

HCPC RISK ASSESSMENT		Issue Number 25
Activity	Local Government in Bath & North East Somerset – Parish Council level	
People exposed to hazard	<p>The following five categories of people at risk are identified.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Employees of the Council: G Parkes, D Turvey 2) Council Members: Willy Sturges, Fraser Robertson, Gillie Whiteley, Howard Jones, Harriet Pilkington, Laura Holvey, David Featherstone 3) 'Sub-committees: Millennium Green and Play Area MC 4) Personnel contracted by Council 5) Local & transient population 	<p>Date of most recent assessment: 05/12/2025</p> <p>It is Mandatory that the Risk Assessment is updated at least Annually</p>
Define Hazards	<p>The following eight categories have been used – and then an attempt made to identify any realistic hazards within each category.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Health & Safety of Employees, 2) Health & Safety of Councillors, 3) Health & Safety of General Public, 4) Financial Risk to Council, 5) Legal Risk to Council, 6) Reputational Risk to Council, 7) Internal Administration Risks, 8) Specific Millennium Green Trust Hazards (as Trustee) & Generally 	
Define area of hazard	<p>Geographical Parish of Hinton Charterhouse and any necessary travel by employees outside it. Actions by Councillors or staff anywhere on anything that can be connected or attributed to HCPC</p>	
<p>Comments and Recommendations.</p> <p>All Council members should share knowledge and experience within the Council to minimise risks, and bring to the Clerk’s attention any new hazards they become aware of.</p>		

Current Recommendations. At this review the highest risks (10+) remain:

Main Risks

- Council employee in road traffic incident,
- Council employee as pedestrian hit by road traffic,
- General Public accident on Council property,
- Loss of Paper or Computer records. Computer back up systems. Computer security discipline
- Defibrillator proves to be non-operational during an incident
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In the light of some recent events. These risks appear to have become higher at present.

- Planning controversies. Councillors to be aware that planning applications and approaches may not always be what they appear to be. At all times Councillors should ensure impartiality, transparent actions, and if in doubt to declare their interests (if they have any) in any planning matter. If approached with an enquiry it is better to forward it to the entire Council
- Legal communications to HCPC. Ensure that you share these as appropriate. Do not respond to any until you have gained specialist advice, and if necessary Council approval.
- Risks connected with unintentional contracts or statements made that confuse authorised Council Statements with individual Councillor view or private views/opinions. Keep the two separate. Indicate in your communications which role you are acting in.
- Dangers due to forwarding long chain-emails. Try not to. Exercise care in language and release of information especially in emails as all information is effectively in the public domain. If nothing else then copyright laws can apply to other another party's text. GDPR regulations mean that you must only use personal details if they are directly relevant to a legitimate Council action. Follow the HCPC Data Protection Policy July 2018.
- Social Media
- Exposure to heat when working outdoors. Also when working near flooded roads or areas of ground.

Minor Risks

- Millennium Green Trust. Tree, Wall, or Pond hazards. Non-compliance with Charity Commissioner's regulations.

Risk Scoring Process: All hazards to be clearly identified and written down simply, and then assessed to give a 'notional risk rating'.

Each hazard is firstly scored for its **potential severity**, and then secondly is scored for the **likelihood of it occurring**. The two scores are multiplied together to give a **risk score**. This score has no special meaning except to highlight those risks that we are currently aware of and which to concentrate upon. This rating then determines priorities for actions or controls that are necessary to reduce the specific risk, and if necessary the overall risk rating for the Council. The Risk Management Options should be the most reasonable actions and need to

be regularly reviewed.

All Councillors and Council Employees are to read the assessment, contribute to it or modify it if necessary, and agree to comply with control actions. Anyone acting outside the Code of Conduct or the agreed Risk Management actions does so at their own risk.

Finally of course the Risk you haven't thought of is likely to be the one that gets you! This table is only a guide not a foolproof assessment and doesn't replace common sense. However, accidents don't just happen – they are caused. There will be a link of causal elements leading to an incident. It is your responsibility as far as reasonable to break the causal links that lead to an incident.

