

WIGGENHALL ST GERMANS PARISH COUNCIL

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

Adopted May 2020

Reviewed Jan 2024

1. Introduction

Wiggenhall St Germans Parish Council recognises the importance of a Business Continuity Plan for implementation in the event of disruption to the routine running of the Council and in the event of a local or national emergency being declared. This plan seeks to identify potential disruptions and to provide pre-emptive and reactive plans to mitigate for and recover from the event. The plan can't cover every eventuality, but it can provide a guide to initiate appropriate action.

2. Council Core Business

The Council provides local services and democratic processes to its electorate which include the following:

- a. Provision of council administration, meetings and information.
- b. Consultee for planning applications in the Parish.
- c. Communication via:
 - i. Council website.
 - ii. Newsletter.
 - iii. Notice Boards – Surrey Street and Saddlebow.
 - iv. Social Media (Clerk is an administrator on Village Facebook page).
- d. Management of public open space.
 - i. Village Hall play park & playing field.
 - ii. Leonard Towler Memorial playing field.
 - iii. Grassed areas (Surrey Street, Legge Place).
- e. Maintenance of Street furniture (as per Asset Register).
- f. Provision and deployment of Speed Awareness Monitoring equipment.
- g. Grants and donations:
 - i. made under S.137 and other appropriate legislation for regular items (see budget) and new applications/proposals considered.
 - ii. Applications for funds from organisations for Parish projects.
- h. Liaison with the Borough and County Councils, Internal Drainage Board and Environment Agency. (Covers aspects such as Highways Rangers requests and reporting highways and drainage issues).
- i. Management of parish land used for allotments or leased for agriculture.
- j. Maintenance of the St Germans Church clock.

3. Potential disruption events and actions for business continuity:

Item	Event	Actions to minimise impact	Immediate Action	Continuity Action
3.1	Loss of Clerk for period up to 2 months.	Ensure key account login and passwords are kept in a sealed envelope by the chairman. Clerk's Council Action plan is kept up to date.	Chairman/Vice Chairman to be informed as soon as practicable. Chairman to inform council and allocate essential tasks to appropriate councillors and decide whether to	Postpone/reschedule meetings or whether able to continue. If Clerk unable to assist in any capacity seek assistance/guidance from NALC and request a locum clerk if deemed appropriate.
3.2	Loss of Clerk (permanent)	In addition to actions at 3.1 the loss of clerk by retirement should be considered and a retirement and handover plan negotiated. Treat the clerk with respect and seek to identify and resolve 'stress-raisers'.	As at 3.1 plus: Ensure all documents, data and equipment retrieved from the clerk's possession and home office and that the HMRC actions are taken to notify cessation of employment.	In addition to continuity actions at 3.1: Advertise through NALC and Recruit replacement clerk
3.3	Loss of Councillors in numbers that causes the Council to become inquorate.	Ensure councillor vacancies are filled by co-option as soon as possible.	Clerk to inform Chairman/Vice Chairman, and remaining councillors. Clerk to inform the Electoral Officer at Borough Council. Instigate the Scheme of Delegated Authority and record actions at Annex A.	Seek Borough Council Electoral Officer advice for any additional strategy or procedural requirements and the instigation of a by-election or co-option procedure.
3.4	Loss of Council documents and data due to fire/flood/theft.	Key documents are scanned and retained as electronic back up. Documents of official record are archived periodically in the County Archives. Regular back up of electronic files to another hard	Clerk to inform council, insurance company and bank if necessary. Impact of loss to be assessed by clerk and council and appropriate action taken (consider GDPR and financial risks)	Replace systems and restore from back up.

		drive stored away from the clerk's home/office or in the 'cloud'.		
3.5	Loss of Council electronic documents and data due to fire/flood/theft, breakdown of IT or hacking/malware.	Regular back up on secondary hard drive and 'cloud'. Computer software updates carried out in timely manner and virus protection maintained up to date.	As actions at 3.4	As actions at 3.4
3.6	Loss of meeting venue. (the location becomes unavailable or councillors are unable to attend in person with public accessibility. Eg 'lockdown')	As the Council does not own a meeting venue it has no influence over availability.	Clerk to notify Chairman and councillors. Alternative location to be identified (eg School or Church, neighbouring village hall), costs incurred to be allocated from contingency reserve fund and budget for re-establishing the fund level.	Council to seek suitable long-term meeting venue within the Parish.
3.7	Local/National emergency event. (Flood, fire, civil disturbance, medical pandemic etc)	Formulate a Parish Emergency Action Plan. Contact details for Councillors held by the Clerk for call out.	Clerk and Chairman to establish nature of emergency, inform councillors and key stakeholders and organisations (School, Church, Village Hall Cttee) and put in place appropriate actions to support Borough/County Councils and Emergency Services.	Implement the Scheme of Delegation as appropriate and record actions taken using the delegated powers at Annex A for ratification by the Parish Council at an appropriate juncture. Provide 'umbrella' for volunteer mutual aid groups that form in the Parish and review their plan to support and sustain it with the resources and expertise available through the Parish Council.

4. Key Documents

Key documents and accounts as referred to items 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5 are:

- a. Bank Accounts.
- b. PC Website
- c. Electoral Role (encrypted files and code)
- d. Laptop login
- e. Norfolk ALC
- f. HMRC:
 - i. Online Account Number and Password,
 - ii. PAYE Employer reference,
 - iii. 13-character accounts office number,
 - iv. VAT Reference number.
- g. Email Account.
- h. Cashbook/Accounting Software.
- i. Payments and Receipts records.
- j. Information Commissioners Office reference number.
- k. Clerk/Council Action Plan.
- l. Contacts list.
- m. Minutes.

5. Post disruption event actions

Following a disruption event where the business continuity plan has been invoked there should be a review of the plan and actions taken; any subsidiary follow-up actions should be taken and amendments to the plan made from lessons identified.

Adopted May 2020

Reviewed Sep 2022 and post event.

RECORD OF ACTIONS AND DECISIONS TAKEN USING DELEGATED POWERS DURING DISRUPTION

Item	Action/Decision	Action by/Cllr consulted	Ratification Minute ref & Follow up required