

Lowestoft Town Council

For the attention of all Councillors

You are summoned to attend a **Personnel Committee** meeting of Lowestoft Town Council, which will be held at **Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE** at **10:00** on **Thursday, September 4, 2025**.

The meeting is held in accessible premises and open to the public and press to attend.

Those attending shall be informed that the meeting may be reported on (including recording, photographing and filming). This does not apply to confidential items. Comments can also be submitting regarding any item on the agenda in advance of the meeting.

Members of the public can join the meeting remotely via [Teams](#). The meeting can also be observed via [YouTube](#).

In providing any comments members of the public accept that, where they are suitable, they may be considered at the meeting and published in our minutes. Any individual submitting the comments should ensure that their name, address and contact details are included in their communication and should note that anonymous submissions will not be accepted. Members of the public accept that their name may be noted and recorded at the meeting. However, their contact details will not be noted and reported publicly.

Councillors must register relevant interests and declare them at a meeting if they have such an interest in a matter to be considered. Under the Localism Act 2011, a councillor with relevant interests in matters on the agenda cannot take part or vote on those matters, unless they have been granted a dispensation. Under the Council's Code of Conduct, a councillor must leave the meeting room if they have such an interest, unless they have been granted a dispensation. There may be other interests or matters in which councillors might be considered to be biased or predetermined in which case they will need to consider whether they should leave the room.

The Council has a duty to pay due regard to preventing crime and disorder and to conserve biodiversity as part of relevant decisions.

S. L. Foote

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Sarah Foote, Town Clerk
01 September 2025

Lowestoft Town Council

Personnel Committee

Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE

10:00 on Thursday, September 4, 2025

AGENDA

39 Welcome

To explain the fire evacuation procedure, welcome the meeting, and remind councillors and members of the public of the right to report.

40 To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

41 Declarations of Interests and dispensations

41.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests, and of bias and pre-determination on items on the agenda

41.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted

42 To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 7 August 2025, and the confidential note of the meeting on 3 July 2025

43 Public forum

An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public.

44 To monitor expenditure from the staffing contingency budget

45 To monitor the Risk Register and receive an update on the implementation of control measures

46 To consider the following relating to Councillors:

46.1 To receive a report of training completed

46.2 To note schedule for completion of Councillor Training Programme for 2025/2026

47 To consider the following regarding staffing (some aspects may be confidential):

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47.1 A recommendation to Full Council regarding leave arrangements for the Christmas and New Year period

47.2 Terms and conditions

- a. Pay reviews
- b. Support for wellbeing

47.3 To receive an update on recruitment

- a. Town Hall Manager

47.4 Arrangements to cover staff absence

48 Date of next meeting

Thursday 2 October 2025 at 10:00.

49 Items for the next agenda and close

50 Admission to meetings

To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely any employment matters and legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda

Lowestoft Town Council
Personnel Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE
Thursday 7 August 2025 at 10:00

MINUTES

Present: Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum, Wendy Brooks, Jen Jones, Christian Newsome (Chair), Graham Parker, Andy Pearce and Bernie Rappensberger

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Town Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Senior Committee and Project Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

27 Welcome

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained, and the meeting was welcomed.

28 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Connor Blowers, John Murray, Keith Patience, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman with reasons provided. Cllr Rappensberger proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

29 Declarations of interests and dispensations:

29.1 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable interests, and of bias and pre-determination from Councillors – There were none.

29.2 Written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – There were none.

30 The draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 3 July 2025

Cllr Pearce had provided his confidential note for the section of the meeting where no officers were in attendance. The confidential note from 3 July as prepared by officers would be deferred. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the minutes of the meeting on 3 July 2025 and the confidential note which had been provided; seconded by Cllr Begum; one Councillor abstained; one Councillor voted against.

31 Public forum

No advance comments had been received and there were no members of the public in attendance.

32 Finance:

32.1 Monitoring expenditure from the staffing contingency budget – The budget monitoring document had been provided. Currently, it was anticipated the year-end position would be an £8,800 surplus. Cllr Brooks had a matter relating to the staffing contingency budget to raise during the confidential session.

32.2 The local government pay award agreement – This had been settled at 3.2%, which was slightly below inflation. Unless there were any objections, this would be applied to all staff and backdated to 1 April.

32.3 Budget for extension of temporary contracts (some aspects may be confidential) – To be considered during the confidential session.

