

SOUTH HEIGHTON PARISH BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

Scope

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on a local authority to ensure that it is prepared, as far as reasonably practical, to continue to provide important functions and services in the event of a disruption.

Whilst this is not a statutory duty for a parish council, South Highton Parish Council recognise the importance of producing and maintaining a Business Continuity Plan for implementation in the event of disruptions to the day to day running of the council.

This plan identifies:

- Potential instances of disruption
- Actions the Parish Council will take to minimise the impact of the disruption
- The immediate response that will be taken by the Parish Council
- Procedures that will be followed to maintain continuity of service
- Follow-up procedures and necessary changes to service delivery

The Business Continuity Plan will be invoked the event of a Business Continuity Event as outlined in the Parish Council Risk Assessment (risk ref R01). The authority to invoke the plan is delegated to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman and Vice Chairman as outlined in Financial Regulation 4.10. In the event of the Business Continuity Plan being invoked, the Clerk, with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, has delegated authority to authorise revenue expenditure and make decisions to ensure the continued delivery of critical council services. Any such actions shall be reported to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

The Business Continuity Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by at a meeting of the Council. A copy will be placed on the Parish Council website and will be provided to all Councillors.

Core business of South Highton Parish Council

The Council provides local services to its electorate which includes the provision of:

- Signs, salt bins, benches and waste bins
- Street lighting
- The Hollow recreation ground
- Children's play equipment at The Hollow recreation ground
- Village Green
- Grass cutting
- Website, notice board, newsletter and the use of local social media to communicate important and relevant matters
- Acting as a consultee on planning applications to represent the best interests of the villages
- Managing the finances of the Council and using the precept for the benefit of the community
- Liaising with Lewes District Council, East Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park

Potential causes of disruption:

- a) Damage or disruption caused by:
 - Storms, flood, heatwave or snow

- Fire
- Terrorism
- Vandalism or actions by other parties
- Epidemic/Pandemic

b) Failures to:

- Equipment due to malfunction, breakage or theft
- Public Services
- Utilities and infrastructure providers

c) Loss of:

- Staff through death, injury, illness, incapacity or resignation
- Councillors by any reason which leaves the Council inquorate
- Parish Council records through theft, fire or corruption of files

Key contacts

The Clerk is the first point of contact for all emergencies and business continuity actions, or in their absence the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Clerk hold the contact details for all Council and emergency contacts.

Identified events and agreed responses

Ref	Response Event	Minimise Impact	Immediate Response	Continuity	Longer Term
CP01	Loss of Clerk due to death, sudden illness, long term illness, incapacity, resignation or dismissal.	Ensure key tasks are up to date. Ensure Chairman has access to all electronic files and details of log-in to PC Laptop and websites. Knowledge of duties with regard to employment law and staff supervision.	Chairman and Vice Chairman to be informed. Chairman to inform Council. Call extraordinary meeting to confirm appointment of temporary cover.	Recruit temporary replacement. Recruit permanent Clerk.	Review procedures to ensure minimal impact from loss.
CP02	Death or serious injury to Clerk whilst carrying out parish council duties.	Knowledge of duties with regard to Health & Safety.	Chairman and Vice Chairman to be informed. Chairman to inform Council. Chairman to inform the insurance company and HSE if necessary.	As the Clerk is the only employee, in the event of death or serious injury, continuity plan CP01 will be followed.	See CP01.
CP03	Epidemic or pandemic infectious disease or other event resulting in restricted	Keep up to date with any epidemic/pandemic outbreaks. Awareness of official sources of	The Clerk and Chairman will undertake an immediate review of upcoming meetings, events and council	The Clerk will continue to work from home until the government advice changes. Payments and decisions required to ensure the continuity of	Review procedures to ensure improvements.

Ref	Response		Immediate Response	Continuity	Longer Term
	Event	Minimise Impact			
	movement of the population, quarantine or self-isolation.	information and guidance.	activities. Any meetings scheduled to fall within the period of restricted movement will be cancelled; the Clerk will update the council's website and noticeboards and will distribute an alert via social media.	council services will be authorised as outlined in Financial Regulation 4.10. The Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman, shall respond to planning applications on the basis of an email response from a minimum of 3 councillors. For large planning applications, or where agreement on a response cannot be reached via email, the Clerk will seek an extension from the principal planning authority. In the event of the Clerk contracting an infectious disease and being unable to work, CP01 will apply.	
CP03	Loss of Councillors due to multiple resignations (causing Council to be inquorate)	Co-option of Councillors from waiting list/reserves.	Clerk to inform remaining Councillors and Lewes District Council Electoral Services.	District Council to decide on temporary working strategy for Council business to be maintained followed by the instigation of a by election or co-option procedure.	Council to review procedures for recruitment of Councillors.
CP04	Loss of Council documents due to fire, flood or other causes.	Keep all documents in electronic format where possible and back-up to secure cloud-based storage. Scan-in hard copy documents (lease agreements, deeds, contracts etc) and store hard copies in secure storage.	Clerk to inform Council and insurance company if necessary. Retrieve scanned copies.	Council to consider implications and actions at next Council meeting.	Review procedures to ensure improvements and robust security.
CP05	Loss of Council electronic data due to fire, fault or breakdown.	Back laptop up to secure cloud-based storage on an immediate basis. Back laptop up to external hard drive weekly.	Clerk to inform Council and insurance company if necessary.	Instigate use of stored documentation.	Review procedures, keep abreast of advancements in electronic storage.
CP06	Loss of Council equipment due	Back laptop up to secure cloud-based storage on an	Report theft to police and insurance company. Decide on	Replace in accordance with current financial regulations.	Review procedures to

Ref	Response		Immediate Response	Continuity	Longer Term
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	to theft, fault or breakdown.	immediate basis. Back laptop up to external hard drive weekly.	immediate replacement.		ensure improvements.
CP07	Damage to recreation ground or play equipment.	Maintain adequate insurance cover, where available and appropriate. Carry out regular risk assessments.	Clerk to inform Chairman, Vice Chairman, insurance company and/or police if appropriate. Health and Safety audit of play equipment and cordon off, as required.	Clerk to agree emergency repair/replacement with Chairman in line with financial regulations if required, otherwise Council to consider appropriate actions at next meeting.	Review procedures, insurance levels and risk assessment.
CP08	Local disaster	Maintain up to date risk assessments of all parish council liabilities. Maintain up to date contact details for Parish Councillors and staff, including next of kin. Maintain up to date list of emergency contacts. Awareness of District and County Council Disaster Planning and key contacts.	All members of Council and Clerk to be informed. Contact relevant emergency services if appropriate.	Call extraordinary meeting of the council to discuss position and any necessary actions.	Review procedures and risk assessment.