Ranger to keep the hedges manageable. Traffic management • If any work is undertaken in the car park, then there is no access and the entrance to the car park is blocked off. • Assembly point in the case of a fire is not in the car park but at the front of the building. The car park is fenced to make it secure. Regular six-month review along with asset inspections.
12.	**Parish Council Office**		
12.1	**Slips and trips**	High	General good housekeeping.

	Staff and visitors could be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.		Obvious hazards such as steps pointed out to staff and visitors. Staff keep work areas clear e.g. no boxes or objects left in walkways, deliveries put away immediately, no trailing cables or wires. All areas well lit, including stairs. Secure handrail provided on the stairs. Office cleaned regularly. Spills mopped up immediately. First Aid box provided. Staff First Aid trained.
12.2	**Manual Handling of paper, office equip. etc.** Staff risk injury or back pain from handling heavy/bulky objects.	High	A trolley is available to move heavy items. High shelves used for light objects only.
12.3	**Display Screen Equipment** Staff risk pain, discomfort or injuries from overuse or improper use of poorly designed workstations.	High	Workstations designed to take account of ergonomic factors. Work arranged so that staff do not use computers for continuous, long periods of time i.e. breaks away from the computer screen. Eye tests provided for clerk and assistant clerk.
12.4	**Working at height** Falls from height can cause injuries	High	Stool provided to enable staff to safely file or retrieve things from high shelves.
12.5	**Falling objects** Falling objects can cause injury	High	Books, files, paper and equipment are stored safely and securely on shelves.
12.6	**Stress** Staff could be affected by factors such as lack of job control, bullying, not knowing their role etc.	High	Staff understand what their duties and responsibilities are. Staff can talk confidentially to the Clerk if they are feeling unwell or ill at ease about things at work. 'No bullying' policy.
12.7	**Fire** If trapped staff could suffer fatal	High	Fire risk assessment carried out and fire alarm system installed and maintained accordingly. Fire escape route to be kept clear of obstructions and combustible materials at all times.

	injuries from smoke inhalation/burns.		
12.8	**Lone working** Staff could suffer injury or ill health while working alone. Potential danger from visitors.	High	The area is lit at night so visitors can be seen when it is dark. Staff have the option not to open the door to visitors if working alone. In the event of a problem police, emergency services or other assistance can be called.

13. Parish Ranger Risks

	Description of Risk	**Risk Rating**	**Control**
13.1	Weedkilling	High	Parish Ranger has undertaken a three-day training course in weedkilling and the use of pesticides and obtained qualification. All equipment which includes gloves, wellingtons, masks and face googles and overalls purchased for when in use and Parish Ranger wears all the correct appropriate protective equipment. Safety Data sheets for substances obtained and COSH sheets provided. First Aid kit in Parish Ranger van for use when weedkilling. Chemicals are kept in a locked room in a fire safety cupboard and are only used by qualified staff. Only recommended methods of spraying are used and all equipment has been purchased from reputable suppliers. The Parish Ranger is monitored to ensure all PPE is worn. All chemicals transported in labelled containers in the Parish Ranger's van. Parish Ranger checks the area prior to spraying and to ensure that there are no members of the public within 30 feet of the equipment when in use and any area which is going to be sprayed is cordoned off.
13.2	Accidents arising from site conditions including slips, trips	Low	Parish Ranger attends regular training sessions is a qualified first aider and has a first aid kit in the Parish Ranger's van which is checked on a regular basis. Correct PPE equipment to be used. Safety boots to be worn.
13.3	Traffic	Low	Parish Ranger issued with Hi-viz vest and is worn whilst on duty at all times.

13.4	Grass cutting and branch cutting. Potential to harm to hands, trapping of fingers and clothing in blades	Low	Parish Ranger had induction course from the Environmental Dept of Warrington Borough Council upon induction. Lawn mower is diesel and is kept in a secured locked room at Appleton Parish Hall and is never left overnight in the Parish Ranger van. Training provided in the use of the lawn mower. Ear defenders to be worn when in use. Safety goggles worn when necessary. Gloves to be worn at all times to protect hands. Litter picker to be used. Equipment to stopped and engine switched off when removing tangled objects.
13.5	Flying debris	High	Eye protection to be worn and gloves to be worn when machinery is in operation. This applies to all sections were activities produce flying debris. Pre-inspection of the area.
13.6	Exhaust fumes – Burns and impact injury	Medium	Hand and eye protection to be worn. Regular breaks to be taken as necessary . No use in closed areas.
13.7	Noise – ear and loss of hearing injury	High	Only competent members of staff allowed to operate machinery. Parish Ranger wears ear protections when machinery is in use.
13.8	Overhead cables	High	Inspect area prior to work commencing.
13.9	Vibration	Low	Hand protection gloves to be worn and machinery to be regularly serviced.
13.10	Use of flammable liquids	High	Fuels to be kept in a safe place and within sight Equipment to be switched off and refuelled away from naked flames.
13.11	Operating rotating and cutting blades	High	Observe weather conditions before commencing. Gloves to be worn at all times. Machinery to be regularly serviced.
13.12	Remove of Waste/debris	High	PPE to be worn.
13.13	Use of strimmers – Danger of flying debris Use of strimmer Noise and vibration	High	PPE and suitable clothing to be worn. Always wear the shoulder strap. Site inspection before commencing including clearance of the area to be strimmed. Look at weather conditions and clear the area before commencing.