33 Staffing (confidential):

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33.1 Review of the Committee Clerks' job descriptions in light of staffing structure changes –

To be considered during the confidential session.

33.2 Line management and governance arrangements for accountability of the Town Clerk –

To be considered during the confidential session.

33.3 Staff terms and conditions (confidential): - To be considered during the confidential session.

- a. Application of the Local Government Pay Award for the 25/26 financial year
- b. Updates on model contract of employment
- c. Updates on the employee handbook
- d. Variations to the application of Flexible Working and Family Related Leave (Chapter 4 Employee Handbook)
- e. Variation of temporary contract of employment to permanent
- f. Variation of contract of employment from part-time to full-time
- g. Agreeing working arrangements for Christmas and New Year period

33.4 An update on any matters relating to recruitment – The Town Hall Heritage Apprentice had been appointed and would be starting on 8 September. The advertisement for the Town Hall Manager was due to be published in September. The advertisement had been provided to the Town Hall Project Committee. At its meeting in July, the Finance and Governance Committee had made a recommendation regarding the salary banding. The contingency budget allowed for six months' salary pro-rata, at the top end of the salary banding that the position will be advertised at.

34 Organisational resilience and contingency/succession planning – This had been considered by the Personnel Working Group and Personnel Committee, who had made a recommendation for the external consultant to take this forward as part of the staffing and organisational structure elements of business plan. Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse this as a recommendation to Full Council; seconded by Cllr Barker. Cllr Pearce had circulated the confidential notes of the Personnel Working Group meeting to Councillors via email, and they had also been provided as a confidential document with the agenda. Seven Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

35 Review and formalisation of recruitment processes

The Working Group had considered this item at its meeting on 25 June. No particular issues had been raised and a standardised recruitment process had already been adopted by the Council, however it was noted that there had been deviations from this process, particularly for the Town Hall and some Grounds Maintenance Team positions. Where a delegation had been agreed with regard to the recruitment process, this would need to be made clear, if not the agreed process should be adhered to.

36 Date of next meeting

Thursday 4 September 2025 at 10:00.

37 Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests.

Cllr Jones proposed to move the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

38 Admission to meetings

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Personnel Committee

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Thursday 7 August 2025 at 10:00

32.1 Monitoring expenditure from the staffing contingency budget – An independent HR consultancy had been commissioned to undertake salary benchmarking for senior posts in recent months. An external consultant would also be reviewing this as part of the business plan.

32.3 Budget for extension of temporary contracts (some aspects may be confidential) – This would be covered under item 33.3f.

33.1 Review of the Committee Clerks' job descriptions in light of staffing structure changes – These had been reviewed by the Personnel Working Group. The job descriptions for both Committee Clerks required amending to remove outdated references and typographical errors. Cllr Brooks proposed to approve an addition to the Senior Committee and Project Clerk's job description; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Depth of cover for when the Town Clerk is on leave or absent was considered. Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse a recommendation of the Personnel Working Group to Full Council regarding this; seconded by Cllr Barker; seven Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against. It was considered this would form part of the Council's resilience and risk management, and Cllr Begum therefore proposed for the external consultant to also consider this as part of her work on the business plan; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

IT resilience was also considered. The Town Council had moved over to a new provider.

33.2 Line management and governance arrangements for accountability of the Town Clerk – The Personnel Working Group had considered this item but had made no recommendations and had asked the Personnel Committee to consider it. It was agreed to move this item to the end of the meeting.

33.3a Application of the Local Government Pay Award for the 25/26 financial year – It was noted the 3.2 % increase would be applied to all staff in August's pay, backdated to 1 April 2025. This had been budgeted for, up to 5%.

33.3b (Updates on model contract of employment), 33.3c (Updates on the employee handbook) and 33.3d (Variations to the application of Flexible Working and Family Related Leave - Chapter 4 Employee Handbook) – The Senior Committee and Project Clerk gave an update to the Committee on her personal circumstances.

Regarding items 33.3b and 33.3c, an external HR provider had been asked to review the model contract of employment, and had also applied updates to the employee handbook, reflecting new legislation. It was suggested the Working Group could meet to review the changes.

Cllr Pearce proposed for the Personnel Working Group to review the model contract of employment and updates to the employee handbook and make recommendations back to the Personnel Committee at its September meeting; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

It was agreed to move item 33.3d to the end of the meeting.

