

Mrs. L.A. Ruff, Clerk of the Council, Street Parish Rooms, 6 Leigh Road, Street, Somerset BA16 0HA Tel. (01458) 440588

Email street.parish@street-pc.gov.uk Website www.street-pc.gov.uk

1st July, 2021

 PLEASE NOTE DATE TIME VENUE Dear Sir/Madam,

 You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Policy and Finance

Committee which will be held in the **Main Library, Street Parish Rooms**, 6

Leigh Road, Street on **TUESDAY, 6TH JULY, 2021** for the purpose of

transacting the business specified in the following agenda. The meeting will

commence at **6 p.m**. The Chair will explain the procedures for the meeting.

The public and press are invited to attend. Numbers will be restricted in line

with Covid guidance at the time. All attendees except children under 16 years

will be required to check in by scanning the NHS QR code poster or providing

their name and number. Social distancing, wearing a mask and using hand

sanitizer must be adhered to. Anyone experiencing Covid symptoms must not

attend.

 Yours faithfully,

 

 L.A. Ruff

 Clerk of the Council

 AGENDA

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR - to elect the Chair of the Committee for the year.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR - to elect the Vice-Chair of the Committee for year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - acceptance of any reasons offered

4. MINUTES

 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23rd

February, 2021 (copies attached).

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

6. GRANTS (report attached)

7. NEW BANNERS - to agree to make a contribution of £200 each to St. John

 Ambulance for the design work done by S. Hann and to the Harvest Church

 for the work done by D. Thomas and to pay S. Hann £100.

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8. QUOTES FOR NEW LOGO/BRANDING, WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA

 (confidential report for councillors only) It is likely that the public and

 press will be excluded for this item.

9. RECEPTION FOR COVID AWARD WINNERS – to discuss holding a lunch

 or evening reception at an agreed venue for the winners of the Covid

 awards. The cost is likely to be around £1,000 and arrangements would be

 agreed when restrictions are lifted.

10. BUDGET 2022/23 (report attached)

11. INVESTMENT OF FUNDS (report attached)

12. BI-ANNUAL GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT (report attached)

13. MP SURGERIES AND HIRING OF PARISH ROOMS - James Heappey, MP would

like to hold 6 weekly surgeries in the Parish Rooms where local residents could

speak to him in confidence on their issues. VAT will now be charged on room

hire so for a community group the charge will be £5 + VAT = £6 per hour and

for others it will be £8 + VAT = £9.60 per hour. The Community Centre

charges £8 and £13.

14. PROJECTS - the Clerk to give a short verbal update on the 1924 library

 building, improving the area outside of the Parish Rooms and Greenbank

 Pool. The Council can apply for a grant of up to £5,000 from Creative

 Mendip for a project which embraces and celebrates any form of

 creativity in the community, working with one or more established

 organisations. A suitable project must be put forward by 9th July and

 the Library Garden mural is suggested provided that the Library Trust

 is in agreement.

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To: Councillors S. Carswell, M. Daniells, D. Knibbs, L. Mogg, A. Prior and H. Shearer

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 STREET PARISH COUNCIL

 Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held virtually using Zoom

with remote attendance on 23rd February, 2021 at 7 p.m.

 PRESENT: Councillor A. Prior (Chair)

 Councillors: S. Carswell, M. Daniells, L. Mogg and

 N. Smith

 PRESENT BY Councillors: P. Birch, A. Leafe (Chair of Council)

 and T.W.E. Napper

 IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. L.A. Ruff – Clerk/RFO

 R. Peters, Manager of Strode Theatre

 P. Edge, Chair of Langport Transport Group

 APOLOGIES: Councillors D. Knibbs and H. Shearer – another

meeting/engagement – reasons accepted

22. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

 RESOLVED

 that Councillor Daniells be elected as Vice-Chair of the Committee until

 the annual Council meeting in May.

23. MINUTES

 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2nd February,

 2021 which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record

 and arrangements made for them to be signed by the Chair in

accordance with current guidance.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

 In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillors Carswell and

Napper declared an other interest under Appendix B as they were

members of Mendip District Council and that they would keep an open

mind when considering matters at either parish or district level.

Councillor Napper declared an other interest under Appendix B as he

was a member of Somerset County Council and that he would keep an

open mind when considering matters at parish or county level.

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25. STRODE THEATRE

 As previously agreed R. Peters, manager of Strode Theatre gave a

 presentation on future plans. The grant of £20,000 in 2021/22 had

 already been agreed. The vision following consultation was for the

 community to be educated, entertained and inspired. He explained

 how the business model for the Theatre would change and the various

 ways in which the necessary funding would be secured. Under the

 recent Covid announcement the earliest that it could re-open would be

 17th May and he would keep the Council updated on plans. The Chair

 stated that the proposals were in line with the work of the Council in

 linking all kinds of organisations in Street together to think outside the

 box and expand what they could offer to Street life.

 In answer to queries R. Peters reported that he was working with staff

 at the College to make both organisations more attractive to the bodies

 which gave out larger grants. He was also planning to organise joint

 events with facilities such as the Crispin Hall and Greenbank Pool with

 both organisations gaining income. This would be greater if costs

 could be met by a sponsor.

 RESOLVED

 that the report be approved and details of the clerks of surrounding

 local councils and other potential partners be sent to the Manager.

26. NEW RAILWAY STATION

 P. Edge, Chair of Langport Transport Group gave a presentation on the

 project to open a new railway station on the existing line in the

 Langport – Somerton area. The feasibility study needed to consider

 potential sites and take the scheme forward would cost around £60,000

with the Department of Transport funding 75% and the remaining

£15,000 to be raised locally. The station would form part of the

Taunton to Reading line linking with Castle Cary, Bruton and new

stations at Cullompton, Wellington and Devizes. Timetabling would

need to be considered very carefully. The area was poorly served by

rail compared to the rest of the Country and there was a lack of

connectivity in the region. Somerton Town Council had agreed to give

£3,000 and more could be requested. Langport had agreed a

minimum of £500 but had pledged £3,000 in 2015. South Somerset

District Council and other councils would be asked to contribute. The

site at Somerton would be accessed from Riksey Lane and the car

park would be built on land owned by Network Rail.

