

Great Notley Parish Council Risk Management Policy

2025 - 2026

Introduction

This document explains Great Notley Parish Council's ('GNPC') approach to risk management, as mandated by the Council's Financial Regulations 2024 (regulation 2.2).

Definition of Risk

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect Great Notley Parish Council's ability to achieve its objectives or carry out its duties effectively

Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to outline Great Notley Parish Council's approach to identifying, evaluating, and managing risks to ensure the effective delivery of services, safeguard public funds, and maintain public trust.

Approach to Risk Management

GNPC recognises that safeguarding the people and the natural & built environments in its jurisdiction makes for sound moral and economic sense. The Council acknowledges that 'risk' cannot be eliminated wholly, but considers it vital to take all reasonable steps to minimise the incidence & extent of injury, damage and financial loss.

Policy Statement

Great Notley Parish Council will:

- Identify potential risks
- Assess their impact and likelihood
- Implement control measures to mitigate risk
- Review risks regularly

Types of Risks Considered

Risks include but are not limited to:

a) Financial Risks:

- Loss of income or fraud
- Uninsured liabilities
- Budgetary control and reserves

b) Legal and Compliance Risks:

- Breach of legal responsibilities
- GDPR and FOI non-compliance
- Contracts and procurement

c) Operational Risks:

- Failure of IT systems
- Lack of staff training or turnover
- Dependence on key individuals

d) Reputational Risks:

- Poor public perception
- Failure to communicate effectively
- Failure to deliver services

e) Physical Risks:

- Damage to property or assets
- Health and safety incidents or injury

Strategy for Implementing the Risk Management Policy

JPAG recommends a formal implementation strategy with clear responsibilities. The following paragraphs aim to comply with the recommendation.

The first step for management of risks is to identify them. Government legislation & guidance and GNPC's policies, strategies & procedures include pointers to risks involved in the Council's operations. Additionally, GNPC will seek professional advice in specialist areas where appropriate.

For successful implementation of the Policy, it is essential that:

- a. All Councillors & Staff have an understanding of what constitutes a risk; and
- b. The Council adopts a uniform approach to managing risk.

This should facilitate choosing of the most appropriate method for dealing with each risk.

Both Councillors and Staff will assist in and take responsibility for the identification, control and reduction of risk and containment of cost in all aspects of their activities.

Councillors & Staff will provide adequate information about any identified risk to the Council in a timely manner.

Complaints, including those from the public, will be reviewed to identify any problem areas that may be indicative of risks being managed inadequately. Identified risks will be entered in a risk register, evaluated and prioritised. Training opportunities for staff and councillors will be made available where necessary.

Reviewing the Policy

GNPC's approach to risk management will be reviewed annually with a view to incorporating improvements to key elements of its processes and procedures.

In case of a substantial change in the functions/duties undertaken by GNPC, the policy will be reviewed prior to such change being undertaken to assess the viability and effectiveness of the policy.

Assessment of the Strategy

Both internal & external audits provide an independent review of the Council's systems of internal control for risk identification & management. The external audit is conducted annually by a government appointed auditor.

The internal audit is conducted annually by an independent auditor (JPAG para 4.10-4.11) appointed by Great Notley Parish Council. For years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25, the Council appointed Internal Auditor, Ann Wood.

The external audit is conducted annually by a government appointed auditor. For the period 2022-23 to 2026-2027 the appointed auditor is PKF Littlejohn LLP.