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Thursday 7 August 2025 at 10:00

33.3e Variation of temporary contract of employment to permanent - Cllr Brooks made a recommendation to Full Council to approve the variation of a temporary contract of employment to permanent; seconded by Cllr Pearce. It was requested the Finance Manager budget for this on a pro-rata basis. All Councillors voted in favour.

33.3f Variation of contract of employment from part-time to full-time – Cllr Brooks proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve the variation of a contract of employment from part-time to full-time; seconded by Cllr Pearce. It was again requested the Finance Manager budget for this on a pro-rata basis. All Councillors voted in favour. It was requested for the Grounds Maintenance Team’s requirements and justifications for equipment to be provided no later than September.

Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to delegate authority to the Clerk to authorise a contractual change for an officer’s hours to be increased, in consultation with the Finance Assistant and Town Hall Project Manager to agree the appropriate time to do this. Cllr Begum seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

33.3g Agreeing working arrangements for Christmas and New Year period – Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to close the office on Christmas Eve this year. For any staff required to work that day, they would instead be permitted to take an alternative day, before the end of January 2026, by arrangement with their Line Manager. Cllr Begum seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

In appreciation of officers, Cllr Pearce proposed to set aside funds from the staff contingency fund for a staff Christmas wellbeing event; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour. In previous years, this included a round-up of work completed and achievements that year, and planning for the year ahead.

The Senior Committee and Project Clerk left the meeting 11:21 for consideration of the remaining items

Signed:

21 August 2025



Risk Register

Introduction

Lowestoft Town Council has a robust approach to risk management and reviews and adopts its policy on an annual basis. The attached report provides an overview of the Council's approach to risk management, an updated Risk Management Policy, Internal Control Statement and fully revised Risk Register. The key changes to each section of the attached paper are set out below, followed by a recommendation to Council.

1. Introductory Paper setting out approach to risk management: updated from 2024 to improve clarity with further detail provided on the Council approach to considering risk.
2. Annex 1: Review of Risk Management Policy (introduced by Council in May 2017, reviewed and updated annually)
 - Expanded ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
 - Risks allocated to Committees to review on a quarterly basis and recommend amendments to Council
 - Clerk undertakes a full review of risk register each quarter
 - Added in IMPACT category of OPERATIONAL IMPACT within the Risk Assessment Rating Criteria
3. Annex 2: Internal Control Statement for Year Ending 31 March 2026
 - Internal Control Statement from Internal Auditors
4. Annex 3: Lowestoft Town Council Risk Register
 - External consultant completed a full review of all risks and discussed with Acting Town Clerk, Facilities and Contracts Manager and Senior Committee and Projects Clerk
 - Re-grouped risks into 7 categories and tested impact and likelihood scores for each risk
 - The Risk Register contains a total of 36 risks categorised as followed:

Risk Category	Red	Amber	Green	Total
Finance and Governance	2	7	5	14
Assets & facilities		2		2
Staffing		1	3	4
Major projects		2	2	4
Health & safety & emergencies	1	2		3
Information & communications	1		2	3
Reputational		3	3	6
Total	4	17	15	36

Recommendations

Council to review and adopt Risk Management Policy and Internal Statement of Control.

Council to review Risk Register and approve changes to risks, ratings and organisational management of risks.

Lowestoft Town Council
Council paper
Risk Management: Policy, Internal Control Statement and Risk Register
April 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Council introduced a Risk Management Policy in May 2017 which included risk assessment criteria and an initial risk register.

The Council has grown substantially over the past seven years, going from a staffing team of 4 to a team of nearly 30 with an annual precept of £2.4m. Additional income is received from capital grants and loans to deliver a programme of major projects such as the refurbishment of the Town Hall (£10m) and Marina Theatre (£3.4m).

As a result of this growth and the multi-faceted programme of work now being pursued by the Council it is appropriate that Council review and update its

- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Assessment Criteria and Council's Appetite for Risk
- Risk Register

WHAT IS RISK MANAGEMENT?

Risk management is the on-going process of identifying the actual and potential risks that an organisation is facing, assessing the impact of these risks and putting in place actions (controls) intended to lessen (mitigate) the risk to an acceptable level. Council officers and members should work together to review the risk register on a regular basis – in the case of Lowestoft Town Council this review is via Full Council – recognising while risks are unlikely to be fully eliminated, through robust and timely management, they can be brought to within an acceptable level.