**Name of Assessor: Mr Geoffrey Parkes –
Clerk/RFO**

Date of Assessment: 5th Dec 2025

**Copies to: All Councillors
Members of sub-committees
Clerk/RFO, Internal Auditor**

Signature: G Parkes

EXPLANATION OF THE RISK SCORING SYSTEM

Process: Multiply score for Hazard Severity by Likelihood to give Risk Score

HAZARD SEVERITY – Worst case How serious could the hazard be at worst?		LIKELIHOOD it happens – how often. Rarity		LEVEL OF RISK – Notional Score and Action	
1	No or Minor injury – Minimum cost	1	Very unlikely - Not expected to happen	1 to 2	Trivial - No further action required
2	Absence from work less than 3 days. Low key financial implications.	2	Unlikely - 25% chance it might happen this year	4 to 6	Tolerable – Do what is reasonably practicable
3	Absence from work more than 3 days. Important legal/financial implications.	3	Possible - If not this year then next year.	8 to 12	Medium- Take some action now to reduce risks
4	Serious injury. Serious legal/financial implications.	4	Likely - 75% chance it will happen this year.	15 to 16	High Risk- Take Immediate action to reduce risk
5	Death –Disablement. Criminal legal/financial	5	Very likely - Expected to happen	20 to 25	Intolerable – Do not start/stop if underway

Hazard	Person(s) involved or affected	Hazard Severity	Likelihood of occurrence	Risk Score	Current Risk Management Options (RMOs)	Any Additional RMOs and Notes	Action By Whom	Risk Level to aim for
1. Health & Safety of Council Employees								
Road Traffic incident on Council business	Employees	5	1	5	Drive carefully Insurance Cover by Council Private Insurance Cover for occasional business use.		Clerk and Steward	5
As pedestrian hit by road traffic	Employees (especially those working near or on roads)	5	2	10	Annual Review Insurance Cover. Ensure staff wear conspicuous safety equipment and use warning triangles if necessary		Steward and Clerk	5
Other form of injury	Employees	5	1	5	Maintain working awareness of risks Insurance Cover		Clerk and Steward	5
Attitude and behaviour that could lead to accidents	Employees	3	1	3	Ensure all read and comply with RMOs and apply common sense. Regular Staff Reviews to identify anything risky.		Clerk and Steward	3
Inexperience or lack of training	Employees	4	1	4	Review annually with Employees. Regular Staff Reviews.		Steward and Clerk	4
Unsuitable personal equipment	Employees	3	1	3	Issue basic equipment suitable for the environment. Warning signs, high visibility jackets etc.		Steward	3
Weeding Chemicals	Employees (Sweeper)	0	0	0	Council Policy not to handle chemicals . PA1 and PA6 certification required. Staff not qualified.		Steward	0

					Council policy not to use chemical weeding			
Health problems caused as a result of chemical or biological/ zoonotic vectors	Employees	4	2	8	Clerk and Steward to follow accepted COSHH guidelines for inorganics. For Biohazards. Follow Govt guidance and regulations. HCPC can buy gloves – masks if required.	If in doubt – avoid exposure to these.	Clerk & Steward	
Health problems – Climate Change impacts of Heat Stress. Or Flash flood events	Employees	3	3	9	Guidance on safe outdoor working during heat waves, and also taking note during flash flooding incidents	Judge exposure to risks. Care when entering flooded areas. Clerk to forward Govt. Heat and Flood warnings to all Council members	All	
2. Health & Safety of Councillors								
Councillor having an incident while on Council business	Councillor	5	1	5	Ensure insurance policy is up to date with sufficient cover. N.B. Councillors are covered to age 85.	Take common sense precautions	All	5
Long term health problems brought on by Council work	Councillor	4	1	4	Ensure insurance policy is up to date with sufficient cover. Councillors are covered to age 85. If in doubt Cllrs should raise the matter with Chairman, Clerk or even whole Council	Take common sense precautions.	All	4
Health problems caused as a result of chemical or biological/ zoonotic vectors	Councillor	4	1	4	Councillors to follow accepted COSHH guidelines for inorganics. For Biohazards. Follow Govt guidance and regulations. HCPC can buy gloves - masks	Councillors should not need to carry out council tasks that lead to exposure. If in doubt – avoid exposure to these.	All	

Health problems – Climate Change impacts of Heat Stress. Or Flash flood events	Councillor	3	3	9	Guidance on safe working during heat waves, and also taking note during flash flooding incidents	Judge exposure to risks.	All	
3. Health & Safety of General Public								
Incident on Council Property (Play Area. The Pound. Phone Box)	General Public	5	2	10	Inspect current Council Property for hazards regularly. Annual Inspection RoSPA of Play Area Equipment. Insurance Cover. Terms of Reference for Play Area Committee. Check other property. PAMC to encourage sensible use of Play Area	Play Area Committee now transferred to MG Trust (The Council still has a duty to oversee as Trustee)	Clerk and PA MC	5
Incident due to Council Activity	General Public	5	1	5	Safety awareness by Councillors and Employees when at work. Insurance Cover. Probably only applies to road sweeping or grass cutting. However, be aware of risks to others while on any Council business		All	5
Incident or Problems due to the Defibrillator	Anyone	5	1	5	Inspections – weekly/monthly Maintenance contract with CHT Familiarisation sessions Registration with SW Ambulance service. Regular inspections by Clerk – update sent to SWAS website	Essential that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the Defibrillator is operational and fit for use to reduce Likelihood to 1.	All	5
4. Financial or Stability Risk to Council								
Fraud	By Councillor or Clerk/RFO	3	1	3	Financial Regulations. Two signatures on all cheques, stubs, and invoices. Photocopies of all Cheques.	This is covered from several angles and should be difficult – if not	All	3

