MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

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General Risk Register – Melbourn Parish Council

Likelihood Scores : Low (unlikely) = 1 Medium (possible) =2 High (highly likely) = 3

Impact Scores : Low (negligible) = 1 Medium (moderate) = 2 High (Severe) =3

Risk Rating Scores (Likelihood x Impact) : Low = 1,2 Medium = 3, 4 High = 6,9

Risk Ref Key: F= Finance, POS = Public Open Spaces, G= Governance, C= Cemeteries, A = Allotments, B= Parish Buildings.

Risk Ref.	Description of risk	Impact of risk on MPC	Likelihood Score (1-3)	Impact Score (1-3)	Risk Rating (high, Medium, Low)	Response
F1	Expenditure is incurred or grants awarded without proper legal Authority.	Potential for complaints, fines, qualified audit report.	1	2	Low (2)	Qualified staff. Record of power under which grants are awarded is minuted.
F2	The PC has insufficient General Reserves so is at risk of administration if the precept is not paid on time.	Inability to provide services or pay staff salaries and other contractual liabilities.	1	3	Medium (3)	MPC holds 6 months of running costs in general reserve in line with its Reserves Policy.
F3	An adequate record of the Council's assets is not maintained.	Potential theft or misappropriation of assets. Assets could fall into disrepair. Assets may be inadequately insured.	1	3	Medium (3)	Asset register in place and reviewed annually. New acquisitions and disposals recorded. Periodic inventory checks carried out. Insurance cover linked to asset register. Professional insurance valuation of buildings to be undertaken every 5 years.

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F4	The PC has insufficient money ring-fenced in Asset Replacement/Maintenance Reserves.	Assets could fall into disrepair. Potential H&S concerns as well as adverse service delivery and rental income impact.	2	3	High (6)	Full asset register in place. Ongoing maintenance spend requirements included in precept. MPC building up Asset Management Reserve and linking it to asset renewal programme. Maintenance Committee prioritise and monitor maintenance spend monthly. MPC to create maintenance plan based on Asset Management Schedule created from survey carried out every five years.
F5	Cash is lost through theft/misappropriation.	Funding shortfall. Adverse publicity.	1	1	Low (1)	Limited cash held and banked promptly. Controls over dealing with cash. Fidelity Guarantee (insurance).
F6	Failure to ensure proper use of funds under S137.	Total S137 expenditure could exceed statutory limit for MPC.	1	1	Low (1)	Qualified Clerkand RFO. Powers for grant approvals minuted. MPC hold General Power of Competence (GPC) and do not rely on S137
F7	Proper financial records are not kept.	Inadequate understanding of financial position of the authority. Potential qualified audit.	1	3	Medium (3)	RFO in place. Regular finance reports submitted at meetings. Two internal audit visits per year.
F8	Poor Financial Management	MPC could run out of funds before the financial year end. Risk to service delivery.	1	3	Medium (3)	RFO in place. Regular budget progress reports/monitoring. General reserves of over 6 months running costs.
F9	Failure to set a precept within sound budgeting arrangements.	Inadequate funds to effectively carry out planned services. Unjustified precept charge to parishioners.	1	3	Medium (3)	RFO in place. Rigorous precept setting process followed. Adequacy of General reserves considered when setting precept. Regular budget monitoring throughout the year.

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F10	Failure to maintain an effective bank payments system.	Loss of funds from bank due to staff error or fraud.	1	2	Low (2)	Controls in place over bank payments – proper separation of duties. All payments approved by council and minuted. Review of bank reconciliations by PC member. Regular budget monitoring. Fidelity Guarantee (insurance).
F11	Loss of funds due to bank failure.	Any funds above FSCS guarantee limit could be lost. Impact on ability to deliver services and projects and meet contractual payments.	1	3	Medium (3)	Guarantee limit of £120k per financial institution. Investment policy in place. Spread of investments among different institutions.
F12	Failure to collect income from customers.	Funding shortfall which needs to be met from elsewhere.	1	1	Low (1)	Responsibility for collection of debts defined – separation of duties. Budget monitoring. Procedures to chase outstanding debts.
F13	Loss of tenant for Little Hands Nursery building	Funding shortfall which needs to be met from elsewhere.	1	3	Medium (3)	Longstanding tenant. General reserves of 6 months to cover income shortfall. Opportunity to develop parish asset for other uses.
F14	Claims will be made on insurance due to accidents in, on or around Council property (includes maintenance of public open spaces).	Adverse publicity. Failure in duty of care to parishioners. Increased insurance premiums.	2	2	Medium (4)	Wardens regularly inspect and mend things. Cllr inspections. Maintenance Committee oversees and monitors. Process over awarding of major Maintenance Contracts. Risk assessments carried out. Public Liability Insurance held.