In line with the newly issued *Model Financial Regulations for Local Councils*, updated April 2024, NALC states:

- ***The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.***
- *The Clerk / RFO shall prepare, for approval by [the council], a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.*

ANNUAL APPROACH TO RISK MANAGEMENT

LTC has a robust approach to risk management that includes:

- A Risk Management Policy, adopted by Full Council and reviewed on an annual basis at Annual General Meeting (May) – see Annex 1.
- Internal Control Statement – reviewed and updated each year at the Annual General Meeting (May) – see Annex 2.

- Annual audit of accounts (internal auditor) with full internal audit report – submitted to Full Council, in June (accounts to be approved by 30th June)
- Submission of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (to government appointed external body)
- Risk Register, owned by Full Council and considered each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May – see Annex 3.

In April 2025 it is proposed:

- each Committee review the full Risk Register and confirm those risks they should consider in detail as part of their annual programme (e.g. AID should review the Assets & Facilities risks, Personnel the staffing risks, F&G the financial and governance risks etc). The Risk Register contained within this Paper provides an initial allocation of risks for consideration.
- Full Council retains ownership of the Risk Register with Committees reporting recommendations for changes to the Risk Register on a quarterly basis.

UPDATES TO THE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Lowestoft Town Council introduced a Risk Management Policy in May 2017. This policy has been updated and is included in Annex 1.

UPDATED RISK REGISTER (2025)

The previous risk register has been fully reviewed and updated and is presented as the Lowestoft Town Council Risk Register 2025, available in Annex 3.

Annex 1:

Risk Management Policy

1. Purpose

To ensure the Council identifies, manages and mitigates risks which may impact Council members, officers, the public, operational services and / or capital investments.

2. Definition of Risk

An uncertainty of outcome of actions or events which impacts upon Lowestoft Town Council achieving its objectives or which might create legal, regulatory, financial or reputational exposure for the Town Council

3. Approach to Risk

Lowestoft Town Council is committed to good management of risks as part of its wider internal control procedures. This ensures the Council can:

- Have increased confidence in achieving its objectives and deliver core services
- Contain threats to levels it considers reasonably acceptable.
- Take informed decisions about exploiting opportunities.
- Assist the Clerk in completing the annual governance statement; and
- Identify, monitor, and manage any exposure to legal, regulatory, financial or reputational risk

The Council recognises that to achieve its objectives it must manage risk within its assessment of reasonable levels. The following principles outline the Council's approach to risk management:

- The Town Council, as a whole, has responsibility for overseeing its own risk management;
- An open and receptive approach to managing risk is adopted by the Town Council;
- The approach to assessing risk will be consistent and will include an assessment of likelihood and impact.

In addition to corporate risk, members and officers have a responsibility to assess and appropriately manage risk as part of the evaluation of project proposals, business cases and grant applications including where the Town Council is working in partnership with external agencies. Officers will include the detailed outcome of project and business case risk assessment in any Council agenda item that considers major financial investment.

Where risks lie beyond the risk appetite of the Council, members and officers will take appropriate action to reduce those risks. A schedule of corporate risks will be maintained in a corporate risk register for review and approval by members.

Responsibility for assessing and managing Health and Safety risks associated with Council activity, events, serious and emergency situations will be managed by the Clerk with expert advice from the Town Council's appointed Health and Safety Consultant. Methods of safe working will be communicated to and adhered by members, officers and contractors.

Officers are responsible for assessing and managing risk as an integral part of their day-to-day role in ensuring the Council's objectives are met, recognising that all risk categories must be considered, including reputation, health and safety and financial risk. Where risks are identified which have the potential to impact upon the Council's objectives, operational or service delivery, these will be referred to the Clerk for consideration for inclusion in the corporate risk register.

Members are required to review (on an annual basis) the risk management policy and corporate risk register. This will include ensuring there is:

- A review of the risk assessment criteria, risk appetite and approaches to managing risk;
- An identification and updating of the schedule of risks;
- An evaluation of the likelihood and potential impact to the Council of each risk materialising;
- A decision on measures to avoid, reduce or control each risk, as appropriate; and
- A record made of the decisions reached.

4. Organisational Arrangements

The Town Clerk will ensure that all officers are aware of their responsibility in managing and reporting risk. Each officer shall make appropriate arrangements to ensure risk is continually assessed in relation to their area of responsibility.

Risks are allocated to Council Committees on the basis of the Committee's remit. Each Committee should review their risks on a regular basis and put forward recommendations for amendments to Full Council on a quarterly basis.

The Clerk will review the full risk register quarterly advance of it being submitted to the Council highlighting any Committee recommendations for amendments.

