

Combs Parish Council

Risk Assessment and Financial Management for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

Topic		Risk Identified	Risk Level H/M/L	Management of Risk	Staff Action
1.	Precept	Not submitted	L	Full minute – The Clerk/RFO notes the submission date and informs the Parish Councillors	Diary
		Not paid by DC	L	Confirm receipt. An email confirming BACS payment is received from MSDC that confirms when the payment will be/has been made.	Diary
		Adequacy of precept	H	Quarterly review of budget to actual. Budgets are set ahead of deciding what level of precept to request and appears as agenda items. The clerk updates the Parish Council meeting on budget to actual. The clerk ratifies the bank statement with payments made and receipts received.	Diary
2.	Cemetery	Payment	M	Cheque fees for burials/memorials checked against fee schedule for burials/memorials, clerk updates receipt on the finance spreadsheet and adds as a receipt to the agenda which is reported to the Parish Council at each meeting	Member to verify
		Administration	M	Clerk updates burial records each time they are notified of a new burial/memorial	Member to verify
3.	Grants District	Claims Procedure	M	The clerk always follows the correct procedure for grant applications and all receipts are recorded in the agenda and minutes at the Parish Council Meetings	Diary
		Receipt of grant when due	M		
4.	Salaries	Wrong salary/hours/rate paid	M	The clerk is the only employee at Combs Parish Council and is paid an annual set salary based on 10 hours a week throughout the year. The clerk is responsible for calculating (through the HM Revenue & Customs PAYE tools) their own salary/overtime/expenses/tax which has a preliminary check by a designated councillor and then by the parish council	Member to verify
		Wrong deductions – NI and Income Tax	M		Member to verify

				prior to payment and signed off at the Parish Council Meetings. The clerk is not self-employed.	
5.	Direct Costs and overhead expenses	Goods not supplied to Council	M	The clerk reviews all invoices for the delivery of goods or services before submitting them for approval for payment, unless payments are required in advance, such as a pro-forma invoice previously agreed at a Parish Council Meeting. All necessary items are added to the asset register, which is checked annually.	Approval check
		Invoice incorrectly calculated or recorded	L	Arithmetic is checked on invoices and bank reconciliations are performed on a monthly basis when the monthly bank statements are received.	Member to verify
		BACs payment is excessive or to wrong party	M	All invoices are reviewed for payment during a Parish Council meeting and are checked and initialled to approve the payment. This is minuted. The Clerk enters online bank payments, which are then approved by two councillors. Payments are only made to the bank details specified on the invoice, unless paid directly by the clerk or a councillor. A copy of the approved invoice is included in an email sent to each signatory for verification prior to approval. All payments are recorded in the cashbook, assigned a folio number, and the backup documentation is stored in a designated folder for future reference.	Approval check
6.	Grants & Support	No power to pay or no evidence of agreement of Council to pay	M	The power to pay is always checked before payments is made. All grants are considered at a full Parish Council Meeting and conditions agreed if appropriate e.g. requests for further information for clarity. All payments are agreed and cheques written and signed during each Parish Council Meeting. The clerk updates financial records accordingly.	Member verify
		Conditions agreed	L		RFO Check
7.	Election Costs	Invoice at agreed rate	L	The clerk notes estimated election costs during an election year and budgets appropriately. The Parish Council ensure there are sufficient funds in the reserve account.	RFO verify
8.	VAT	VAT Analysis	M	The clerk keeps a register of all VAT paid in the cash book	RFO verify

		Charged on sales	M	The council is not VAT registered as they do not conduct sales	RFO verify
		Charged on purchases	L	All VAT invoices are filed accordingly and VAT paid recorded accordingly for VAT claim to be carried out.	RFO verify
		Claimed within time limits	M	Clerk submits VAT reclaims within time limit in accordance with HM Revenue & Customs regulations.	RFO verify
9.	Reserves - General	Adequacy	L	The reserve account is monitored at each Parish Council Meeting and considered at the annual budget meeting. Clerk keeps a financial record of all transactions and receives a monthly bank statement.	RFO opinion/member view
	Reserves - Earmarked	Adequacy	L	The earmarked reserves are considered at the annual budget setting, regularly at the parish council meetings and when the annual account review is carried out.	RFO opinion/member view
	Reserves - Earmarked	Unidentified Earmarked or Contingent liability	L	This is reviewed as necessary throughout the year and minuted as appropriate	RFO/member view
10.	Assets	Loss, Damage etc.	M	Assets are reviewed annually – an annual inspection is carried out on assets and insurance and asset registers are updated	Diary
		Risk or damage to third party property or individuals	M	The adequacy of the parish council's public liability insurance is reviewed annually.	Diary
11.	Staff	Loss of key personnel (clerk)	L	The clerk is the only employee. Communications are good which ensures that stress is minimal and training is provided when needed. Hours, health, stress, training, long term sick, early departure – risk is monitored and managed as appropriate. There is a formal documented annual clerk appraisal system in place with semi-formal (undocumented) reviews half-yearly supported by ongoing dialogue in the event of issues arising. Clerk is on a 3 month notice period.	RFO/member view
		Fraud by staff	L	Fidelity Guarantee value appropriately set	Council to review annually

12.	Loss	Consequential loss due to critical damage or third party performance	L	Insurance cover is reviewed and renewed annually.	Diary
13.	Cash	Cash handling	L	No cash is kept by the parish council – all financial transactions are processed by bank transfer (DDR or BACS). Regular bank reconciliations are carried out within an excel spreadsheet and statements checked. Bank balances and a financial spreadsheet are circulated via email to Combs Parish Council prior to parish council meetings and bank balances are also included in the minutes of the meeting.	Annual review of controls and member to verify reconciliations taking place.
		Cash banking	L		
14.	Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payment	H	Parish Councillors attend training when relevant. The clerk has received clerk's training but needs to be aware of changes. The clerk regularly researches or asks SALC for advice on Parish Council powers.	Diary
15.	Financial Records	Inadequate records	L	The clerk keeps account records which are updated before and after each Parish Council Meeting and on receipt of the monthly bank statement. Accounts are inspected by Internal and External Auditors annually and records are always available.	Diary
16.	Bank & Banking	Inadequate Checks	L	The council's Financial Regulations Policy sets out the procedures and requirements for all banking and the reconciliation of accounts. The clerk reconciles the bank accounts monthly to ensure all transactions are authorised and correctly recorded. This is presented to the council on a monthly basis. All online banking payments require three people to activate them - one person (an administrator) to set up the payment and two others (approvers) to authorise it. The backup paperwork is available to check authority to pay, values and banking details.	Diary
		Mistakes	L		
		Loss through dishonesty or theft	L		

17.	Minutes	Accurate and legal	L	Minutes are always reviewed and approved at the following Parish Council Meeting to which they refer. Approval of minutes are a permanent agenda item.	Diary
18.	Members Interests	Conflict of interest/Lobbying	M	These are reviewed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting and members are asked for their declaration of interests at each Parish Council Meeting and these are documented/minuted and any conflict is addressed appropriately.	Diary
19.	Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities loss of interest or performance	M	Annual maintenance inspection and review.	Diary

Approved at the Parish Council meeting dd/mm/yyyy

Signed:Chairman

Date:

(signed document is with Parish Clerk)