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F15	New employees in key officer roles.	Loss of funds through staff error or fraud.	1	2	Low (2)	Staff continuity in key officer roles. Recruitment processes and references. Separation of staff duties/RFO separate from Clerk. Internal controls in place over bank payments and cash handling. Staff training and performance reviews. Fidelity guarantee (insurance).
F16	Melbourn Community Hub Management Committee might not be able to make the Hub financially viable.	The Hub might need to be managed and run by MPC. Potential adverse impact on reserves and increase in precept.	1	3	Medium (3)	MPC works closely with the Hub Management Group and several Cllrs are directors. Alternative use, provision and funding streams could be introduced to the Community Hub.
F17	SCDC and CCC are unable to perform their delegated tasks and these get pushed down to Parish Council level.	The Precept would need to be increased to enable MPC to carry out additional duties.	2	3	High (6)	MPC works closely with its District and County Cllrs and should get warning of any proposed changes so that it can make appropriate plans. MPC must continue to do this
F18	Damage or loss by fire, weather or vandalism of Councils assets	Potential adverse service disruption and unbudgeted outlay for replacements/repairs.	2	2	Medium (4)	Asset register is linked to MPC's insurance policy. Wardens and regular Maintenance Contractors report damage to assets. Asset inspections programme. Risk assessments and fire prevention measures in place.

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F19	Lack of financial controls when appointing contractors and lack of monitoring of contractors following appointment.	MPC may not get the best value from its contractors and may not get the service that it has paid for. Contractors may go out of business with an adverse impact on services.	2	2	Medium (4)	Policy for appointment & management of contractors. Policy includes financial checks. The Financial Regulations have controls around tender procedures and quotes. Maintenance Committee/Clerk monitors contractor performance.
F20	Inadequate financial controls around ordering goods and services.	The Council may not get best value for goods and services and may commit to expenditure without the necessary budget being available.	1	3	Medium (3)	Financial Regulations/Standing Orders detail procedures for authorisation of orders. It is potentially a disciplinary offence not to follow Financial Regulations. Extra checks on approvals for ordering introduced. MPC policy for awarding contracts.
F21	Loss of Financial Records.	Inability to access financial information. Failure to meet statutory requirements regarding record keeping.	1	3	Medium (3)	Financial accounting system is on a cloud-based system that is backed up remotely. Computerised finance records are regularly backed up.
F22	Investments made by MPC lose money.	The council would have to make the shortfall up from elsewhere.	1	3	Medium (3)	Investment strategy in place – low risk investments made and reviewed annually.
F23	Pandemic (such as Covid-19) may have an unforeseen impact on MPC finances.	Additional unbudgeted costs may fall on the parish council which could impact planned service delivery and projects.	2	2	Medium (4)	Position kept under review. General reserves in place of 6 months. It may be possible to move funds from other ring-fenced reserves in an emergency.

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F24	Inadequate controls over salaries and associated costs.	Salaries paid incorrectly or fraudulently. Incorrect deductions made and potential fines by HMRC.	1	2	Low (2)	HR Panel approve salary budget. Amendments to pay rates/hours are approved by HR/MPC. Signatories check salary amounts paid. Budget monitoring. Payroll software package used for deductions and returns to HMRC.
F25	Increased financial burden following impact of proposed Local Government reorganisation.	Increase to precept. Increased demand on staff resources. Risk of not fulfilling duties of Council.	2	2	Medium (4)	Council to keep up to date with proposals and work with SCDC and CCC when required to ensure Parish requirements are considered in reorganisation plans. Membership of NALC and CAPALC provides advice and information about relevant changes.
POS1	Injury of user at one of the playparks.	Poor public perception of the council. The injured party could sue MPC.	1	2	Low (2)	Wardens inspect play parks weekly and report any maintenance issues to the council for repair. Play parks are also inspected annually by RoSPA who assess the risk and highlight any necessary repair works. MPC has insurance to reduce any monetary impact.
POS2	Damage to play park equipment.	Pay for repairs or replacement of equipment.	2	2	Medium (4)	Any damage is recorded on the weekly inspections and reported to council. All items of equipment in the playparks are recorded on the asset register and are insured. MPC could claim for any damages to the insurance so there would be little/no impact to council finances.

