

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

1. Objective at Risk: Providing the local community with the opportunity to participate.

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action Taken
1.1 Failure to attract sufficient candidates for member vacancies	Medium	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek candidates amongst contacts, colleagues & identified interested parties • Publicise vacancies in Council Newsletters, notice boards & local newspapers • Publicise on website/social media
1.2 Failure to achieve quorum at meetings	Low	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue annual meeting calendar to all Members • Issue meeting agendas promptly • Maintain attendance register and contact Members who fail to attend meetings
1.3 Lack of public participation at meetings	High	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include public participation on all agendas • Place articles in the Town Council newsletter • Publicise agenda on notice-boards/web-site • Notify interested groups by e-mail • Provide advice to members of the public attending Community meetings and other community events
1.4 Lack of public consultation by Members	Medium	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise address and contact details • Conduct surveys
1.5 Members acting alone outside meetings	Medium	Clerk Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide “ Good Councillor Guide” booklet to all elected members • Arrange relevant training courses
1.6 Negative publicity	Medium/High	Clerk Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that a communications protocol is in place to review all press articles before release • Avoid making comments to the press outside of Meetings.

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action Taken
1.7 Council decisions not implemented	Medium	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review minutes for confirmation of action Review correspondence file as necessary
1.8 Inaccurate Minutes	Low	Members Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and approve at next meeting Review draft minutes before publication
1.9 Inadequate document control	Low	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain Chair’s signature on approved minutes Securely retain separate copy of signed minutes Back up computer records Retain all records for required legal period

2. Objective at risk: providing such services as the community wishes

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action
2.1 Failure to correctly identify local needs or wishes	Medium	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain close contact with local residents via newsletters/website/attendance at community meetings and events Use meetings to obtain residents feedback Conduct surveys, to identify local wishes Publicise plans and invite comments

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

3. Objective at Risk: Compliance with Laws & Regulations

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action
3.1 Inadequate awareness of relevant legislation	Medium	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit suitably qualified staff Prepare comprehensive job description Attend relevant training courses & conferences Join NALC/Employer bodies Maintain reference library Attend CILCA training Liaise and network with other Clerks Liaise and network with NCC officers
3.2 Failure to comply with relevant legislation	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant legislation for all items of expenditure Refer to good practice tool kit to identify legal requirements
3.3 Failure to recognise and address conflict of interest	Medium	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review code of conduct annually Complete and sign declaration of interests form Declare personal and or prejudicial interests at each meeting
3.4 Failure to meet all payroll requirements	Low	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outsource payroll and pension administration to Northumberland County Council

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

4. Objective at Risk: Control over Fixed Assets

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action
4.1 Failure to maintain Fixed Asset register	Low	Clerk Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain & update fixed asset register • Periodically review fixed asset register
4.2 Theft of office files and equipment	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep office secure and locked • Keep important documents in secure locked filing cabinet/s
4.3 Fire damage to office equipment	Low	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all office equipment turned off when not in use • Ensure fire extinguishers are located in office
4.4 Accidental damage to fixed assets	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain adequate insurance cover
4.5 Vandalism to fixed assets	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement regular asset inspections • Arrange adequate insurance cover • Introduce planned maintenance programme where necessary.
4.6 Loss to Third Parties	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out regular Health & Safety checks • Obtain adequate insurance cover
4.7 Inadequate insurance cover	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review full insurance cover on a regular basis • Maintain an up-to-date register of assets
4.8 Insufficient income from allotments to meet costs	Low	Clerk Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor & Control spend • Review allotment rents annually • Prepare management and capital plan

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

5. Objective at Risk: Control over Funds

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action
5.1 Failure to calculate / submit precept on time	Low	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce defined budget setting and meeting timetable Confirm submission dates with Northumberland County Council
5.2 Failure to maintain proper accounting records	High	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit suitably qualified Clerk Prepare a comprehensive job description Periodically review accounting records Review reports from internal & External Auditors Annual review of Financial Regulations Keep financial records up to date Document Financial procedures
5.3 Failure to account properly for income	Medium	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive and review reports of income received Bank money received promptly Issue receipts for all money received Advise Council of all money received
5.4 Failure to account properly for expenditure	Medium	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review budgetary control reports regularly Inspect and authorise all invoices Review bank reconciliations Restrict signing of cheques Enter all invoice details in cash book immediately List all payments due at each meeting Cross reference all payments to invoices Maintain adequate analysis of expenditure

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action
5.5 Failure to account for and recover VAT	Low	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain separate records for all VAT paid • Ensure invoices are correctly made out to Ashington Town Council • Calculate VAT on small vat invoices
5.6 Failure to stay within agreed budgets	Medium	Clerk Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain properly analysed records of all receipts and payments • Produce quarterly budget reports • Regularly review budget reports
5.7 Holding excessive or inadequate reserves	Medium	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review annually
5.8 Failure to comply with statutory deadlines for accounts and other financial returns	Low	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check and log cut off dates and co-ordinate with Committee dates • Ensure the accounts are prepared promptly after the Financial year end • Ensure adequate internal controls are in place • Incorporate into audit planning process
5.9 Fraud by Clerk	High	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit suitably qualified Clerk after checking references • Periodically review accounts • Periodically review bank reconciliations • Receive & review internal/ external auditors reports • Ensure adequate insurance cover
5.10 Fraud by Members	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict access to cheque book • Ensure all financial transactions are processed by the Clerk • Ensure financial regulations are followed

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action
5.11 Failure to achieve best value	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure financial regulations are strictly adhered to • Issue competitive tenders for all major purchases
5.12 Improper contracting procedures	Medium	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure standing orders and financial regulations dealing with contracts are in place and reviewed annually • Conduct annual review of contracts • Adhere to codes of practice on procurement
5.13 Inadequate annual precept and budgeting arrangements	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present quarterly budget monitoring statement to Council • Prepare detailed budget working papers • Include contingency in budget to meet unforeseen expenditure • Retain adequate balances • Formulate Medium –Term Financial Plan • Ensure full grant sums are received from the Billing Authority
5.14 Customs & Excise requirements not met	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit regular vat returns • Undertake training on Vat and taxation matters

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – RISK REGISTER

6. Objective at Risk: Control over administration, employees and services

Description of Risk	Rating	Responsibility	Action
6.1 Loss of data on PC due to systems fault	High	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back up data on a regular basis
6.2 Loss of services of Town Clerk	Medium	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate member/s to co-ordinate recruitment and appointment activities • Immediately advertise position • Document procedures • Maintain calendar of significant administrative and financial activities • Appropriate Period of Notice
6.3 Loss of records through fire	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain back up records off site
6.4 Lack of professional advice	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase appropriate reference books • Subscribe to NALC • Attend CILCA meetings & training events
6.5 Improper, untimely and inaccurate reporting of Council business in minutes	Low	Clerk Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number minutes • Write up minutes immediately following a meeting • Agree draft minutes with the Chair prior to publication • Approve minutes and Chair sign and date. • Maintain a register of signed minutes
6.6 Failure to respond to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection	Medium	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop protocol for dealing with enquiries from the public
6.7 Incomplete/ inaccurate register of Members interests	Medium	Members Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt code of conduct • Conduct annual review