

Creech St Michael Parish Council

Policy Title	Business Continuity Plan
Policy Reference	B23
Applies to	All Employees and Councillors
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Review Cycle	Annual
Review Dates	



1.0 Introduction

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on a local authority that it is prepared, as far as reasonably practical, to continue to provide functions/services in the event of a disruption by whatever cause. Whilst this is not a statutory duty for a Parish Council, it is Creech St Michael Parish Council's intention to recognise the importance of producing and maintaining a Business Continuity Plan for implementation in the event of disruptions, the immediate responses, the procedures and necessary changes to service delivery, where such services are disrupted by factors within the Council's area of responsibility.

This policy provides a framework in order for the Parish Council to mobilise its response and undertake work to prevent or mitigate the severity of potential disruptions. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Parish Council's Risk register and Health and Safety Policy.

2.0 The Parish Council's Core Business

The Parish Council provides a number of services and holds responsibilities within its community. These include, but are not restricted to the following.

- Maintenance of a website, notice boards, newsletter information and the use of other social media to communicate important and relevant matters.
- Maintenance of signs, benches, waste bins, bus shelters and other street furniture.
- The provision of allotments.
- The provision of sports fields, play areas and public open spaces.
- Maintenance of phone boxes and defibrillators.
- Maintenance of Speed Indicator Devices
- Acting as a consultee on planning applications to represent the best interests of the parish.
- As a member of the Hestercombe Local Community Network (LCN)
- Managing the finances of the Parish Council to enable the delivery of services and facilities within the Parish.
- Liaising with Somerset Council and other partner organisations on issues that affect the parish

Creech St Michael Parish Council does not operate from an office or have any specific premises necessary for the discharge of its responsibilities.

3.0 Causes of Disruption

The most common causes of disruption to the operation of 'normal' business are as a result of damage, failure or loss and all are considered as part of this plan.

3.1 Damage

Damage that is significant enough to disrupt services or the operation of the Parish council is likely to be as a result of fire, adverse weather, an act of terrorism or significant intervention from an external source.

See Plan A for identified risks and steps that should be taken to manage the impact on the Parish Council

3.2 Failure

Impacts from a failure can be significant, but in the case of the Parish Council are unlikely to significantly disrupt the operation of the Council's services or day-to-day operation. The impact

of a failure in equipment or machinery is likely to only have a short term impact and can be easily addressed through the replacement or repair of any failed items. A failure in the provision of a service is also unlikely to have far reaching consequences and can be addressed in a relatively short period of time. These services include but are not limited to the following.

- Waste disposal.
- Grass gutting.
- Provision of rooms for meetings.
- Recreation park locking and unlocking service.

The Parish Council identifies the measures that are in place to mitigate against a failure by the Unitary Authority to process payment of the annual precept within the Parish Council's Risk register and this should be referred to in this situation.

3.3 Loss

The single most significant factor that is likely to cause disruption to the Parish Council's ability to function, is the loss of people, either employees or members. A significant loss of members to fulfil key roles or a reduction in members that are able to fulfil their basic role could lead to a paralysis in the Parish Council's ability to function.

The Parish Council recognises the importance of the Clerk and RFO to the day-to-day operation of the Council's activities and that the vulnerability that comes as a result of this key role. Plan B details the identified risks and steps that should be taken to manage the impact of loss on the business of the Parish Council.

4.0 Continuity Plans

Plan A – Damage Business Continuity Plan

Issue	Impact	Minimise Actions	Medium Term Mitigations
Fire damage to a building	Minimal impact on services. Potential for building to be out of use for an extended period of time.	Building to be securely cordoned off and access to users to be denied. Communicate situation to users and explain short term proposals to mitigate impact. If required, source temporary accommodation as a replacement.	Evaluation of ability of the Parish council to fund a replacement building, to include an assessment of need.
Damage to property or as a result of adverse weather or closure of service or facilities as a result of adverse weather.	Closure of facilities or withdrawal of services.	Property to be securely cordoned off and access to users to be denied. Communicate situation to users and explain short term proposals to mitigate impact. If required, source temporary accommodation as a replacement.	Parish Council to review property or service viability post-incident. Parish Council to approve plan for remedial works or for plans to replace property or services.
Damage to property or facilities by some other source.	Closure of facilities or withdrawal of services.	Property to be securely cordoned off and access to users to be denied. Communicate situation to users and explain short term proposals to mitigate impact. If required, source temporary accommodation as a replacement.	Parish Council to review property or service viability post-incident. Parish Council to approve plan for remedial works or for plans to replace property or services.

Plan B – Loss Business Continuity Plan

Issue	Impact	Minimise Actions	Medium Term Mitigations
Financial Loss	Reputational impact within the community. Inability of the Parish Council to function day-to-day.	Parish Council to continue to exercise financial controls and to monitor income and expenditure.	Parish Council to investigate an investment strategy for retained funds.
Significant reduction in member numbers	Inability of the Parish Council to meet and be quorate leading to a block on decision-making. Reputational impact within the community.	Proactive exercise in recruitment of members. Seek support from Somerset Council Democratic Services. Reduce meeting frequency to focus membership on key decision-making processes.	Ensure members are trained and supported to encourage retention. Build a pipeline of members through good governance practices, effective communication and community engagement.
Loss of key members – Chair or vice Chair – for an extended period of time.	Inability of the Parish Council to meet and be quorate leading to a block on decision-making.	Seek to establish a succession plan for key roles. Chair appointed meeting-to-meeting.	Ensure members are provided with the opportunity to undergo training for Chair role.
Loss of Clerk and RFO for an extended period of time	Significant impact on the day-to-day operation of the Parish Council.	Clerk and RFO to prepare key activity information pack, to include details of the following. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking • Payroll • Accounting procedures • Key outsourced services • Key contacts • Social media and website • Email and telephone 	Parish Council seeks to recruit to post following review of role and terms and conditions. Parish Council seeks support from SALC and SLCC to ensure role is an attractive proposition and recruitment plan is appropriate.

		<p>Chair of Staffing Committee or another designated member to oversee line management of employees.</p> <p>Chair or other designated member to act as clerk to administer meetings.</p> <p>Parish Council seeks support from SALC and SLCC to appoint an interim Clerk and RFO.</p>	
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