					Monthly Financial Reports to Council with reconciliation to bank statements. Monthly Bank Statements. Internal & External Audits.	impossible to carry out unless complicity of at least three persons.		
Mismanagement of HCPC Bank Accounts	Clerk/RFO	3	1	3	Financial Regulations. Requirements for two authorised signatures Monthly Financial Reports to Council. Monthly Bank Statements. Maintain Receipt/Payment (Red) Book & Accounts Files. End of Year Accounts. Internal & External Audits.	This is covered from several angles and should be difficult – if not impossible to carry out unless wide spread complicity.	Clerk	3
Failure of Co-operative Bank	Co-operative Bank	3	1	3	Stability of Co-operative bank. The Council is covered by the Financial Services Act up to £85K. However, there could be disruption or freezing of account while FSA take action	Be aware of.	Clerk	3
Failure to reclaim VAT		2	1	2	Reclaim from Revenue & Customs annually. Take care with rules on VAT recovery by a public body. HMRC are being more particular about this. Take care with VAT claims. Complete within each year iaw Internal Auditors recommendations		Clerk	2
Precept failure. B&NES delay six monthly payment. Cuts in funding.		4	2	8	Maintain Contingency for six months essential expenditure. Set adequate Budget in Dec/Jan each year with amounts set aside to cover any B&NES cuts/shortfalls due to Govt. cuts in support.	Keep recommended 50% of essential expenditure + contingency with B&NES cuts to services.	Clerk	8
Unexpected expenditure		4	3	12	Maintain Contingency to cover unexpected expenditure. Set annual budgets. Agree precept level in Council. Monthly reports to Council on Spend against Budgets	Keep under review all liabilities for a) Streetlights and electricity costs , b) Millennium Green c)Play Area Safety repairs	All	8

						d) Legal ?		
Damage to fixed assets by accident or vandalism	Lamp posts. MG assets Play Area Equipment. Bus Shelter Cast Iron Finger Post Notice Boards Memorial Benches Telephone Kiosk Pound Wall	4	1	4	Maintain asset register. Review annually. Insurance schedule to cover all assets. Minor damage below £150 is not covered by policy	.		5
Loss of portable assets	Defibrillator Wheelbarrow & Sweeper equipment	3	2	6	Keep locked up when not in use. Defibrillator in steel cabinet with key pad and code: 'C 123 X'. Insurance Cover. Retain minimal portable assets		All	6
Defibrillator – Risks of accidental or deliberate damage	The Defibrillator Unit itself	4	2	8	Storage in cabinet with key pad Heater element to protect equipment in colder weather Inspection & maintenance regime. Management Contract with CHT. Regular replacement of parts (pads and batteries) is prompted by the AED itself.		All	8
PAYE miscalculation – penalties	Council	2	1	2	Minor risk. But penalties have to be paid whether Council is correct or not. And then recovered later. Review in practice as HMRC software does not seem to be set up for very part time employees. Real Time Information system introduced by HMR&C (Apr 2013) makes this highly unlikely as records are automatically checked each month by HMR&C.		Clerk	2

Pensions miscalculation – penalties	Council	2	1	2	Current Employees are ‘Ineligible’ due to pay levels below threshold. However, Council must send in ‘Nil Returns’ to the Pensions Regulator	Review in practice as Pensions Regulator does not seem to be set up for very part time employees	Clerk	2
Number of Councillors falls below quorate level	Council	2	2	4	The Council would not be able to legally function if it has fewer than three Councillors. Ensure that Council has nine, or as close to nine as possible, Councillors	Advertise Casual Vacancies and recruit public minded individuals		4
5. Legal Risk to Council								
Slander litigation	By Councillor or Clerk against third party	4	2	8	Code of Conduct. Respect for others. Insurance Cover. Think before you speak on Council business and remember the Code of Conduct	If in doubt ‘no comment’ is fine	All	8
Libel litigation. Freedom of Information request for emails	By Councillor or Clerk against third party	4	2	8	Code of Conduct. Respect for others. Care to be taken with use of e-mail. Insurance Cover. Take care with all written communications – especially email. Please Do not forward long chain-emails. Delete earlier parts of long messages.	NB. This applies to Social Media as well! Take time and consideration before responding.	All	8
Planning Process disputes	Councillor or Clerk	5	2	10	Code of Conduct. Maintain impartiality in representing the views of the community. Openness of meetings and records. Complaints Procedures Refer to Legislation, B&NES policies, Local plan. Full review by Council if discussing a contentious planning application.		All	4

