

## RISK REGISTER - EPPING TOWN COUNCIL - MARCH 2025

### GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Key to risks: **High (H)**      **Medium (M)**      **Low (L)**

	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Severity	Control Measure	Review frequency	Alternative Review trigger	Responsible Person/s
1.	Lack of forward planning and financial/ budgetary controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of direction and prioritisation</li> <li>Needs of those in partner organisations not addressed</li> <li>Poor financial control</li> <li>Loss of respect and reputation</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business/action plan in operation</li> <li>In year budget reviews</li> <li>Feedback from Partners</li> <li>Monthly reconciliation for all accounts</li> </ul>	Annually  Quarterly As required  Monthly	Unexpected expense	Clerk/RFO & All Members
2.	Council lacks relevant skills and commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council fails to achieve its purpose</li> <li>Decision making bypasses Council</li> <li>Poor value for precept money</li> <li>Council ignores advice of Clerk</li> </ul>			Whilst difficult with democratic election process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to select carefully</li> <li>Ongoing training for Councillors</li> <li>Close review of attendance</li> <li>Ongoing training for Clerk</li> </ul>	Annually & ongoing Every meeting Ongoing	Poor decisions through lack of knowledge	Chairman of Council
3.	Council becomes dominated by one or two or cliques form (Illegitimate Party dominance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflicts of interest</li> <li>Pursuit of personal agendas</li> <li>Decisions made outside Council</li> <li>Loss of interest by excluded members</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear Standing Orders regarding conduct of meetings and Conflict of Interests</li> <li>Clerk monitors</li> <li>Chairman monitors</li> <li>Select carefully</li> </ul>	Annually (or through CGAC when legislation changes) Ongoing monitoring		Chairman/Clerk

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4.	Councillors benefiting from being on Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affect reputation</li> <li>Conflicts of Interest</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear Standing Orders</li> <li>Open system of payment</li> <li>Robust Internal Audit</li> </ul>	Annually All meetings		Chairman Clerk Internal Auditor
5.	Poor reporting to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor quality decision making</li> <li>Council becomes ill informed</li> <li>Clerk fails to keep Council informed</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timely and accurate financial reporting</li> <li>Clear instructions to staff</li> <li>Regular project reports</li> <li>Clerk's ongoing training</li> <li>Clerk to ensure good reporting to Council</li> <li>Clerk appraisal</li> </ul>	Quarterly  Ongoing  Each meeting Ongoing	Reminder from District and County  Project Problem	Clerk/Chairman
6.	Loss of key staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure in budgetary controls</li> <li>Correspondence backlog</li> <li>Lack of knowledge/loss of experience</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Succession Planning</li> <li>Clear office procedures</li> <li>Clear budgetary procedures</li> <li>Monitor remuneration packages</li> <li>Up to date job descriptions</li> <li>Good handover arrangements</li> <li>Ongoing communication and sharing of information</li> </ul>	Ongoing Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing	Loss of staff member	Chairman/Clerk /All staff

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff development and training</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
7.	Inadequacy of Precept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services not provided</li> <li>• Lack of confidence in Council</li> <li>• Strong budgeting process</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular in year budget reviews</li> <li>• Detailed budget setting process and monitoring of funds</li> <li>• Regular highlighting of any potential forthcoming high costs/necessary expenditure</li> </ul>	Every Council Meeting Annually & ongoing Ongoing as required	Unexpected event i.e. flooding	Clerk & All Members
8.	Failure to respond to electors wish to right of inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of confidence</li> <li>• Loss of reputation</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear Standing Orders and Operating Protocols</li> <li>• Adherence to Audit Regulations</li> </ul>	Annually  Annually		Clerk
9.	Failure to register Members interests, gifts, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member could make inappropriate gains</li> <li>• Could affect reputations</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear code of conduct</li> <li>• Clear procedure monitoring interests</li> <li>• Clerk monitors</li> </ul>	Annually		Individual Member Clerk
10.	Failure to meet the requirements for LCAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status</li> <li>• Reputation</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor requirements for LCAS</li> <li>• High standards</li> </ul>	As required		Clerk
11.	Poor document control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not passed on in a timely manner</li> <li>• Deadlines missed</li> <li>• Lack of achievement</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear Standing Orders</li> <li>• Clear Job Descriptions</li> <li>• Clear Office Procedures</li> <li>• Good communication</li> <li>• Ongoing policy</li> </ul>	Annually Ongoing  Ongoing Ongoing		Clerk/All staff