	Fumes Loss of footing		Use of RCD cut off switch. Read the instruction manual and inspect the machine before use. When the strimmer is in use the operater should make a steady sweeping motion going from left to right in two meter movements. The strimmer should be cleaned before putting it away.
13.14	Dog faeces	High	This should not be collected under any circumstances report should be sent to Warrington Borough Council.
13.15	Needles and sharp objects	High	This should not be collected under any circumstances report should be sent to Warrington Borough Council.
13.16	Site activity and conditions – accidents arising from site conditions, trips and falls and slips	High	Weather conditions and work conditions to be looked at before any work commencing. PPE equipment to be used including safety boots
13.17	Broken Glass – injury to hands	High	Hand protection to be worn. Litter pickers to be used as and when necessary.
13.18	Dust – inhalation of dust and eye injury	High	Dust masks to be worn where high levels of dust concentrations are high.
13.19	Personal Safety	High	Lone working and contact with the public. Hi-viz jacket must be worn at all times and a charged mobile phone which is provided is carried at all times. Work areas to be cordoned off and conformation avoided and any incidents reported to the clerk.
13.20	Work at height and use of stepladders	High	Stepladders and small stepladders only be used and these must be inspected before use. Any work requiring a full ladders must be used by contractors. Checklist of ladder inspection in place.
13.21	Weather	High	Weather conditions must be looked at before starting out for the day and assessed accordingly. Sun UV rays – hat must be worn, clothes to cover up and regular drink breaks must be taken and sun cream used. Hi-viz jacket must be worn and regular equipment checks must be carried out and any missing items reported immediately to the clerk. Cold weather – regular breaks with hot drinks and gloves.

13.22	Working on or near highways	High	Hi-viz jacket always worn and work only undertaken in daylight hours. No litter picking or work to be undertaken on roads which are over 30mph. Avoid places which do not have footpaths or have sharp bends. Never work where there aren't verges or on sharp bends.
13.23	Litter/flytipping	High	Long handled litter picking equipment provided and steel safety boots provided. Never pick up any of the following; Dog faeces, broken glass, condoms, needles or syringes. Please make a note of the location and contact Warrington Borough Council so arrangements can be made for it's correct disposal. Work area to be inspected by Parish Ranger to work commencing/object to be removed should be checked visually before handling. Long handled litter picker to be used and/or dust pan and brush. Never handle or collect any unidentified cans or canisters, oil drums, poisons, insecticides and contact Warrington Borough Council for disposal.
13.24	Carrying or lifting heavy objects	High	Training, the Parish Ranger has undertook a manual handling training course. Lifting operations for manual handling. • Hand protection to be worn • PPE equipment to be worm • Always estimate the weight of a load before attempting to lift it and if it too heavy ask for assistance to lift. • Check object for any sharp edges • Ensure that object is in a stable condition and is not likely to become unstable in transit. • Remove any loose wrapping • Check for any obstruction or hazards that may be encountered before moving load. • Adopt a good posture for lifting keeping back as straight as possible and bend knees before lifting. • Get firm grip. • Keep load close to body. • Lift smoothly, raising the chin as the lift begins, keeping control of the load. • Do not twist truck of body when lifting. • If load is be carried a long distance considering resting the load mid-way on a table or bench to change grip.

13.25	Van	High	Fire Extinguisher (checked annually) and first aid box on board and is refilled when necessary. Torch is also kept in the van. Insurance is in place and this is renewed annually. The van is taxed with fully comprehensive cover and MOT is done on a annual basis. Van handbook and mileage records are maintained. Parking; • Ranger must park the van in a manner that does not cause any obstruction to pedestrians or any other road users which may force them to endanger their safety. • Ranger should check for traffic and for pedestrians before exiting the vehicle. • Hazard warning signals should be used when parking at road side. • The van must not be left running and keys must be removed. • When ranger has exited the van it should be made secure locking all doors and windows. • All tyres, water and antifreeze to be checked regularly by Parish Ranger. • When the van is not in use it should be parked next to the EV charging station.
13.26	Nesting season	Low	No cutting of any trees or hedges during nesting season.

Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ

Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonparish.gov.uk

Cyber-security Policy

Adopted on 18th June 2024

Introduction

The risk of data theft, scams, and security breaches can have a detrimental impact on a company's systems, technology infrastructure, and reputation. As a result, Appleton Parish Council has created this policy to help outline the security measures put in place to ensure information remains secure and protected.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to (a) protect Appleton Parish Council's data and infrastructure, (b) outline the protocols and guidelines that govern cyber security measures, (c) define the rules for company and personal use, and (d) list the company's disciplinary process for policy violations.

Scope

This policy applies to all of Appleton Parish Council's remote workers, permanent, and part-time employees, contractors, volunteers, suppliers, interns, and/or any individuals with access to the company's electronic systems, information, software, and/or hardware.

Confidential Data

Appleton Parish Council defines "confidential data" as:

- Unreleased and classified financial information.
- Customer, supplier, and shareholder information.
- Customer leads and sales-related data.
- Patents, business processes, and/or new technologies.
- Employees' passwords, assignments, and personal information.
- Company contracts and legal records.

Device Security

Company Use

To ensure the security of all company-issued devices and information, Appleton Parish Council employees are required to:

- Keep all company-issued devices, including tablets, computers, and mobile devices, password-protected (minimum of 8 characters).
- Secure all relevant devices before leaving their desk.
- Obtain authorisation from the clerk or assistant clerk before removing devices from company premises.
- Refrain from sharing private passwords with colleagues, personal acquaintances, senior personnel, and councillors.
- Regularly update devices with the latest security software.

Personal Use

Appleton Parish Council recognises that employees may be required to use personal devices to access company systems. In these cases, employees must report this information to management for record-keeping purposes. To ensure company systems are protected, all employees are required to:

- Keep all devices password-protected (minimum of 8 characters).
- Ensure all personal devices used to access company-related systems are password protected.
- Install full-featured antivirus software.
- Regularly upgrade antivirus software.
- Lock all devices if left unattended.
- Ensure all devices are protected at all times.
- Always use secure and private networks.

Email Security

Protecting email systems is a high priority as emails can lead to data theft, scams, and carry malicious software like worms and bugs. Therefore, Appleton Parish Council requires all employees to:

- Verify the legitimacy of each email, including the email address and sender name.
- Avoid opening suspicious emails, attachments, and clicking on links.
- Look for any significant grammatical errors.
- Avoid clickbait titles and links.
- Contact the IT department regarding any suspicious emails.

Transferring Data

Appleton Parish Council recognises the security risks of transferring confidential data internally and/or externally. To minimise the chances of data theft, we instruct all employees to:

- Refrain from transferring classified information to employees and outside parties.
- Only transfer confidential data over Appleton Parish Council networks.
- Obtain the necessary authorisation from senior management.
- Verify the recipient of the information and ensure they have the appropriate security measures in place.
- Immediately alert the Parish Council of any breaches, malicious software, and/or scams.

Appleton Parish Council

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Appleton Parish Council Safeguarding Policy

Adopted on 18th June 2024

1. Executive Summary

Appleton Parish Council has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy outlines practice that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults using parish council facilities. The policy will be reviewed regularly by the parish council.

Appleton Parish Council recognises that for this policy to be effective, it is essential that everyone working in and for the organisation understands what safeguarding is, knows that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and knows how to access further advice, support or services.

2. Definitions

Children and young people:	anyone under the age of 18
Vulnerable Adult:	anyone over 18 who is unable to care for themselves; unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation as a result of age, frailty, disability, illness or lifestyle; in need of community care services.

3. Policy Objectives

- To ensure where possible all facilities and activities offered by the Parish Council are designed and maintained to limit risk.
- To promote the general welfare, health and development of children by being aware of child protection issues and to be able to respond where appropriate as a local government organisation.
- Whilst the parish council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children and vulnerable adults, it expects all children and vulnerable adults using its facilities to do so with the consent and necessary supervision of a parent, carer or other responsible adult.