Unintentional Commercial Contracts	By Councillor or Clerk	4	1	4	Understanding that only The Council as a corporate body can enter and authorise a Contract. Clerk to gain approval for a contract. Reminder that individual Councillors can not enter into agreements or contracts unless they have Council approval to act. If in doubt preface discussions: 'Without commitment' or 'Subject to contract'		All	4
Unintentional statements made as if on behalf of the Council	By Councillor or Clerk	5	2	10	Understanding that only The Council as a corporate body can make agreed decisions about Council Positions. All other statements are private views unless the individual is authorised to speak on the Council's behalf. Individuals to ensure recipients are aware if a statement is a personal view or an agreed Council Statement		All	8
Data Protection Act – failures	By Councillor or Clerk	4	1	4	Councillors and Clerk not to divulge sensitive or personnel information. Annual Registration with Information Commissioner on Data Register. The Council is entitled to exclude the Public/Press from any meeting where sensitive commercial or employee information is discussed. There are no other reasons for exclusive meetings.		All	4
GDPR. Mis-use of personal data beyond its original legitimate purpose. Investigation by Information Commissioner.	By Councillor or Clerk	4	2	8	It is permitted for HCPC to record personal information as part of its legal and democratic process. However, take care to only store necessary personal information. Gain permission to use the same information for other uses. Report data breaches to the Information Commissioner. Councillors must take care with data	Take care of Electoral Register. Cllrs are ONLY to use their copies during the elections period after which is must be destroyed. (The Clerk will maintain one copy with		

					entrusted to them, and follow the HCPC Data Protection Policy July 2018	Council files)		
Transparency Code or Freedom of Information Requests not met	By Clerk	3	1	3	Ensure documents are placed on public access website. Maintain Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. Clerk to respond promptly and appropriately (excluding sensitive personnel information). Assume all information is public. A policy of 'reasonable openness' is always the best route. Only exceptions are Commercial Tenders or Personnel matters. Or excessive or repetitive demands that cost disproportionate time or money		Clerk and Web co-ord	3
6. Reputational Risk to Council or Individuals								
Behaviour	By Councillor, Clerk or Steward. Council reputation	4	2	8	Code of Conduct. Respect for others. Register of Interests updated with B&NES. Declarations of Interest at Council Meetings. Keep in mind slander/libel laws. All communications are effectively public information – Must be able to justify what has been written/said..		All	8
Social Media	By Councillor, Clerk or Steward. Council reputation for impartiality and expected behaviour	2	4	8	All to remember Code of Conduct. What may be your personal opinions on social media may be mistaken for the Council's view. Remember you are 'on show' at all times as a Cllr or employee of HCPC		All	8
Mismanagement	By Councillor or Clerk/RFO. Council reputation for competence	5	1	5	Internal Controls and Reviews – Audits are designed to make this difficult in practice.		All	5

7. Internal Administration Risk								
Unplanned Loss of Parish Clerk	Parish Clerk	5	1	5	Ensure regular electronic back ups of HCPC records on external hard drive that can be accessed by Councillors. Paper copies are stored in 7 clear plastic boxes at the Clerk's home	Hard Drive back up on Passport. Stored off site.	Clerk	5
Loss of paper records	Damage, fire, theft	4	1	4	Store under lock. Maintain computer copies.	Move toward electronic copy of as many documents as possible.	Clerk	5
Loss of computer records	Computer failure, Damage, fire, theft. Security breach	5	2	10	Store under lock. Maintain anti-virus and security software. Maintain back up hard disc. Keep paper copies	Deposit back up copies every 3 months on separate hard drive. Computer is currently Clerk's personal machine.	Clerk	10
Failure of email/web provider	Loss of service and communications	5	2	10	Select email/web provider with track record and financial – resource resilience. Change to Gov.Uk addresses	Ensure provider keeps up to date with regulations	Clerk	
Document Control		2	1	2	Maintain Filing System in hard copy. Maintain Filing System in computer directories.		Clerk	2
Ineffective Internal Audit		2	1	2	Council to discuss Effectiveness of Internal Audit. No problems to date. New auditors ASL with established systems and best practice		All	2
External Audit non compliance		5	1	5	Internal Audit recommendations. Internal Controls. Risk Management.	Unlikely. But monitor new External Audit regime	All	5

