

YATTON PARISH COUNCIL

Finance, Personnel & Administration Committee, 24 May 2010

Agenda item 10: Risk assessment

Report of the Clerk

1. This report summarises the risks the Parish Council is exposed to. Risks come in various form but the main ones are: risk of injury to staff, risk of injury to members of the public using council property, risk of loss of or damage to council property and risk of unlawful action.

2. Risk management involves (a) reducing the likelihood of a risk occurring and (b) reducing the impact on the Parish Council if a risk does occur. (a) is achieved by (for example) regular inspection of assets, the maintenance of an up-to-date asset register and effective internal control procedures. (b) is achieved mainly through insurance cover.

3. As regards (a) Yatton Parish Council's assets, both land and equipment, are regularly inspected by staff. There was a recent electrical inspection of Hangstones pavilion and the remedial works listed as essential or desirable have been carried out. However, PAT testing of the Parish Council's portable electrical appliances is required. The asset register has been updated to 1 April and a copy sent to our insurers. Internal controls were reviewed by two councillors in April. The Parish Councils books and records are available to inspection by any councillor on demand and without notice.

4. As regards (b) the Parish Council's insurance covers (1) buildings and contents insurance for Hangstones and Rock Road (2) buildings insurance for Yatton Youth Club (because the Parish Council is the tenant) (3) all risks insurance for equipment (4) public liability insurance of £5 million (5) employer's liability insurance of £10 million (6) libel and slander insurance (7) tractor insurance (8) legal expenses insurance (9) personal accident insurance for employees, volunteers and councillors (10) fidelity guarantee insurance of £600,000 (fidelity guarantee insurance is against the risk that an employee will make off with the Parish Council's funds). The level of cover is reviewed annually.

5. As a further aid to risk assessment the Finance, Personnel & Administration Committee agreed last year to the purchase of software specifically aimed at parish council risk assessment called Local Council Risk System (LCRS). LCRS asks for every risk facing the Parish Council to be assessed for likelihood and impact, in each case as 1 Low, 2 Medium or 3 High. The two scores are then multiplied and if the result is 4 or over the risk is scored as requiring action. This happens unless one or other of the scores is Low.

6. I attach a summary report from LCRS and I will bring a few copies of a full report (48 pages) to the meeting. The result of my scoring is that vandalism is the only risk that consistently requires action, because it occurs often and requires remedying but the cost is unlikely to exceed the insurance excess. Ultimately there is little to be done about vandalism at unsupervised and unfenced areas except to work closely with the police, engage with young people to get their support in discouraging vandalism and work with others to provide constructive recreational opportunities.

7. In my view the Parish Council's management of risk is satisfactory but I would welcome members' comments.