

Risk Assessment for contracting a locum Clerk

(as authorised in minute 226.20 of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th January 2021)

- **266.20** After a brief discussion Cllr Cornell proposed, Cllr Roberts seconded and it was RESOLVED to authorise members of the Staffing Committee to appoint a locum clerk (as a contractor, not as an employee) to act as the Clerk for meetings of the Parish Council, and any of its Committees and Sub-Committees, whilst the Clerk is not fully back to work, and to allow the members of the Staffing Committee to spend up to £2,000 on such services.
- The Parish Council is not required to manage payroll activities for the locum clerk or provide pension arrangements.

The Parish Council therefore needs to consider any risks that this arrangement poses:

Activity	Risk/Hazard description	Who is at risk / Risk Category	Risk Score			Risk level (red, amber, green)	Existing Controls	Further actions	Risk level if further actions completed	Risk owner	Review date
			Impact	Likelihood	Total						
1. Agenda management	In the absence of the Clerk the Agenda is poorly worded, unclear in meaning, fails to be provided in a timely way or itemises activities that are not within the remit of the Council	Council reputation Misleading members of the public	3	2	6	Amber	(In normal circumstances the DPC Clerk manages Ordinary and Committee meeting agendas and meeting agendas are usually checked by the meeting chair before publication) In the absence of the Clerk, the agenda is being created and reviewed jointly by the four chairs on the rota, following	In the event of absence of the Clerk for a period which is considered as having potential to impact on the legitimate running of the Council to appoint a locum Clerk to cover this activity and with the following provisos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The locum's qualifications and experience will be to a good standard by choosing one who has been pre-checked by SLCC. • A minimum of 2 of 	3 x 1 = 3	Parish Council	At the start of any new contract for this service

						<p>as far as possible the Clerk's wordings from previous meetings and after taking advice from WALC and South West Councils when needed.</p>	<p>the 4 chairs will check the wording of the agenda before publication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any doubt about the legitimacy of an agenda item will be checked with WALC • Meeting chair will ensure agenda is published 3 clear days before meeting • Locum will show that they have sufficient personal public liability insurance • DPC's insurers have confirmed that the locum Clerk is covered under the Parish Council's insurance policy 		
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2. Minute taking and publishing	Minutes are inaccurate and subsequently used as the basis for Council activity Minutes are poorly worded and unclear	Council reputation Misleading members of the public Any person or body being the subject of Illegal activity	3	2	6	(In normal circumstances DPC Clerk manages Ordinary and Committee meeting minutes and meeting minutes are usually checked by the meeting chair and are either published as draft or not published before being agreed at the next meeting) In the absence of the Clerk, the minutes are being created and reviewed jointly by the four chairs on the rota, following as far as possible the Clerk's wordings from previous meetings and taking advice from WALC and South West Councils when needed.	In the event of absence of the Clerk for a period which is considered as having potential to impact on the legitimate running of the Council to appoint a locum Clerk to cover this activity and with the following provisos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The locum's qualifications and experience will be to a good standard by choosing one who has been pre-checked by SLCC. • Locum's qualifications and experience will be established (locum obtained via SLCC and therefore pre-checked) • Full council will approve minutes before publication. • Locum will show that they have sufficient personal public liability insurance. • DPC's insurers 	3 x1 =3	Parish Council	At the start of any new contract for this service
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								confirmed that the locum Clerk is covered under the Parish Council's insurance.			
3. Advice regarding legislative obligations undertaken by the Council	In the absence of the Clerk incorrect advice is given resulting in the Council undertaking illegal activities or failing to undertake its legal responsibility	Council reputation Misleading members of the public Any person or body being the subject of Illegal activity or failure of legal duty	3	3	9		(In normal circumstances, the DPC Clerk is experienced and well qualified to provide this advice and the DPC Clerk has the opportunity to consult SLCC, WALC and a network of clerks) In the absence of the Clerk, WALC and South West Councils are consulted by the chairs but only when it is recognised that advice is needed. One of the problems with this approach is that WALC has limited resources and consequently may not always be able to respond quickly enough to	In the event of absence of the Clerk for a period which is considered as having potential to impact on the legitimate running of the Council to appoint a locum Clerk to cover this activity and with the following provisos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The locum's qualifications and experience will be to a good standard by choosing one who has been pre-checked by SLCC. • Locum will show that they have sufficient personal public liability insurance. • Locum will have sufficient personal public liability insurance. • DPC's insurers have 	3 x1 =3	Parish Council	At the start of any new contract for this service

							meet our needs.	confirmed that the locum Clerk is covered under the Parish Council's insurance.			
4. Involvement in financial activities required by the Council	In the absence of the Clerk incorrect advice is given resulting in the Council spending monies unnecessarily Fraudulent use of Council funds	Council Parish resident rate payers	3	2	6		(In normal circumstances, the DPC Clerk is experienced and well qualified to provide this advice, has the opportunity to consult SLCC, WALC and a network of clerks and payments are set up by the Clerk and require two members to authorise) In the absence of the Clerk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WALC and South West Councils are consulted by the chairs but only when it is recognised by them that that advice is needed. One of the problems with 	In the event of absence of the Clerk for a period which is considered as having potential to impact on the legitimate running of the Council to appoint a locum Clerk to cover this activity and with the following provisos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locum Clerk's involvement will be limited to advice with no access to bank details. Any uncertainty about financial advice will be checked with WALC. Locum will show that they have sufficient personal public liability insurance. DPC's insurers have confirmed that the locum Clerk is 	3 x1 =3	Parish Council	At the start of any new contract for this service

							<p>this approach is that WALC has limited resources and consequently may not always be able to respond quickly enough to meet our needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One of the three members with access to the Parish Council's bank accounts is setting up Parish Council approved payments for authorisation by the two other members.	<p>covered under the Parish Council's insurance.</p>		
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