The Council will adopt the risk management policy and corporate risk register on at least an annual basis.

5. Risk Assessment Rating Criteria

Risks will be rated based on the likelihood of occurrence and the impact that could result. The matrix below sets out the rating criteria and gradings.

LIKELIHOOD	RELATIVE	76-99%	4				
		51-75%	3				
		26-50%	2				
		1-25%	1				
				1	2	3	4
				Minor	Moderate	Serious	Major
				IMPACT			
				Loss of up to £1000	Loss of up to £10,000	Loss of up to £50,000	Loss of over £50,000
				Minimal / localised damage to reputation	Moderate and/or medium term damage to reputation.	Serious damage to reputation within the area and potentially beyond.	National and/or long-standing damage to reputation; intervention by Government
				No health and safety impact	Minor injury, possibly requiring treatment by health care professional	Serious injuries	Fatality or life-changing injuries
				No legal/regulatory exposure	Moderate findings against the Council/moderate impact on the public/services/assets	Serious findings against the Council/serious impact on the public/services/assets	Major findings against the Council/major impact on the public/services/assets
				Risk can be quickly and effectively be managed by staff	Risk requires input from senior staff over a number of days / instances	Risk requires input from Mayor / a Committee and officers resulting in a diversion from core service delivery	Risk requires significant input from Council and officers, resulting in a failure to deliver core services

6. Lowestoft Town Council Approach to Managing Risk

Given the multi-faceted programme of work that is being taken forward by the Council it is not possible to eliminate all risks and the Council, through this policy, has agreed to be open and receptive to risk – ensuring appropriate measures (captured through the Risk Register) are in place to mitigate / manage risks.

The matrix below sets out the Council's approach to managing risk, demonstrating that activities with a medium to very high likelihood of occurrence (from 26-99%) and a major or serious impact will be managed down or terminated – as shown in the red squares.

LIKELIHOOD	Very high: 76-99%	4				
	High: 51-75%	3				
	Medium: 26-50%	2				
	Low: 1-25%	1				
			1	2	3	4
			Minor	Moderate	Serious	Major
			IMPACT			

Risks rated as **GREEN** are reasonably acceptable to the Council on the presumption that the identified control mechanisms remain in place and are followed. The risk level will remain monitored as part of the risk management.

Risks rated as **AMBER** are reasonably acceptable to the Council with identified measures to control the risk and so reduce exposure to the Council.

Risks rated as **RED** are high risk to the Council and must be monitored with immediate action(s) put in place to bring the risk down to a lower category. *Any action taken must be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.*

Annex 2

Internal Control Statement for Year Ending 31 March 2026

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Lowestoft Town Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and usually approves budgets for the following year at its November/December meeting. The January meeting of the Council usually approves the level of precept for the following financial year.

The Council has appointed a Finance and Governance Committee. The Committee meets not less than 10 times during the financial year. Members of the Committee monitor progress against objectives, financial systems and procedures, budgetary control and carry out regular reviews of financial matters. The minutes of the meetings of the Committee are circulated to all members of the Council. A councillor responsible for bank reconciliation checks has been appointed.

The Full Council meets at least 11 times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the Finance and Governance Committee and the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

Clerk to the Council/Responsible Finance Officer:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk manages the Responsible Financial Officer who is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems

and policies are adhered to. The Responsible Financial Officer (or the Clerk in their absence) takes particular responsibility in relation to these responsibilities in relation to financial matters.

Payments:

All payments are reported to the Council or Finance and Governance Committee or Clerk for Approval where delegations permit. All payments must be reported to Council. Any delegations are only as authorised by s.101(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's financial regulations or as authorised by Full Council.

Two members of the Council must sign every cheque or order for payment. The signatories should consider each cheque against the relevant invoice, sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil or relevant online banking paperwork. All authorised cheque signatories are members of the Council. No officer of the Council can sign cheques. All payments should align with the Council's financial regulations unless authorised by Full Council.

Income:

All income is received and banked in the Council's name in a timely manner and reported to the Council.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management:

The Council reviews its risk assessment policy annually, usually in May, and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

Managing risk is a key feature of good governance. If Lowestoft Town Council can manage risks effectively then they are more likely to delivery on their aims and ambitions.

Risk management is not just about health and safety, it applies to all elements of the Council's work.