POS3	Trees on boundaries	Falling branches / debris. Cost of Clearance. Injury / Loss of life. Impacted party could sue MPC.	2	2	Medium (4)	Weekly inspection of open spaces by wardens. Trees of concern reported to parish office and inspected as soon as practicable. Biennial inspection by tree inspector. Relevant insurance cover.
POS4	Benches	Vandalism. Cost of replacement.	2	2	Medium (4)	Vandalism is recorded and reported monthly to council. Some unplanned expenditure is budgeted for unplanned maintenance/replacement. Wardens to complete minor repairs as needed.
POS5	Bins	Vandalism. Impact of damage to environment. Cost of replacement.	2	2	Medium (4)	Vandalism is recorded and reported monthly to council. Unplanned expenditure is budgeted for unplanned maintenance/ replacement. Report issued to SCDC to clear rubbish.
POS6	Pests	Damage to ground causing uneven ground/ trip hazards could cause injury. Injured party could sue council.	1	2	Low (2)	Regular pest control is carried out. Wardens monitor the open spaces and fill in holes which are pose high risk. Football team required to check pitches prior to use. MPC has public liability insurance.
POS7	Uncontrolled grass fire (caused by extreme weather, discarded glass or smoking materials)	Severe damage to biodiversity. Threat to neighbouring properties. Injury to members of the public.	1	3	Medium (4)	Vegetation management: Maintain regular mowing schedules and clear dry undergrowth, especially near property boundaries. Public signage: Install clear "No Littering" signs at main entrances. Emergency access: Ensure all entry gates remain clear and accessible for emergency vehicles.

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POS9	Barbecues and Unauthorised bonfires	Grass or woodland ignition. Scorched earth and property damage. Smoke inhalation. Risk of injury.	1	3	Medium (4)	Approve, implement and publicise strict "No open flame" policies across sites under landownership rights. Install signage at all sites to state no open flames. Any granted exemptions to be on a case by case basis in the proviso that relevant risk assessments and insurances are in place.
POS9	Arson (deliberate ignition of bins, benches, play equipment, vegetation)	Destruction of parish assets. Financial loss to council. Risk of injury if fire spreads. Risk of property damage if fire spreads.	2	2	Medium (4)	Where possible position bins away from boundary properties. Encourage reporting through promoting details on signage at sites. Use of fire-retardant materials for asset where possible.
G1	Failure to attract sufficient candidates for member vacancies.	Reduced representation of neighbourhoods. Lack of resource. Possible meeting inquorate.	1	3	Medium (3)	Actively publicise MPC's activities. Seek candidates from groups within village. Publicise vacancies in an eye-catching manner on noticeboards, social media, website, and in the press.
G2	Failure to achieve quorum at meetings.	Business not transacted. Decisions not made.	1	3	Medium (3)	Issue annual meeting calendar to all councillors and officers. Issue agendas promptly. Check which councillors will be attending before the meeting. Contact councillors who miss meetings.

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G3	Failure to correctly identify local needs or wishes due to lack of public consultation by Council.	Council does not represent the people. Resources not applied. Democratic deficit. Decisions not based on evidence. People disenfranchised.	1	2	Low (2)	Ensure meetings are publicised on the notice boards and website. Maintain close contact with local residents, with working parties, surveys, public consultations etc. Publicise plans and invite comments. Act on residents' feedback.
G4	Failure to respond to electors wishing to exercise right of inspection	Complaints received. Not transparent. Non-compliance.	1	2	Low (2)	Advertise how electors can exercise right of inspection and respond to requests.
G5	Members acting alone outside meetings.	Members outside compliance. Indemnities invalid. Personal risk.	1	2	Low (2)	Councillors attend training session and read "Good Councillor Guide". Do not make agreements outside of meetings.
G6	Council decisions not Implemented.	Confidence undermined. Reputation risk arises. Possible losses.	1	2	Low (2)	Actions from meetings to be reported to relevant meeting / committee.
G7	Inaccurate, untimely, improper minutes.	Poor decisions in future. Poor evidence for decisions.	1	2	Low (2)	Draft minutes publish. Draft minutes to be approved at following meeting.
G8	Inadequate document control.	Poor evidence. Poor support to Members.	1	2	Low (1)	Establish an appropriate filing and retrieval system. Produce a document version control calendar.

