

# EAST GOSCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

## RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

### JUNE 2026

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## 1. Introduction

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East Goscote Parish Council is committed to effective risk management as a fundamental part of its governance and financial responsibilities. This policy sets out the framework by which the Council identifies, assesses and manages risks that could affect its ability to deliver services, protect public funds and meet its legal obligations.

Risk management is important to all councils, regardless of size. Failure to manage risks effectively can result in significant financial cost, reputational damage and disruption to service delivery. Whilst many risks may already be managed informally, this policy ensures that existing practices are documented, consistent and subject to regular review.

## 2. Responsibilities

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The Parish Council Clerk, as the Proper Officer of the Council, holds ultimate responsibility for risk management, as risks directly threaten the Councils capacity to achieve its objectives. The Clerk/RFO, will ensure that the Council:

- Identifies key risks facing the Council;
- Evaluates the likelihood and potential impact of each risk materialising; and
- Agrees and implements appropriate measures to avoid, reduce, transfer or accept each risk.

## 3. Common Risk Areas

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Every council faces a different set of risks. However, a number of common themes are likely to apply to East Goscote Parish Council, including:

- Physical assets; buildings, equipment, IT hardware and vehicles;
- Finance; banking arrangements, loss of income, petty cash and expenditure controls;
- Injury to the public; in playgrounds, recreational grounds and at council events;
- Legal compliance; agendas, minutes, and statutory obligations;
- Councillor propriety; declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality; and
- Cyber security; data protection, IT systems, online communications and fraud prevention.

## 4. Risk Management Approach

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For each identified risk, the Council will assess its likelihood and potential impact, classifying these as High, Medium or Low. There are three principal methods by which risks may be managed:

- take out appropriate insurance to transfer the financial impact of the risk;
- Reduce; work with a third party or implement controls to reduce the likelihood or impact; or

- Manage; monitor and control the risk directly through internal procedures and governance.

## 5. Risk Management Levels

The following table records the key risks identified by the Council, together with the risk level and the controls currently in place. This is reviewed annually and can be read in conjunction with the risk register. It will be updated as circumstances change.

Area	Risk	Level	Controls in Place
Assets	Protection of physical assets	LOW	The Parish Council holds buildings and contents insurance, along with vehicle insurance, with a level of cover applicable to the total current value of all material assets held.
	Security of buildings and equipment	MED	Door entry system at Council Offices and CCTV covering all access points. Contents insured. Regular external data back-ups maintained.
	Maintenance of buildings and recreational areas	MED	Buildings and recreational areas inspected on a weekly basis. A planned programme of electrical and safety equipment checks is in place.
Finance	Banking arrangements	MED	Current and deposit accounts maintained. Regular reconciliation of bank statements.
	Consequential loss of income	LOW	Insurance cover in place. Important documents backed up, copied and stored off-premises.
	Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty	MED	Adequate fidelity insurance cover of £250,000 maintained.
	Financial controls and records	MED	Bank reconciliations and accounts prepared monthly by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and reported to Council. Internal and external audit conducted annually. Online payments approved by Vice-Chair and Chair. Safeguarding procedures in place.
	Compliance with HMRC and VAT regulations	MED	External advice sought when required. Half-yearly VAT returns prepared by the RFO. Internal and external auditors provide verification. Monthly payroll submitted via RTI.
	Sound budgeting to underpin annual precept	MED	All sub-committees and the full Council receive detailed budgets in late autumn. Precept is derived directly from these. Actual expenditure against budget reported to Council twice per year.
	Compliance with borrowing restrictions	LOW	No new borrowing is anticipated at present.
	Legal liability arising from asset ownership (playgrounds and parks)	MED	Insurance in place. Health & Safety checklist operated at all Council premises. Weekly inspections undertaken with written records maintained. Annual checks carried out on playgrounds/assets by professional suppliers
Liability	Risk to third parties, property or individuals	MED	Public Liability insurance cover of £10,000,000 maintained.
Employer Liability	Compliance with Employment Law	MED	Membership of NALC and other national/regional bodies. Advice sought from HMRC and LRALC as required. Code of conduct training was offered to members in May 2026. Employers Liability insurance of £10,000,000 maintained.
	Compliance with HMRC requirements	MED	Advice obtained from HMRC and accounts software providers as necessary. Internal and external auditors conduct annual review.

Area	Risk	Level	Controls in Place
	Safety of staff and visitors	LOW	CCTV and door access control system fitted to restrict entry to Council Offices. Health and Safety policy in force.
	Staff long-term absence	MED	In the event of long-term staff sickness, the Council will arrange adequate cover to ensure that core administrative, financial and maintenance functions continue effectively.
Legal Liability	Ensuring all activities are within legal powers	LOW	Clerk to the Council clarifies the legal position on any new proposal. Legal advice sought where necessary. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations kept up to date and fully complied with.
	Timely and accurate reporting via Minutes	MED	Full Council meets monthly. Minutes made available to the press and public at the Council Offices, the public library and the Councils' website.
	Proper document control and retention	MED	Key legal documents held securely in the Parish Office. Computers backed up regularly in accordance with the Councils data management procedures.
Councillor Propriety	Registers of Interests and gifts and hospitality	MED	Register of Interests are completed and declared at every meeting. A Gifts and Hospitality Register is also kept in the office.
Cyber Security	Unauthorised access to council systems or data	HIGH	Strong password policies enforced for all systems. Multi-factor authentication (MFA) enabled on email and key platforms. User accounts reviewed annually and promptly deactivated upon Staff and Councillor departure.
	Phishing, ransomware or malware attacks	HIGH	Up-to-date anti-virus and anti-malware software installed on all Council devices. Staff and Councillors receive annual cyber awareness training. Suspicious emails reported to the Clerk. Automatic software and OS updates enabled.
	Data loss or breach of personal data (GDPR)	HIGH	Data Protection Policy in place and reviewed annually. Personal data stored securely and access restricted on a need-to-know basis. Data breaches reported to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) within 72 hours in accordance with UK GDPR. Data Protection Officer (DPO) appointed. All Councillors sign the GDPR consent form.
	Loss of data through hardware failure or accidental deletion	MED	Regular automated backups performed and stored securely off-site. Backup restoration tested periodically. Council data not stored solely on individual personal devices.
	Use of personal or Council-issued devices for council business	MED	Council-issued devices used for all official business where practicable. Anti-Virus installed on all devices. Loan Agreements signed.
	Third-party supplier or software vulnerability	MED	Software and online services procured only from reputable providers. Third-party access to council systems limited and monitored.
	Website security and online communications	MED	Council website hosted on a secure platform with SSL certification. Content Management System (CMS) kept up to date. Responsibility for website management clearly assigned. No sensitive personal data published online.
	Compliance with UK GDPR and data protection legislation	HIGH	Privacy Notice published on Council website. Data Subject Access Requests handled in accordance with statutory timescales. Training on data protection obligations provided to all councillors and staff.

## 6. Review

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This Risk Assessment Policy was considered and approved by East Goscote Parish Council on 15th June 2026. It will be reviewed in June 2027, or sooner if there are material changes to the Councils activities, staffing or legal obligations.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair/Vice chair)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_