Managing risk involves:

- Risk identification and assessment
 - o Introduce controls to mitigate the risk
 - o Transfer the risk (e.g. through insurance)
 - o Tolerate the risk (if the risk is deemed acceptable and if controls to mitigate are not cost-effective or efficient)
 - o Terminate the risk – if the risk is assessed as unacceptable then stop

Internal Audit:

The Council appoints an independent and competent internal auditor who reports to the Council on a half-yearly basis on the adequacy of its:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems

- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management

External Audit:

The Council's external auditors submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and will also review the effectiveness of internal audit. The results of that review will be considered by the Council, which will also approve the related Statement on Internal Control.

Annex 3

Lowestoft Town Council Risk Register (2025)

The Corporate Risk Register contains a total of 36 risks categorised as followed:

Risk Category	Red	Amber	Green	Total
Finance and Governance	2	7	5	14
Assets & facilities		2		2
Staffing		1	3	4
Major projects		2	2	4
Health & safety & emergencies	1	2		3
Information & communications	1		2	3
Reputational		3	3	6
Total	4	17	15	36

The risk register will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and the table above updated to reflect amendments.

Risk number	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk rating	Controls in place	Timeframe	Responsible officer	Committee
FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE								
F.1	Precept inadequate	4	1		Finance and Governance Cttee consider throughout year – quarterly review of budget to actual undertaken by Full Council. Annual Internal Audit – Risk Assessment and Management (Financial) review confirms appropriate procedures in place. 3 year business plan in development and will set out forecast spend against priorities	Precept submitted January	RFO	Finance and Governance (F&G)
F.2	Breach of Financial Regulations	4	1		Financial Regulations adopted by Full Council and reviewed / re-adopted on annual basis. Updated in line with changes to legislation and guidance from NALC. Members and officers are required to comply with Financial Regulations.	Monthly	RFO	F&G
F.3	Council spend is not aligned to Council priorities	4	2		Areas of spend closely monitored by RFO and Council with regular reporting to Council. Details of committed spend provided to members to inform decision making through the year and at budget planning stage. Reserves policy in place and reviewed annually. 3 year business plan in development and will set out forecast spend against priorities.	Monthly	RFO	F&G
F.4	Payroll inaccurate	2	1		Payroll brought in house 2024/25 3 year business plan in development and set out forecast spend against staffing need	Ongoing	RFO	F&G / Personnel
F.5	Spend and activity in areas in which the Council has no power (ie Council behaves <i>ultra vires</i>)	2	1		Clerk / RFO qualifications on the scope of Council's legal powers an essential criterion for role. Access to legal advice through the Council's solicitors. Appropriate training made available for councillors and provided for staff and particularly for the Clerk and RFO. Other specialist advisors and subscriptions provide support. Council has adopted "General Power of Competence" at term of office (once every 4 years)	Ongoing	TC	F&G
F.6	Incorrect VAT claim and / or VAT non-compliance leads to a loss of income for Council.	4	1		RFO scrutinises all invoices received to assess / Finance Officer trained in procedures for VAT. Specialist advice secured as needed. VAT registration has taken place. Making Tax Digital rules complied with including software upgrades. Annual Internal Audit – Risk Assessment and Management (Financial) review confirms appropriate procedures in place.	Quarterly	RFO	F&G

