

Business Continuity Plan: Loss of Clerk

Introduction

1. The Council recognises the need to ensure it is able to continue to function and provide services in the event of the temporary loss or absence of the Clerk.
2. This plan identifies potential issues and the immediate responses and procedures to follow to allow the Council to continue to operate normally as far as possible.

Council Services

3. The Clerk is responsible for the delivery of the Council's services which include:
 - Running a civil cemetery on Parker Road
 - Looking after a community woodland
 - Cutting verges of all roads in the Village and on the Hill, apart from those that are the responsibility of Highways England
 - Looking after an automated external defibrillator attached to the Village Hall.

Council Functions

4. The Clerk is responsible for:
 - Organising monthly Council meetings, except in August
 - Commenting on planning applications submitted to the District Council for land in or immediately adjacent to the parish
 - Publishing notices and sharing information on its website, and on noticeboards on the Hill and outside the Village Hall
 - Managing the Council's finances
 - Pursuing and promoting the interests of parishioners with the District and County Councils and other organisations on issues that affect the parish.

Potential causes of disruption

5. The Council may lose its Clerk through resignation or illness or injury whilst on or off Council duties.

Activities

Task	Minimise impact	Action
Send, receive and answer emails	Chairman to hold passwords in sealed envelope	Recover Council's laptop from Clerk's home, if possible
Organise monthly Council meetings (face to face)	Meetings and venues arranged annually for whole year	
Organise monthly Council meetings (remote)	Chairman to hold Zoom account password in sealed envelope	
Make payments and pay in cheques	Financial Regulations allow direct debits and electronic payments	Recover cheque book and paying-in book from Clerk's home, if possible
Carry out monthly defibrillator checks, replace pads or batteries	Chairman to hold access code in sealed envelope	
Deal with applications for plots, interments, memorials or additional inscriptions	Up-to-date diagram of burial ground published on website	Recover Registers from Clerk's home, if required and if possible
Pay Clerk's salary net of PAYE tax due	Chairman to hold Government Gateway ID and password in sealed envelope	Recover HMRC paying in book from Clerk's home, if possible

Sources of Advice

Subject	Who to contact	Telephone no	Email address
Financial procedures	Current internal auditor, Auditing Solutions Ltd	01380 850588	stuart@councilaudit.co.uk
Governance	Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	01491 838555	info@oalc.org.uk
Insurance	Current insurers, BHIB Insurance Ltd	0330 013 0036	enquiries@bhibcouncils.co.uk
Locum	Society of Local Council Clerks, which runs a Locum Service	01823 253646	consultancy@slcc.co.uk
Maintenance	Laura Harlock, Oxford Direct Services Ltd	07483 010887	laura.harlock@odsgroup.co.uk
Monitoring Officer	Margaret Reed, Head of Legal and Democratic	01235 422520	democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk

Geoffrey Ferres
 Parish Clerk,
 Wednesday 30th December 2020