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					document review timetable			
12.	Lack of maintenance of Council owned property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High cost of repair</li> <li>• Injury to 3<sup>rd</sup> party leading to claims</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stock condition survey</li> <li>• Regular routine maintenance</li> <li>• Insurance cover</li> <li>• Interim insurance updates if necessary</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing As required</p> <p>Annually Ongoing</p>	<p>Unexpected Natural Disaster</p> <p>Acquisitions /disposals</p>	Clerk
13.	Damage or loss to Council owned property by 3 <sup>rd</sup> party or act of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High cost of repair</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance cover</li> <li>• Good Fire Alarm</li> <li>• Good Burglar Alarm</li> <li>• Regular Maintenance Inspection</li> </ul>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p>		Clerk
14.	Damage to 3 <sup>rd</sup> party property or individual due to service or amenity provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claim against Council</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance</li> <li>• Regular checks of facilities</li> <li>• Risk Assessments</li> </ul>	<p>As required Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Annually As reported</p>	Clerk
15.	Loss of cash through fraud or dishonesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in available funds</li> <li>• Loss of reputation</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear financial procedures</li> <li>• Adequate insurance cover</li> <li>• Verify &amp; attach copy order to invoice</li> <li>• Fidelity guarantee cover (insurance)</li> </ul>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>One offs</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>On a Loss</p>	<p>All Members Clerk Internal Auditor</p>
16.	Problems due to borrowing or lending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure of 3<sup>rd</sup> party to repay loan</li> <li>• Inability of Council to</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include in annual budget</li> <li>• Clear Standing Orders</li> </ul>	<p>Quarterly reviews</p> <p>Annually</p>		Clerk/Members

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• repay a loan</li> <li>• Poor investments</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office Procedures</li> <li>• Review investments regularly</li> <li>• Strong Financial Key Member</li> </ul>	Ongoing Annually	Economic climate	
17.	Failure to use grants for purpose for which they were intended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of funds for project for which grant was intended</li> <li>• Investigation into the use of funds</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear minutes</li> <li>• Ensure funds properly ring fenced</li> <li>• Clear financial procedures</li> <li>• Review of funds</li> </ul>	Ongoing  Ongoing Annually		Clerk
18.	Ensure Council complies with law, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Equal Opportunities</li> <li>• Data Protection</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Disability and Discrimination</li> <li>• Employment Law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fines and Penalties from regulation bodies</li> <li>• Employee action for negligence of grievance</li> <li>• Risk of reputation</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive Standing Orders and Procedures</li> <li>• Clear Job Descriptions</li> <li>• Comprehensive Risk Assessments</li> <li>• Ongoing training as legislation changes</li> <li>• Professional membership such as EALC/NALC</li> </ul>	Annually  Ongoing Annually Ongoing		Clerk/Members
19.	Risk of acting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Loss –</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure powers are</li> </ul>	All		Clerk/Members

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	without proper powers. (Ultra vires)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criminal Charges</li> <li>Loss of respect and reputation</li> <li>Loss of confidence</li> <li>Claim against Council</li> <li>Lack of knowledge</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>researched and stated in Agenda reports</li> <li>Ongoing training for Clerks and councillors</li> <li>Qualified Clerk</li> </ul>	meetings		
20.	Risk of increasing regulatory burden preventing performance of work benefiting the parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased complaints from Precept payers</li> <li>Staff stress and retention problems</li> <li>Poor relationship between Officers and Members</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Members are advised of regulatory demands and the effect of these demands on workload</li> <li>Ensure the Members respond to consultations on regulatory issues</li> <li>Pressure on employees/workload is monitored by the Clerk</li> </ul>	<p>As required</p> <p>Monthly meetings &amp; Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing &amp; annually</p>		Clerk
21.	Failure to identify Risks facing the Council & to put measures in place to mitigate such risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council encounters serious challenges for which no pre-planning has been undertaken</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clerk to review risk register &amp; make appropriate recommendations</li> <li>Senior member of staff monitoring as a back up</li> </ul>	Annually	Serious challenge	Clerk & All Members
22.	Dramatic fall in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extreme difficulty in</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly Budget</li> </ul>	Monthly		Clerk, Finance

