

Lockton Parish Council

Business Continuity Plan

1. Purpose

This Business Continuity Plan (BCP) sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of an unexpected disruption affecting the operation of Lockton Parish Council.

The aim of the plan is to ensure that the Council can continue to deliver its statutory functions and essential services to residents whilst minimising disruption.

This plan should be read alongside the Council's:

- Financial Regulations
 - Standing Orders
 - Risk Management Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Emergency Plan (where applicable)
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2. Scope

This plan applies to:

- Councillors
 - The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
 - Contractors acting on behalf of the Council
 - Council records and assets
 - Council services and facilities
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3. Objectives

The Council will seek to:

- Protect councillors, employees, contractors and members of the public.
- Ensure statutory responsibilities continue to be met.
- Safeguard Council funds and assets.
- Protect Council records and data.
- Maintain communication with residents.
- Restore normal operations as quickly as reasonably practicable.

4. Critical Functions

The following activities are considered essential:

Function	Priority
Payment of staff salaries	High
Payment of creditors and utilities	High
Banking and financial management	High
Preparation and publication of agendas and minutes	High
Compliance with statutory deadlines	High
Management of Council assets	High
Maintenance of street lighting	Medium
Maintenance of public open spaces and assets	Medium
Public communications	Medium
Project work	Low

5. Key Risks and Responses

Loss of Clerk/RFO

Risk

The Clerk is unavailable due to illness, accident, resignation or other unforeseen circumstances.

Actions

Clerk Shall:

1. Provide the Chair with a sealed envelope containing operational information and passwords; this information shall be reviewed annually or sooner if anything changes. The PC laptop will also be made available to the Chair.

The Chair shall:

1. Notify councillors.
2. Assess expected duration of absence.
3. Prioritise essential activities.
4. Contact YLCA / NALC for advice and support if required.
5. Arrange temporary cover through:
 - o Existing qualified locum clerk
 - o Another suitably qualified clerk
 - o North Yorkshire Council services

Essential Functions

The Chair and Vice-Chair may jointly:

- Authorise emergency expenditure within delegated powers.
- Liaise with banks and auditors.
- Ensure statutory notices continue to be published.

A temporary clerk may be appointed by Council resolution.

Loss of Chair

Actions

The Vice-Chair shall assume duties in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's Standing Orders until the Chair returns or a new Chair is elected.

Multiple Councillor Absences

Risk

Insufficient members available to form a quorum.

Actions

- Meetings may be postponed.
- Urgent business may be delegated where lawful.
- Casual vacancies to be filled as soon as practicable.
- Residents kept informed via website and noticeboards.

Loss of Meeting Venue

Risk

Village Hall unavailable due to damage, closure or emergency.

Alternative Arrangements

Potential alternative venues include:

- Community buildings in neighbouring parishes
- Other suitable public venues in Pickering

IT Failure

Risk

Loss of computer equipment, internet access or software failure.

Actions

The Clerk shall ensure:

- Cloud-based backups are maintained.
- Passwords are securely recorded.
- Critical documents are stored securely and separately.

Alternative devices may be used where required.

Loss of Council Records

Risk

Damage, theft or corruption of records.

Controls

- Electronic files stored in secure cloud storage.
- Important records retained in accordance with the Council's Retention Policy.
- Financial records backed up regularly.
- Access restricted to authorised persons.

Cyber Incident

Risk

Cyber-attack, ransomware, phishing or data breach.

Actions

1. Disconnect affected systems.
2. Change passwords immediately.
3. Inform Chair.
4. Assess whether personal data has been compromised.
5. Report breaches to the Information Commissioner's Office where required.
6. Restore systems from backups.

Banking Failure

Risk

Loss of banking access or banking platform outage.

Actions

- Maintain multiple authorised signatories.
- Retain copies of bank mandates.
- Use alternative authorised officers where available.
- Contact bank immediately.

Financial Fraud

Actions

- Follow Financial Regulations.
 - Maintain separation of duties.
 - Verify changes to bank details independently.
 - Report suspected fraud to:
 - Police
 - Insurers
 - Internal Auditor and External Auditor if appropriate
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Failure of Contractor

Risk

Council contractor unable to fulfil obligations.

Actions

- Contact alternative approved contractors.
 - Prioritise health and safety works.
 - Inform residents if service disruption is likely.
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Severe Weather

Risk

Flooding, snow, storms, heatwaves.

Actions

The Council shall:

- Work with North Yorkshire Council and emergency services.
 - Disseminate public information.
 - Prioritise protection of Council assets.
 - Defer non-essential activities.
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Pandemic or Public Health Emergency

Actions

- Follow Government guidance.
- Enable remote working where possible.
- Prioritise essential functions.
- Maintain communication with residents through digital channels.

6. Communications

Internal Contacts

Position	Contact Details
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Chair	Held separately
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Vice-Chair	Held separately
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Clerk/RFO	Held separately
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Key External Contacts

Organisation	Contact
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North Yorkshire Council	Held separately
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YLCA / NALC	Held separately
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Internal Auditor	Held separately
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External Auditor	Held separately
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Bank	Held separately
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Insurers	Held separately
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Contact details shall be maintained separately from this document for GDPR and security reasons.

7. Data Protection

The Council shall:

- Comply with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
 - Protect personal information during any disruption.
 - Ensure only authorised persons access Council data.
 - Maintain secure backup arrangements.
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8. Insurance

The Clerk shall ensure that adequate insurance cover is maintained for:

- Public Liability
- Employers Liability
- Fidelity Guarantee
- Property
- Cyber risks (where applicable)

Claims shall be reported as soon as possible following an incident.

9. Recovery Priorities

Within 24 Hours

- Establish extent of disruption.
- Inform Chair and councillors.
- Secure finances and records.
- Restore communications.

Within 7 Days

- Resume urgent financial administration.
- Ensure statutory deadlines are met.
- Arrange alternative meeting arrangements if required.

Within 30 Days

- Restore normal operations.
 - Review effectiveness of response.
 - Identify lessons learned.
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10. Testing and Review

This plan shall:

- Be reviewed annually.
 - Be reviewed following any significant incident.
 - Be approved by Council resolution.
 - Form part of the Council's annual risk management review.
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Adoption

This Business Continuity Plan was adopted by Lockton Parish Council at its meeting held on
____6/7/26_____.

Minute Reference: ____11.1_____

