



Great Barton Parish Council - Risk Management Strategy

1. Introduction

This document sets out Great Barton Parish Council's Risk Management Strategy. Its objectives are to:

- Strengthen and embed risk management within the Council's governance framework
- Ensure risks are managed in accordance with recognised best practice
- Enable the Council to anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental, financial and legislative requirements

Effective risk management supports the Council's ability to deliver high-quality services, safeguard public money, and maintain public confidence.

2. Policy Statement

Risk management is the process used by Great Barton Parish Council to identify, assess and address risks that could adversely affect its ability to achieve its objectives. Poor management of risk can lead to financial loss, reputational damage, service disruption, and increased costs to the local taxpayer.

The Council recognises that not all risks can be eliminated. However, it is committed to a structured, systematic and proportionate approach to managing risk. Wherever possible, risks should be eliminated or reduced before considering more costly options such as transferring or insuring the risk.

3. Implementing the Strategy

3.1 Risk Control

Risk control involves taking action to reduce the likelihood of a risk occurring and/or reducing the severity of its impact. Methods include:

- **Elimination** – removing the circumstances that give rise to the risk
- **Reduction** – implementing controls to reduce likelihood or impact
- **Transfer** – passing financial impact to another party (e.g., contractors)
- **Sharing** – sharing risk with partners or other authorities
- **Insuring** – using insurance to mitigate financial consequences

- **Acceptance** – formally recording risks that the Council agrees to tolerate

3.2 Risk Management Process

The Council will manage risk through the following steps:

- **Risk Identification** – risks will be identified through the Annual Risk Assessment undertaken each February/March, and through ongoing operational monitoring.
- **Risk Analysis** – risks will be assessed for likelihood and impact, and evaluated to determine whether existing controls are adequate.
- **Risk Prioritisation** – risks will be categorised as low, medium or high to ensure resources are directed appropriately.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Great Barton Parish Council considers risk management a core governance responsibility. This includes:

- Clear roles and reporting lines for risk management
- Opportunities for shared learning and training
- Incorporating risk considerations into decision-making, procurement, project planning and financial management
- Ensuring effective communication with staff, councillors and volunteers
- Monitoring risks throughout the year and adapting controls as needed
- Ensuring Internal Audit provides independent assurance that systems are effective
- Considering feedback from internal and external audit
- Reviewing NALC guidance on governance and accountability
- Ensuring compliance with GDPR, including maintaining required documentation
- Ensuring the **Finance & Governance Committee** (or equivalent) reviews the Risk Management Strategy and Insurance Schedule annually

A sound risk management approach supports continuous improvement and demonstrates strong corporate governance.

5. Monitoring and Review

5.1 Strategy Review

This Risk Management Strategy will be reviewed annually as part of the Council's review of internal controls, policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Recommendations will be reported to Full Council.

5.2 Risk Monitoring

Risk management must be monitored regularly to ensure changes in risk profile are identified and controls updated. Progress will be measured through:

- Adjustments to service delivery
- Feedback from councillors, staff, volunteers and residents
- Audit recommendations
- Internal control checks

5.3 Insurance

The Council maintains insurance cover appropriate to its risks, including:

- **Physical assets** – insured at replacement value
- **Public Liability** – £10,000,000
- **Employers' Liability** – £10,000,000
- **Money** – £5,000
- **Fidelity Guarantee** – £250,000
- **Libel & Slander** – £100,000
- **Office Equipment** – insured at current valuation
- **Personal Accident** – £10,000

The Insurance Schedule is reviewed annually by the Finance & Governance Committee and the Internal Control Officer.

5.4 Financial Risk Assessments

Financial Risk Assessments are reviewed annually by the Finance & Governance Committee and reported to Full Council.

5.5 Internal Audit

The Independent Internal Auditor provides essential scrutiny and assurance that risk management systems and internal controls are effective. Internal Audit identifies financial and operational risks and supports the Council in strengthening controls to reduce the likelihood of error or fraud.

5.6 Internal Control

Risk management forms part of the Council's internal control system, which includes:

- Policies and procedures
- Monthly financial reporting
- Budgeting and forward planning

- Internal audit
- Internal control checks carried out by councillors

6. Review Schedule

The Council maintains a record of annual reviews of:

- Risk Management Strategy
- Insurance Schedule
- Financial Risk Assessments
- Internal Control Checks

These reviews are carried out by the Finance & Governance Committee, RFO, Internal Control Officer and Internal Auditor as appropriate.

Adopted September 2026

Review in May 2027 along side Internal controls and Council Risk Assessment