4. Promoting a Safe Environment

To promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Appleton Parish Council will:

- ensure that employees, councillors and volunteers are aware of safeguarding expectations and receive appropriate training
- provide a point of contact for reporting any concerns and for further information (Parish Clerk and/or Assistant Clerk)

5. Recognising Signs of Abuse

5.1 Children – look for changes in the following:

- appearance – such as frequent unexplained injuries, consistently poor hygiene, matted hair, unexplained gifts, parents regularly collecting children when drunk/under the influence of drugs
- behaviour – such as demanding or aggressive behaviour, frequent lateness, avoiding family members, misusing drugs or alcohol, being constantly tired

- communication – such as sexual or aggressive language, self-harming, becoming secretive and reluctant to share information or being overly obedient

5.2 Adults

Abuse or neglect of adults can be single or repeated acts, be done deliberately or unintentionally, be a result of a failure of other to protect them. I can occur in many forms, for example:

- **Physical abuse** – such as hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, or restraint
- **Domestic Abuse** – psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse or 'honour-based violence'
- **Sexual abuse** – such as rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, or innuendo
- **Psychological abuse** –intimidation, bullying, shouting, swearing, taunting, threatening or humiliating someone.
- **Financial or material abuse** – theft, fraud, forcing someone to do something in relation to their financial arrangements (for example wills, property, financial transactions), misusing or taking their money, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** – Slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – such as harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- **Organisational abuse** – organisational neglect and poor care in an institution such as a hospital, care home or care agency. This could be a culture of bullying, poor organisation, denying people choice, and lack of dignity and respect for service users.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – ignoring medical, emotional or physical-care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, and withholding necessities, such as medication, adequate food and drink and heating.
- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding

6. Reporting Concerns

Staff, Councillors and volunteers should report any concerns as soon as possible to the Parish Office who will advise on the appropriate contact, or directly to the following:

Warrington Borough Council

Children's Safeguarding/Social Work Team	443322
(Out of Office Hours	444410)

Police

If you believe a crime has been committed	101
If you believe there is an immediate risk of harm	999

7. Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult and should not take on a supervisory role at any time whilst on duty for the parish council.

Should an allegation be made, the matter will be reported to the relevant organisation (see above) and the parish council will follow its own disciplinary procedures as appropriate, including suspension from work during any investigations if necessary.

8. Further Information

Warrington Safeguarding Partnership: - www.warrington.gov.uk/wsp

Gov.uk: Report child abuse - www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse

NSPCC: What is child abuse - www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/

NHS: Child sexual abuse - www/nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/spotting-signs-of-child-sexual-abuse/

Action for Children - www.actionforchildren.org.uk/how-to-help/worried-about-a-child/

Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ
Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonparish.gov.uk

Virtual meeting protocol
Adopted by the Parish Council on 18th June 2024

1. Introduction

Appleton Parish Council recognises the opportunities offered by meeting virtually when a physical meeting is not appropriate. This policy is to assist Chairs, councillors and members of the public and press to understand how these meetings differ from a physical meeting and to assist residents and members of the public to engage in debate and decision making.

2. Virtual Meeting 'platform'

Appleton Parish Council will utilise Zoom/Teams to provide video communications. Zoom/Teams enables video and audio conferencing for persons using mobile devices, desktops, and fixed room systems.

3. Agenda and document publication

Councillors will continue to receive their agenda in an email as normal. The agenda will also be put on the noticeboards and on the Parish Council's website. www.appletonparishcouncil.org.uk. The following will also be on the agenda;
The meeting link

- Meeting ID
- Meeting passcode

4. Standing Orders

Standing Orders will continue to be used to guide the meeting in a similar way as if persons were present in a place. Any review and amendments to the standing orders will have to be approved by the Parish Council.

5. Specific Virtual Meeting Arrangements

a. Discussions

This section applies if members are experiencing good connectivity. In the case of poor connectivity see 5c.

During the meeting all persons other than members will be muted. During the public participation period members of the public will be required to 'enable video' in order for them to be visible to the Chairman and will raise their hand to indicate that they wish to speak. Their microphone will then be unmuted, and they can address the meeting. Following the conclusion of their address the microphone will be muted.

During the meeting members and officers will raise their hand to indicate to the Chairman that they wish to speak on an agenda item or ask the Chairman to speak.

All members attending the meeting will monitor their own background noise and mute their own microphones, except when speaking, if necessary, to negate interference with the meeting.

b. Voting

The chairman of the Parish Council will ask each Parish Councillor individually what their vote is on every matter. If any Parish Councillor has any objection this must be raised immediately at the meeting and addressed.

c. Poor connectivity

In the case of poor connectivity, the Chairman will decide whether to continue with the meeting or to reconvene.