Clerk's Contract out of date.		1	2	2	Annual Review that contract isn't stating anything illegal. Unlikely	Current Clerk is perfectly content with contract arrangement	Council	2
Stewards's Contract out of date.		2	2	4	Annual Review that contract isn't stating anything illegal. Unlikely	Current Steward is content with contract arrangement	Council	4
8. Millennium Green Trust – All other aspects of Council responsibility								
Incident on Property that the Council is Trustee for (Millennium Green)	General Public	5	2	10	Inspect current Council Property for hazards. Annual Inspection by RoSPA of Play Area Equipment. Surveys of Trees, Walls, Access. Insurance Cover. Terms of Reference for to encourage sensible use of Millennium Green TORs for guidelines on MG use		Clerk & MG MC	
Compliance with Charity Commission rules	Council as Trustee	5	1	5	Observe Charity Commission Rules Complete annual return to the CC Compliance with Deeds of the Trust TORs set for MG Management Committee MG Trust AGM open to public each March/April	Remember the Green is for use of everyone and any use should not exclude others. It is not a playing field.	All	
Compliance with HMRC rules on Charitable Trusts	Council as Trustee	3	1	3	As the MG Trust receives 'just giving' income it is now required to complete an annual Self Assessment Tax Return. HMRC will issue an annual reminder		Clerk & MG Treasurer	
Incident due to MGMC Activity	General Public	5	1	5	Safety awareness by Committee Members. Insurance Cover. Probably only applies to grass cutting. However, MGMC be aware of risks to others while on any Trust		MG MC	5

					business			
Mismanagement of MGMC Bank Accounts	MGMC Account & ultimately Council as Trustee	4	1	4	Financial Regulations. Requirements for two authorised signatures Interim Financial Reports to Council. Regular Bank Statements. Maintain Receipt/Payment End of Year Accounts. External Inspection of accounts	One Councillor to be on the MGMC	All	4
Trees – whole or part of tree falls	General Public Councillors Staff	5	2	10	Regular tree surveys by qualified arboriculturalist Review trees at the Horse Pond that are next to the Highway – being dealt with. Be aware of increased storminess and wind hazards	MGMC to arrange surveys. And keep an eye on things generally. Clerk is maintaining the Horse Pond	MG MC	5
Walls – failures	General Public Councillors Staff	5	1	5	Occasional Wall surveys by chartered structural surveyor (last done by Structures Engineer. Nigel Challis early in 2012). Keep an eye on condition. MGMC to arrange. (Unlikely but collapse into Branch Road could be serious). Be aware that extreme rainfall can build up a considerable weight of earth behind the wall		MG MC	5
Structures and Equipment – failures	General Public Councillors Staff	3	1	3	Annual survey on soundness of any benches, bins, goal posts, any other equipment		MG MC	3
Entrance road from Branch Road	General Public Councillors Staff	2	1	2	Survey condition of road surface and entrance (especially after any heavy vehicles have been using it – eg. Film Crews). NB. The M.Green owns the entrance track to the Cricket Ground Car Park	Liaise with HC Cricket Club and Hinton House Estate	MGMC	

Horse Pond – specific risks	General Public Councillors Staff	3?	1	3	Main risk is of trees falling onto the Highway Secondary risk is the difficulty of access to the site beside the busy B3110. Discourage public access (due to road traffic) and keep survey/maintenance visits to the bare minimum	Trees on road side being progressively trimmed and lowered by Clerk. Clerk is creating a lower living hedge on south and east side of pond – to allow light in. While minimising disturbance to wildlife.	MGMC	
Climate Change: Accelerates stress and resulting damage to trees. Increased flash flooding probability – damage to roads and drains. Heat and Cold events – vulnerable residents.	General Public Councillors Staff	5	3	15	See regular Tree Surveys above. Regular assessments of change and its impact on Parish Environment. Awareness of a growing flash-flooding risk around hard surfaces – and field run off events that flood lanes. Eg Green Lane, Branch Road, outside Tuggys Farm etc. Be aware of increased weight of earth behind the MG Wall. Assessment of risks when considering all future planning applications etc	Recognition of Climate & Ecological Emergency in July 2022. Adoption of an HCPC Policy to consider these risks when assessing planning applications etc	All	