ELDON PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL ASSETS – MANAGING RISK

25th JULY 2023

INTRODUCTION

Every year the Parish Council assesses risk in the form of an annual report and schedule which covers all areas of the Council's activities and operations, including finance and administration and assets. The risk strategy for the current year was approved in May.

The Council's assets are set out in the Assets Register which is regularly reviewed and changes when new assets (such as additional or replacement public seats) are provided or removed. The Parish Council assets include the following main items which are identified on the assets register:

- **(a)** Land (including trees and hedges, some of which land is crossed by public rights of way)
- **(b)** Public Seating
- **(c)** Bus stop
- **(d)** Litter Bins
- **(e)** Pathways (resin bound and compacted dolomite)
- **(f)** Fencing
- **(g)** Stiles
- **(h)** Gates (metal field gates, wooden gates and metal kissing gates)
- **(i)** Gateway Entrance feature
- **(j)** Noticeboard
- **(k)** Flowerbeds/shrubs
- **(l)** Solar Lighting.

ASSESSING RISK

Although damage to Council assets, when it occurs, is often reported to the Council by members of the public and Councillors themselves may become aware of issues/damage, it would be prudent to implement a more systematic way in which Council assets are inspected for damage or a risk to the public or users, so that whenever action is needed, i.e. to prevent potential injury appropriate measures can be put in place. For some areas of Council land which are tenanted for grazing, there is a requirement for tenants to maintain the land and boundaries in a satisfactory condition and the requirements on the Council, may, therefore, be less onerous.

PUTTING PROCEDURES IN PLACE

For the majority of items on the Council's Assets Register, the risk is likely to be in the Low category, but there may be some areas where it is Medium. To reduce the risk to members of the public, it is suggested that an annual inspection regime is implemented. In the majority of instances this will be mainly a visual inspection and where appropriate a physical check – such as the security of seat fixings to the ground; condition of or missing vandalised slats, sharp edges etc.; for gates, the security of fixings and hinges, for paths, trip hazards (although there is a reasonable expectation on public rights of way that walkers will exercise sufficient caution to deal with any trip hazards which may exist). In the case of trees, the risks could include damaged trees, or their branches which may fall on members of the public.

RECOMMENDATION

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Parish Council establish an inspection regime for items listed on the Assets Register; determine the level of risk and implement an inspection regime (annual, bi-annual or quarterly), with details of inspections recorded in a register for the purpose. As in many other Councils, the inspections may be carried out by Councillors, the Clerk, or a qualified third party. It is further **RECOMMENDED** that at the commencement of this process the Council commissions a survey from an arboriculturist of any trees in its ownership with a view to identifying any risks and undertaking any works necessary.

Tom Bolton

Clerk to the Council