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	investment and trading income	<p>achieving budget targets for that financial year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placing of deposits with one source (Council not protected by the FSCS guarantee of £75,000)</li> </ul>			<p>monitoring – Clerk and Members must be aware of the risks and consequence of poor financial performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A significant fall in income must be balanced with spending cuts or a drawdown of reserves (whichever is appropriate see 23 below).</li> <li>Spread investments across banks/building societies</li> </ul>	Annually/as required		Key Member and Council
23.	Inadequate Reserve funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year end cash flow difficulties and/or failure to meet unforeseen expenditure (may result in need for unplanned and expensive borrowing)</li> <li>Unable to deliver service and functions</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain Year end General Reserve level at between 3 to 6 months of the anticipated total expenditure.</li> <li>Maintain adequate levels of specific reserves for known recurrent spending priorities.</li> <li>Understanding of the function of funds and their importance</li> </ul>	<p>Budget setting process and review in relation to ad hoc spending requests</p> <p>Ongoing training for Clerk/Cllrs</p>		Clerk, Finance Key Member and Council
24.	Significant loss of computer facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of administrative capacity</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain electronic backups both onsite and offsite</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Cyber attack or threat of	Clerk

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain separate off site backup of accountancy data.</li> <li>• Maintain battery backup to server (until server not used)</li> <li>• Maintain contract with computer maintenance (good IT support)</li> <li>• Monitor IT support and update as appropriate</li> </ul>		cyber attack or breakdown	
25	Loss of continuity through a change of Council due to elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of knowledge and experience</li> <li>• Risk of poor decisions</li> </ul>		M/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong/clear procedures in place which are followed</li> <li>• Qualified Town Clerk</li> <li>• Members to share knowledge amongst themselves to assist newer councillors</li> <li>• Strong auditing checks</li> </ul>	Election time  Ongoing	Poor decisions	Clerk All members
26	Loss of interest in Council's affairs by councillors and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor decision making</li> <li>• Poorer quality of work</li> </ul>		L/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued engagement of councillors</li> <li>• Continual involvement of staff in projects and training</li> <li>• Sharing of information</li> <li>• Interesting projects</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Poor decisions Poor work Feeling of apathy	Clerk/Chairman / All members/ All staff

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff monitoring and development</li> </ul>			
27	Poor member behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affect on the whole Council including Council's reputation</li> </ul>		L/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reminder of the importance of team working</li> <li>Regular reminders of proper practice/process</li> <li>External reporting of poor behaviour</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Poor behaviour	All members Clerk
28	Unexpected health emergency/situation (such as Covid 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to work in the normal manner</li> <li>Remote working which may lead to gaps in service/provision</li> </ul>	M/H	L/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of remote working methods if needed</li> <li>Team covering different functions so sharing of tasks</li> <li>Strong, diverse team who are multi-skilled in basic daily operations</li> <li>Regular team meetings to ensure engagement</li> <li>Regular contact to ensure continuity</li> </ul>	Health emergency • Requirement for home working	Long term absence  Building failure eg fire/flood	Clerk/All staff/Council
29	Failure to fill all Council seats at an election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less input and potential diversity of opinion</li> <li>Less combined knowledge/experience</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing members training</li> <li>Qualified Clerk</li> <li>Process for advertising vacant Council seats</li> </ul>	4 yearly after elections If required	Elections Vacant member seat	Clerk/Council
30	Failure to understand the implications of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not upgrading cyber security or continuing professional advice and</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing members training</li> <li>Qualified Clerk</li> </ul>	Memberships renewals	Awareness of out of date	Clerk

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	making financial cuts/not listening to advice and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support memberships to save money (EALC, NALC, SLCC, ICCM, NAMBA)</li> <li>Cyber security and legal updates/knowledge becomes out of date exposing/increasing risk</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening to advice of Clerk and others</li> <li>Allocating sufficient budget to cover adequate support and memberships</li> </ul>	Ongoing	software or advice	
31	Devolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Devolved services and functions but no funding</li> <li>Overstretched resources leading to cuts</li> <li>Lack of knowledge</li> <li>Risk of failure</li> </ul>		L/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing discussions and training for members and staff</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Additional information or requests	All members Clerk