Risk number	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk rating	Controls in place	Timeframe	Responsible officer	Committee
FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE								
F.7	Failure to monitor monthly spend and / or banking errors and charges arising / risk of reconciliation mis-match	2	1		Finance Officer regularly reviews spend against invoice, with all payment records validated by bank signatories (2 members). Bank reconciliations undertaken monthly. Regular scrutiny of financial records undertaken to ensure payments supported by invoices, authorised and minuted (undertaken by non-bank signatories to ensure transparency). Bank account held with a reputable organisation.	Monthly	RFO	F&G
F.8	Fraud by staff	2	1		Fidelity Guarantee value appropriately set. Electronic banking verified by 2 members prevents fraudulent transactions.	Ongoing	RFO	F&G
F.9	Contracts & procurements processes do not match Financial Regulations / current legislation.	4	1		Specialist procurement advice contracted for major projects. Financial regulations state threshold limits and all contracts monitored for adherence to these limits. Additional procurement training arranged as needed.	As needed	RFO	F&G and Major Project Committees
G.1	Breach of Standing Orders by Councillors / Officers or during Council meetings	3	2		Standing Orders adopted by Full Council and reviewed on an annual basis. Induction and training arranged for officers and members – log of training held for members. Members sign Code of Conduct and agree to Nolan Principles setting a baseline for behaviours Attendance recorded as part of minute taking to evidence a quorum. / House style used and regularly reviewed for agendas and meeting minutes. / Minutes and agenda published as per legal requirements. / Minutes approved by the Council as a true and accurate record.	Annual	TC	F&G
G.2	New members not sufficiently trained / aware of roles	3	2		Member training and induction programme developed – all new members to complete relevant training in a timely manner. Planning Committee training to be undertaken within 3 months of Committee appointment.	Ongoing	TC	F&G
G.3	Members fail to behave in accordance with the Member Code of Conduct	3	3		Code of Conduct policy adopted by Council. All members to sign declaration of acceptance of office and attend induction / training on Code of Conduct / Nolan Principles of Public Office. Training to be reviewed on a regular basis if complaints are received. Complaints procedure in place and reviewed on a regular basis. Monitoring Officer role in place (via East Suffolk Council)	Reviewed and signed at each AGM	TC	F&G
G.4	Conflict of interest or Councillor bias / pre-determination not declared or dealt with appropriately	3	2		Councillors required to declare any and all conflicts of interest or previous engagement on issues at the start of each meeting. All new members to attend induction / training. Monitoring Officer maintains register of interests which is published on the internet.	After every election and reviewed annually.	TC	F&G

Risk number	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk rating	Controls in place	Timeframe	Responsible officer	Committee
G.5	Multiple referenda or by-elections required	2	1		Annual provision included in budget for cost of a by-election or referendum Business Continuity Plan in place	Autumn of the relevant year	RFO	F&G
ASSETS AND FACILITIES								
AF.1	Failure to comply with ownership responsibilities and law regarding assets	4	1		Financial Regulations require a full asset register to be prepared and maintained by RFO. The asset register is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the F&G Cttee. Facilities and Contracts Manager in post and leads on all elements of asset risk including: - Implementation of SHIRE system to monitor all FM jobs. Full asset register will be put on SHIRE by 1st April 2025. - Regular inspections (RoSPA) undertaken by Qualified Inspectors for play areas / equipment. - Asbestos, legionella, fixed wire testing (5 year), gas servicing, fire risk and other regulatory compliance testing programmed - Use of VISION to manage operational risks - EPC – reviewed every 10 years, all to be at correct rating for tenants	Ongoing	F&C Mgr	Assets, Inclusion and Dev't (AID)
AF.2	Damage / loss or theft of assets	3	2		Condition surveys undertaken on a 5 yearly cycle, with plan of works to be monitored by Facilities and Contracts Manager. Assets to be kept secure and appropriately insured. Insurance levels reviewed on an annual basis.	Ongoing	F&C Mgr	AID

Risk number	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk rating	Controls in place	Timeframe	Responsible officer (s)	Committee
STAFFING								
S.1	Insufficient staffing due to staff absence or failure to fill roles	3	2		New management structure in place and matrix management approach adopted Consultancy budget in place to cover immediate staff shortage needs. 3 year business plan in development and will set out forecast spend against priorities Business Continuity Plan in place	Ongoing	TC	Personnel
S.2	Inadequate staff training and / or qualifications	2	1		All new staff to take part in organisational induction programme with training needs identified and recorded in personnel file. Training plan (external, on the job) developed within 3 months of start date. Staff training policy established and regularly reviewed. All staff training needs and programme completions recorded in personnel files and reviewed as part of annual performance management reviews. Personnel committee receive annual updates.	Ongoing	TC	Personnel
S.3	Safe and inclusive working environment is provided for staff and councillors	3	1		Hamilton House security procedures detailed in lease / operating practices (e.g. visitor badges) New accommodation at Town Hall being developed to ensure safe and inclusive environment.	Ongoing	TC	Personnel
S.4	Staff at risk of harm or injury while lone working	3	1		Officer WhatsApp Group monitored by on-call manager. Lone working procedures set out in Employee Handbook and reviewed with all staff. Staff required to sign compliance with Employee Handbook.	Ongoing	On-call manager	Personnel
MAJOR PROJECTS								
MP.1	Lack of funding for major projects	3	2		Project specific governance arrangements in place and external project managers appointed for largest projects (Town Hall / Marina Theatre).	Monthly	TC F&C Mgr	Project specific committees
MP2	Project slippage	3	2		Monthly project governance meetings to review project delivery.	Monthly	TC F&C Mgr	Project specific committees
MP.3	Grant funding / joint project funding not used appropriately	2	2		Project managers appointed for major external capital projects – monthly meetings to ensure adherence to LTC / partner spend approvals. Annual Internal Audit – Risk Assessment and Management (Financial) review confirms claims applications and procedures are complied with.	Monthly	TC F&C Mgr	Project specific committees
MP.4	Major Projects not delivered in line with grant conditions or contractual requirements	3	1		Project teams and committees set up to monitor and manage major projects. Regular reviews of conditions undertaken and reported to Full Council. 5	Monthly	External Project Managers as commissioned	Project specific committees