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G9	Failure to recognise and address conflict of interest. Inaccurate register of members' interest.	Lack of transparency. Open to complaints of fairness or bias nature.	2	2	Medium (4)	Councillor to review Standards regime and comply with requirements. Register of Interests to be reviewed by Councillors at Annual Parish Council Meeting.
G10	Failure to complete and submit Annual Return.	Poor Auditors report. Public confidence suffers.	1	2	Low (2)	RFO in place. Maintain a diary for the annual return process.
G11	Loss of data on PC due to system fault.	Interruption to effective administration. Possible financial loss.	1	3	Medium (3)	Cloud based system implemented. Cloud back ups.
G12	Loss of services of Parish Clerk.	Interruption to effective administration.	2	2	Medium (4)	Deputy Clerk in place. Locum Clerk to come in. Councillors to undertake some financial and administrative tasks. SLCC to assist in emergency.
G13	Non-compliance with data Protection.	Litigation. Poor reputation.	1	2	Low (2)	Data Protection Officer (Deputy Clerk) to monitor, report and act in accordance with the data protection policy.
C1	Injury caused by poor management of burial grounds e.g. fallen headstone	Poor public perception of the council. The injured party could sue MPC.	1	3	Medium (3)	Wardens to carry out fortnightly inspection. Immediate action taken when high risk issues are identified. The council has public liability insurance. Memorial checks training to be undertaken (action).

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C2	Loss or theft of burial records.	Loss of records would create more work for officers, which would increase the workload and therefore increase wages.	1	3	Medium (3)	Burial records are kept in a fireproof safe or archived. Copies of records from 2011 are also kept digitally to limit the risk of loss.
C3	Burial administration error.	Opening a grave incorrectly or exhuming an incorrectly buried interment would incur additional cost to MPC.	1	2	Low (2)	The burial plot is checked by administrator on the map and then verified by the wardens at the cemetery, who mark the plot prior to the interment. The grave digger/funeral director also has a copy of the map to check the grave.
C4	Error due to incomplete / incorrect historical record keeping.	Opening a grave incorrectly or exhuming an incorrectly buried interment would incur additional cost to MPC.	1	2	Low (2)	Endeavours taken to confirm historical records. Site inspection carried out as required. Digitally updating records as new evidence gathered.
A1	Overgrown and abandoned allotments.	If plot is overgrown and impacting neighbouring plots, the council pay for the clearance, if the previous holder will not, which is an additional cost.	1	1	Low (1)	The plots are regularly inspected so that the council can identify plots of concern and act before clearance is needed.
A2	Bonfires	Damage to the allotments could cause loss to the council and holders. Damage to surrounding land and property.	2	3	Medium (6)	Holders must take out insurance to have a plot. The rental agreement states allotment holders must not leave bonfires unattended.
A3	Poorly constructed sheds and greenhouse.	Damage caused to holders. Damage caused to plots	2	2	Medium (4)	Holders must take out insurance to have a plot. Holders must comply with the shed specification. Any shed that does not comply with the shed specification will be removed.

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A4	Asbestos uncovered .	Cause health issues for users of allotments. Impacted party could sue the council.	1	2	Low (2)	Regular inspections and clearance carried out by council. Asbestos survey carried out ranks risk as "very low". Holders to act in accordance with council's management plan.
B1	Fire	Injury or loss of life. Impacted party could sue the council. Damage to building and assets. Rebuilding costs.	1	3	Medium (3)	Council buildings are insured. Council has public liability insurance. Annual servicing of fire safety equipment. Building specific risk assessments reviewed annually.
B2	Electricity issues	Injury or loss of life. Impacted party could sue the council. Damage to building and assets. Rebuilding costs.	1	3	Medium (3)	Council building are insured. Council has public liability insurance. Annual PAT Testing. Regular inspections where faults can be identified and reported.
B3	Poor hygiene	Cause health issues. Impacted party could sue the council. Damage to building (mould, damp etc.) Repair cost.	1	3	Medium (3)	Users must remove any food from the premises after use. Cleaning is carried out regularly (at least weekly). Issues reported to the council and addressed.
B4	Legionella	Cause health issues/disease. Impacted party could sue the council. Cost of remedial works to clear legionella. Cost of closing premises during work.	1	3	Medium (3)	Annual legionella risk assessment and water testing. Remedial works reported to council. Wardens carry out the legionella control regime (action to update any training required). Any issues reported to council.

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