BREDHURST PARISH COUNCIL

GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Adopted: July 2023
Reviewed: March 2025

Introduction

This risk assessment has been carried out on behalf of Bredhurst Parish Council, by Helen Elstone, having undertaken the CIEH Level 2 Principles of Risk Assessment and CIEH Level 3 Risk Assessment Principles and Practice courses.

The Council employs one part-time clerk, who is home based.

This Risk Assessment is in recognition that the risk assessment governing the day-to-day operations of the council.

What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment should identify potential:

- Accidents - an incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally, typically resulting in damage or injury, resulting in a cost in terms of lost work hours, compensation etc.
- Hazards - something that may cause harm to persons, premises or equipment e.g. chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, noise etc.
- Risks - the likelihood that the hazard will happen and the consequences of this.

By carrying out a risk assessment control measures to reduce either the probability of the accident happening or the severity of the outcome, and where possible both, can be identified and implemented.

Control measures include:

- Prevention – removing the hazard by elimination, replacement with alternative, isolation from the hazard.
- Engineering – introduction of adaptations and preventative measures, inspection regimes.
- Policy and Procedure Controls - reduction of exposure, introduction of safe systems of work and emergency procedures, regular workplace inspections.

How the Risk Assessment was carried out

The HSE Five Steps to Risk Assessment sets out the basic principles involved with carrying out a Risk Assessment:

1. Identify the hazards.

(1) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/section/2

(2) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/regulation/3/made

2. Decide who can be harmed.
3. Evaluate the risk.
4. Record significant findings.
5. Review

It is these principles which have been used in the preparation of the following Risk Assessment.

The system of risk rating used within this Assessment is calculated by multiplying the likelihood of the accident/injury by the severity of the injury/number of persons affected.

Likelihood					
5	5	10	15	20	25
4	4	8	12	16	20
3	3	6	9	12	15
2	2	4	6	8	10
1	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5

Severity

Likelihood (of accident/injury)
1 Negligible
2 Possible
3 Likely Occurrence
4 Occasional
5 Imminent Danger

Severity of Injury/Number of Persons Affected
1 Minor Injury or illness/first aid only/slight loss/work restriction
2 Reportable injury/temporary incapacity/moderate loss
3 Major injury/long term sickness/serious loss
4 Major injury/long term sickness/serious loss/multiple casualties
5 Fatality

These ratings in turn identify the action required, being:

- Low – no further action required;
- Medium – Reduce risk further if possible – monitor accidents/health records and act accordingly.
- High – Unacceptable risk requiring immediate action to remove/reduce risk to an acceptable level.

The Council has formal policies in relation to all aspects of its governance.

On checking the records held there are no significant accidents recorded, therefore the incidents identified are not based upon reality.

Whilst writing this report it should be noted that failure to recognise legal obligations, by employers and employees, can result in enforcement action being carried out by the Health and Safety Executive. This enforcement ensures that all parties:

- deal immediately with serious risks;
- comply with the law; and
- are held to account if they fail in their responsibilities *(3)*

Following an enforcement proceeding the HSE has the power to issue:

- A prohibition notice which tells the duty holder (employer or employee) to stop an activity immediately; or
- An improvement notice which specifies any remedial action and gives the duty holder a date by which they must complete the action.

Failure to comply can result in prosecution and the implementation of a penalty by the courts.

(1) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/section/2
(2) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/regulation/3/made
(3) http://www.hse.gov.uk/enforce/what.htm

Risk Assessment

This assessment of risk has been undertaken to identify measures needed to comply with the Management of Health and Safety and Work Regulations 1999 and the following health and safety legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Working at Height Regulations 2005
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

1.	FINANCE		
Ref	**Risk**	**Risk Level**	**Control, safeguards and recommendations**
1.1	Loss of cash through theft or fraud	Low	2 signatories to authorise all online banking transactions. Monthly bank reconciliation performed by the clerk and presented to full council. Internal audit bi-annual checks. Invoices issued for **all** hall bookings and identified by a unique booking reference. Any cheques or cash received to be banked within 4 working days. Insurance cover in place for fraud and dishonesty to £150,000
1.2	Risk of loss of income	Low	Insurance cover in place for business interruption to £10,000 Quarterly income monitoring carried out
1.3	Risk of improper use of funds granted to local community bodies	Low	Clerk trained in powers of local councils, including S137. Approval of expenditure approved and minuted at full council.
1.4	Failure to meet statutory obligations – VAT, HMRC	Low	Regular returns of VAT made and checked by independent internal auditor. Monthly HMRC returns submitted in relation to Clerk's salary.
1.5	Poor management of finances	Low	Annual review of Financial Regulations carried out by full council. Budget set and agreed annually. Annual application for precept agreed and submitted to MBC. Quarterly budget monitoring reported to full council. Special projects/event expenses monitored separately and reported to full council. Control, safeguards and recommendations.
1.6	Contracts awarded due to influence on councillors	Low	All contracts issued in line with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Job specifications and tenders approved at full council. Contracts issued on an annual basis.
1.7	Protection of records	Low	Regular back up of computer to a hard drive.
1.8	Cyber Security Threat (phishing emails, viruses and data leaks)	Low	The Parish Council has appointed BCTec Ltd to provide external back-up services and additional anti-virus security for all files and emails. The PC has also moved over to a more secure .gov.uk domain name. Cyber Security training is recommended for Cllrs.

2.	INSURANCE		
Ref	**Risk**	**Risk Level**	**Control, safeguards and recommendations**
2.1	Inadequate insurance cover. Risk to property and individuals	Low	Annual review of insurance cover undertaken by clerk and reported to full council. Annual review of asset register. Policy updated as necessary. Public and Employers Liability in place.
3.	**BUILDINGS AND AMENITIES**		
3.1	Protection of physical assets	Low	Gates, fences, street furniture and play equipment insured. Contents insurance in place. Annual safety inspection on playground equipment carried out by qualified contractor. Monthly safety inspections carried out.
4.	**RISK ASSESSMENT AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT**		
4.1	Lack of Risk Assessment leading to claims against council and poor management	Low	Annual review of risk assessment undertaken.
4.2	Poor document management leading to possibility of mismanagement	Low	Proper, timely and accurate reporting of council business in minutes. Annual internal audit of all statutory requirements and procedures. Financial records maintained in accordance with statutory regulations. Council registered with the ICO. Council computer kept secure with McAfee Security. .
5.	**COUNCILLOR PROPIETY AND COUNCIL REPUTATION**		
5.1	Unprofessional actions of councillors and parish brought into disrepute	Low	Register of Interest completed by councillors and kept up to date. Copy held by MBC along with clerk. Declaration of interests made by councillors at start of full council meeting. Councillors undertake code of conduct training.

This risk assessment is based on the current working practices.