In the case of video not being available for some or all of members attending the Chairman can choose to continue but to operate on a roll call for councillor views on individual agenda items.

d. Attendance If a member is believed to have 'dropped out' this will be minuted. If 'drop outs' result in the meeting becoming inquorate members will endeavour to rejoin for a period of 15 minutes. After 15 minutes if the meeting is still inquorate the Chairman will suspend the meeting and reconvene at a later time and date subject to the statutory days of notice. Members will be emailed to advise of the suspension.

e. Telephone attendance

Persons wishing to attend by telephone are advised to contact the Clerk in advance in order that processes can be put in place to enable appropriate engagement.

6. Virtual Meeting Etiquette

Normal Standing Orders apply with regard to Conduct at Meetings and all attendees are expected to be mindful of the difficulties people experience with regard to the operation of technology.

Behaviour that is contrary to the intended outcomes of the meeting will be dealt with at the discretion of the Chairman. For a member of the public or press this may result in them being dismissed from the virtual meeting.
Whilst the meeting is going ahead no eating will be allowed. However, drinking water will be allowed.

7. **Declaration of Interests**
A councillor that has declared an interest that requires them to leave the meeting will be placed in the waiting room. On conclusion of the item for which the declaration is made the councillor will be returned to the meeting

8. **Public Participation**
The Clerk will read any pre submitted addresses from the press and public. Questions will be taken.

It is impossible to hear if everyone speaks at once. To facilitate this please use the 'reactions' button.

9. **Confidential Matters**

Confidential matters will be dealt with only reporting officers and members of the Parish Council present. All members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting and the clerk will ensure that only members of the public and reporting officers are present before any confidential agenda item can be discussed.

10. **Information**
The chat box on the Zoom/Teams meeting will be disabled for all Committee and Council meetings.

Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ

Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonparish.gov.uk

Investment policy and investment strategy

Adopted by the Parish Council on Tuesday 18th June 2024

1. Introduction

This Strategy has been produced in accordance with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003.
This guidance applies to parish councils and charter trustees, providing their total investments exceed or are expected to exceed £100,000 at any time during the financial year. Where a parish council or charter trustee expects its total investments to be between £10,000 and £100,000, it is encouraged to adopt the principles in this guidance.

2. Investment Objectives

The Parish Council's investment priorities are the security of reserves and liquidity of its investments. The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. All investments will be made in sterling. The Department for Communities and Local Government maintains that borrowing of monies purely to invest, or to lend and make a return, is unlawful and this Parish Council will not engage in such activity. Where external investment managers are used, they will be contractually required to comply with the Strategy.

3. Specified Investments

Specified Investments are those offering high security and high liquidity, made in sterling and which mature in no more than a year.
For the prudent management of its treasury balances, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity, Appleton Parish Council will use;

- Deposits with banks, building societies, local authorities or other public authorities.
- Other approved public sector investment funds.

4. Non-Specified Investments

These investments have a greater potential risk, such as investment in stocks and shares the Parish Council will not participate in such investments, which are considered not to offer the level of security and liquidity required.

5. External Borrowing Strategy

The Parish Council acknowledges the importance of borrowing funds and the financial impact on the Council and the local community. The Council will agree borrowing for specific capital projects (as defined in section 16 of the 2003 Act), and gain approval for borrowing by sending an application to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). All borrowings must be approved by full council.
The Parish Council will ensure the following criteria when considering requesting a borrowing approval:

- The borrowing should only be used for the purpose of Capital expenditure as defined by Section 16 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- Any unallocated balances including, where appropriate capital receipts beyond those required for the prudent financial management of the council, should be used in the project for which the borrowing is required.
- The Parish Council should have a realistic budget for the servicing and repayment of the debt, considering the future effect on the council's precept and cash flow.
- The Council must not mortgage or charge any of its property as security for money borrowed.

The Parish Council will pursue the best possible terms when borrowing but will generally use the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). The Parish Council considers that the fixed term rates offered by the PWLB are relatively inexpensive and that PWLB loans are most likely to offer stability for the financial planning of the council.
The Parish Council will determine the period of each loan which should not exceed the period for which the expenditure is forecast to provide benefit to the Council i.e. useful life of the asset.

6. Governance and Risk

There will be due regard to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and the Parish Council will aim to spread 'specified investments' over a range of different providers in such a way as to limit exposure and minimise risk.
The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) in consultation with the Finance and General Purposes Committee will determine the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed so as not to compromise liquidity.
The Parish Council will monitor the yield on investments by having regard to the general financial, economic and political environment nationally.
All resolutions relating to investments will be noted in the minutes.

7. Review and Amendment

The Parish Council's investment position will be reviewed regularly by the Responsible Financial Officer and reported to the Full Council for consideration.
This Investment Strategy will be reviewed annually.

The Parish Council reserves the right to make variations to the Strategy at any time, subject to the approval of the Parish Council. Any variations will be put in the Parish Council minutes.