



# **SOUTHMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL**

**New Parish Room, Queenborough Road, Southminster, Essex. CM0 7AB**

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## **Audit Committee Meeting**

held at Parish Office, Queenborough Road, Southminster.  
on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 @ 9.30am.

### **MINUTES**

Present:

Cllr Harrold, Cllr Cleary, Cllr Partt and Cllr Fluker.

In attendance: Mrs J Jeffery (Clerk)

24/36 Apologies: There were no apologies.

24/37 To agree the Minutes from the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 Cllr Cleary asked for an addition to the Lone Working Policy, 7.2 All staff to be provided with lanyard and ID badge.

Cllr Cleary proposed signing the minutes with the above amendment, seconded by Cllr Harrold.

24/38 Matters arising not covered by the following agenda items.  
There were none.

24/39 To receive and note any declarations of interest:  
To disclose the existence and any nature of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. Other Registrable Interests and Non-Registrable Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraph 9 and Appendix B of the Code of Conduct for Members.

There were none.

24/40 Review Risk Assessment.

It was informed that Clerk generated risk assessments are event driven. Under HSE legislation, Southminster Parish Council will create risk assessments as required.

24/41 Review Statement of Internal Control.

Revisions:

2.2 It will be reviewed January 2025.

3.1 The meeting of the Council in December 2023 approved the level of precept for the following financial year.

All expenditure is to be approved by full council. Any other expenditure to be approved as specified in the Financial Regulations approved in March/April each year.

24/42 Review Lone Worker Policy.

Addition:

7.2 Employees must tell their approved point of contact where they are planning to operate and expected time of return. Maintain contact through appropriate channel.

Signed

Cllr Adrian Fluker 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

24/43 Building Maintenance Policy.  
 Addition of Playing fields/vegetation  
 Tennis Court (Land)  
 Allotments Pantile Hill and Pump Mead.  
 Following areas maintained by others:  
 Strip of land at King George V Memorial Field – Network Rail

Crown Way, Hillside Rd, Devonshire Rd, Coombe Rd, Spells Close, Queenborough Rd,  
 Entrance to Pump Mead, Cripplegate, Orchard Rd, North End, New Moor Crescent, New Moor  
 Close, Kings Rd, Burnham Rd, Rose Drive, Southfield Way, High St, West House Estate,  
 Scotts Hill culvert, Scotts Hill roundabout, Vicarage Meadow – Essex County Council

Council will undertake a third party review every five years.

#### 24/44 Risk Register update

<u>Nbr</u>	<u>Risk</u>	<u>Likelihood of occurrence</u>	<u>Impact on business</u>	<u>Mitigation plan</u>
1	Computer malfunction and loss of data	Low	High	Back up to online storage daily.
2	Paper data destroyed or lost	Low	Medium	Store important documentation in a <b>locked</b> fireproof cabinet Archive data to ECC archiving facility yearly
3	Failure to keep proper records	Medium	High	Back up and archive Meeting Minutes. Record of SPC Meetings and Minutes taken .
4	<b>Corporate Memory</b>	Medium	V High	<b>Record</b> kept of Chairman's contacts, activity, decisions and authorising Councillors Operational contacts and functions are executed in accordance with policies.  Contact list created and updated on a regular basis
5	<b>Major Incidents</b> Local emergency e.g. Large fire requiring evacuation of residents.	Low	medium/high	<b>Maldon District Council</b> emergency room sited in Maldon. <b>Southminster Parish Council to allocate specific space. In the event of an emergency Southminster Parish Council will contact relevant agencies.</b> available for local control room. Chairman and Clerk trained to set up initial rest centre prior to MDC arrival.
6	Loss of communication. <b>In the event of an emergency Southminster Parish Council will work with relevant agencies to mitigate impact on local residents.</b>	low	medium	<b>Clerks mobile telephone number known to Chair.</b>
7	Loss of utilities	low	medium/high	Register of shops who supply Gas, Batteries, generators etc. to be available in the Parish Office. Parish Room, Queenborough Road, available for local control room.
9	Animal health issues e.g. foot and mouth / bird flu <b>Public Health issues</b>	Low	High	<b>Under government guidelines. Staff to be informed and compliant with legislation.</b>
10	<b>Public order e.g. environmental protest, Civic Disorder</b>	Low	low	Under Police and MDC control. <b>Southminster Parish Council to work with relevant agencies.</b>

Signed  
 Cllr Adrian Fluker 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

11	Fraud  Computer fraud and security  Fraud by Clerk	low	medium/high	<p><b>Reconciled</b> Accounts presented to the Council for approval at each monthly meeting  <b>including schedules of payments and receipts.</b>  Two signatories required for cheques.  Cheques are not signed unless they have the bill/invoice attached.</p> <p><b>Minimum of</b> Two signatories required for direct payments (BACS).  Direct payments are not authorised unless they have the bill/invoice attached.</p> <p>Cash transactions are receipted.</p> <p>Computer passwords to be changed at least every 6 months with automatic reminders set.  <b>Council to review and reconcile bank statements.</b></p>
12	Long term unavailability of Clerk or office facility, preventing the normal running of Council business	low	High	See Business Continuity Plan. Corporate memory in place.
13	Failure to maintain built assets	Medium	High	See Buildings Land and Property Policy.
14	Failure to maintain other assets	Medium	High	All other assets including vehicles, plant machinery and plant to be inspected on a regular basis. Log kept showing dates of inspections and deficiencies and repairs carried out Portable appliance testing.
15	Failure to respond to Tenants concerns	Low	High	All Tenants concerns to be dealt with in a timely manner and mitigated as soon as possible. Recorded inline with policy.
16	Failure to deliver Corporate Projects	High	High	Clerk to maintain Corporate Projects log and report to Council accordingly.
17	Councillors unable to make informed decisions	Low	High	Training programme provided.
18	Failure to maintain Risk Register	Medium	Medium	Review to be undertaken annually.
19	Availability of passwords	Low	High	Clerk and Chair to maintain copies. Kept in locked safe.
20	Emergency Planning	Low	High	Clerk to engage with MDC
21	Best value accountability	Low	High	The Council will act within its procurement procedures.
22	Election Costs	Low	High	Council maintains sufficient funds for elections
23	Illegal activity or payments	Low	High	All payments to be made with the resolve of Council
24	Insurance	Low	High	Clerk/RFO to ensure all assets are correctly insured. Insurance Policies to be reviewed annually by Performance, Governance and Audit Committee. Asset register checked regularly.
25	Members Interests	Low	High	Members must declare conflicts of interest and pecuniary registered and non registered interests and keep their register of interests up to date. Clerk to ensure Members are aware of their responsibilities.
26	Data Protection	Low	Low	The Council will act in accordance with the Act
27	Freed of Information	Low	Low	The Council will respond in accordance with ICO guidelines and reserves the right to charge for such applications
28	Governance	Low	High	Performance, Governance and Audit Committee reviews governance and the performance of the Council on a regular basis
29	Decisions of Council and committees not executed	29	Low	Clerk to ensure and confirm all decisions and resolves are carried out
30	Budget not delivered	30	Low	Reported to Council meetings monthly.

24/45 Proposed items for the next agenda.  
Co-option policy

24/46 Date of next meeting: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Signed  
Cllr Adrian Fluker 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

24/47 Meeting Closure.  
Meeting closed at 10.57am.

Signed  
Cllr Adrian Fluker 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024