Risk number	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk rating	Controls in place	Timeframe	Responsible officer	Committee
HEALTH AND SAFETY								
HS.1	Member of public, staff or members injured at Lowestoft Town Council premises or event	4	2		Health and Safety Policy in place Public & employers liability insurance in place. Contractors required to state liability insurance status prior to securing work with Lowestoft Town Council. All staff and members are aware of H&S responsibilities through Induction Programme.	Annually in May policy reviewed	TC F&C Mgr	AID and Events and Communications (E&C)
HS.2	Emergency situations causing unforeseen health, safety, financial and other concerns	4	1		Risk assessments made as needed. Events and Communications Officer leads on emergency planning and business continuity plans. Legal advice available via contract to update on changes to law / regulations.	As needed	TC F&C Mgr	AID
HS.3	A safeguarding issue arises at a LTC venue hire	3	2		Event hire form redeveloped to ensure safeguarding is up to standard. All venue hires required to state requirements for DBS as appropriate to hire..	Ongoing	TC	AID
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY								
IT.1	Freedom of Information requests are complex and time-consuming to respond to with penalties for non-compliance	2	2		ICO registration in place as data controllers (Council and councillors), subject to payment by the Council. Council policies developed and monitored. Publication Scheme in place. Minutes and spend over £500 published on the Lowestoft Town Council website. Public and press welcome to attend council meetings.	Ongoing	TC	F&G
IT.2	Loss of data	3	1		Backup system in place through Cloudy IT plus all contractors dealing with relevant data have secure and backed up systems. Virus protection in place and regularly reviewed.	Ongoing	TC	F&G
IT.3	Breach of data protection / information security	3	4		All staff and members receive information security / principles of data protection as part of Induction Programme. Staff / consultancy contracts include information security clause. Staff / member policy in place. Network password protected. Breaches of data protection required to be reported to council. Council registered as a data controller with ICO	Ongoing. Policy reviewed annually in May	TC	F&G Personnel

Risk number	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk rating	Controls in place	Timeframe	Responsible officer	Committee
REPUTATIONAL								
R.1	Adverse press / social media coverage	4	2		Public and press welcome to attend/film Council meetings. Clerk, Chair and Comms Officer respond to media enquiries on behalf of the Council. Standing Orders / Social Media Policy in place All staff have been trained in social media use Social media protocol to be reviewed and updated	Ongoing	TC	E&C
R.2	Negative feedback received about Council governance / operations / events	4	2		Risk assessment carried out for each event / core Council services All members sign Code of Conduct and adhere to Nolan Principles. Council wide Communications and Engagement Plan in development	Ongoing	TC Comms Officer	F&G E&C
R.3	Libel or slander claims received	2	1		Insurance in place with annual review to ensure sufficient coverage Record of all claims received maintained.	Q4 FY and May AGM	RFO	F&G
R.4	Lack of community engagement and recognition	2	2		Council wide Communications and Engagement Plan in development.	Ongoing	TC	E&C
R.5	Breakdown in partner relationships leading to a loss of joint working / goodwill / reputational damage to parties.	4	2		Regular engagement with other Councils through Clerk and Cllr liaison meetings. All members regularly trained in different roles and responsibilities of a local council and a principal authority. On-going work to complete outstanding legal matters / land transfer following Reorganisation Order and establish way forward on joint projects with ESC / partners. Lowestoft Town Council engages with MP and other decision-makers and influencers as appropriate. Council wide Communications and Engagement Plan in development.	Ongoing	TC	Full Council
R.6	Undue negative influence of political parties on council policy	2	2		Election nominations open and promoted to all residents/workers who meet the qualification criteria Promote outcome focused council working for the benefit of the community. Training sessions held for potential new candidates.	Ongoing	TC	F&G

TC = Town Clerk RFO = Responsible Financial Officer