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It was acknowledged that Somerton was closer to Street than Langport

and therefore preferable but that the feasibility study needed to look at

several options. Councillor Carswell stated that Mendip District Council

might contribute through the economic development budget as this was

also a green initiative. P. Edge was looking to apply to the County

Council climate emergency fund and the Charter of Green Parish

Councils. Private individuals and local organisations might also be

approached. It was acknowledged that the two drawbacks to the

scheme were increased traffic and higher house prices which would

make it more difficult for young people to get on the property ladder. A

one way system had recently been introduced in Somerton which

would help with traffic to some extent. A new station would boost the

local economy and there would be potential for workers of all ages to

travel further away to better paid employment.

The new station if approved would cost around £8 million and this

would be financed by the Department of Transport and Network Rail.

 RESOLVED

 that P. Edge would contact the Clerk regarding a request for funding

 towards the scheme and a letter of support for it would be sent at a

 later date.

27. ACCOUNTS SYSTEM

 Following the resignation of P. Goater Councillor Mogg had agreed to

 operate the Bankline system and to be issued with a debit card.

 RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

 that Councillor Mogg be appointed to operate the Bankline system with

 Councillor Daniells, the Clerk and ACPO and to be issued with a

 Council debit card.

28. ALTERATION OF PARISH ROOMS

 The Clerk submitted the final report of costs, savings and contribution

 from Somerset County Council to the project for information. A copy

 had been circulated. Councillor Leafe stated that the Council had

 saved the Library and it was important that it was well used and

 reached out into the community in a similar way as the Theatre.

 Councillor Daniells thanked the Clerk for identifying several payments

 which the County Council had duplicated resulting in the grant being

 increased by around £1,300 for the Council.

 RESOLVED

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 A. that the report be approved and publicised on the website and

 Facebook with a narrative explaining what the facility could offer to the

 community and the potential to gain income from hiring out rooms

 B. that a grant writer specialising in digital community engagement be

 invited to speak at a meeting of the Committee on what they could offer

 to the Council.

 The meeting ended at 9 p.m.

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 AGENDA ITEM NO: 6

To: Policy and Finance Committee

From: Clerk

Subject: Grants

**STREET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

On 15th June it was agreed that the grant application be supported in principle and more clarity and a business plan including figures, objectives and which businesses retail and other were keen to join be submitted to the next meeting.

The information set out below has been submitted by Councillor Wolfers for consideration. The Committee has delegated authority to agree grants of up to £2,000 each in accordance with the agreed policy and budget. In the interests of transparency it is noted that the Chair of the Council, Councillor Wolfers would be paid to set up the Chamber of Commerce as detailed below. Whenever this item is considered she will be required to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest and leave the meeting.

The only remaining part of any chamber is an account held by P. Eavis as the only remaining part of any chamber. He joined in 1975, wants a chamber and is considering being part of it. There is £5,000 in the account which he wants to protect until another chamber is set up and formally formed. I met with him and discussed this. He wants the chamber to still provide Christmas trees to the shops in the High Street.

To this end I asked the Council for an initial support of £2,000. I will be looking to get grants or funding to help support until membership can sustain the chamber, initially giving free membership. This is to be deposited in to the chamber account and to be used to set up the new chamber

1. get an accountant to set up a community based company suitable for chamber business – Mundays, Vestry Road to quote to set up and run accounts

2. website set up and hosting – quote obtained

3. social media accounts, email, mail chimp etc. to be set up

4. board to be set up hopefully including the accountant, Councillor Prior, Chris Davis of Landsec and a few more

5. work with Mendip media to approach businesses about joining as members

6. Chris Davis at Clarks Village to work with us on getting all businesses to join the chamber

7. events and member benefits, work with the Council’s Business Action Group.

My involvement is that I will set everything up, run the admin as a business development manager freelance, work with the board to deliver events, memberships etc. I will be paid as a freelance on invoice initially to P. Eavis until the company is set up. I look to be working 5 to 10 hours a week depending on what needs doing. I will be working with Millfield and Mendip to deliver the employment fair as our first event.

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**MENDIP YMCA**

The representatives on this body, Cllrs Drew, Goater and Prior have reported that the youth service is being run well. Additional funding/grants are being sought together with an agreement to secure long term use of the Young People’s Centre and there are regular meetings and updates. Therefore the second grant of £5,000 will be paid prior to the school Summer holidays as previously agreed.

**ELMHURST FOREST SCHOOL**

A grant application has been received from the Glastonbury and Street Community Learning Partnership for £600 to run 6 Forest School days for families from Street throughout the Summer. See information submitted below.

I am a trained Forest School leader working within Elmhurst school and I have also been running a toddler group forest school for four years. Both children at the school and the toddlers attending have grown a love for their environment, the space that is available to them, on the grounds of Elmhurst school. Some of the toddlers attending have been doing so for a couple of years and are now due to start school in September. These children may attend local schools and one day find themselves at Elmhurst again. I have been working with the year 3’s (7-8 year olds) this year and forest school has been a great way to settle children who have experienced so many challenges & changes this year with lockdowns happening around the time of starting a new school.

Head Teachers and SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) are concerned about the consequences and impact that the Covid-19 virus has had on their mental wellbeing. Children’s well-being has been in decline in this Country since 2009 (The Childrens society).

For young people with mental ill-health the effects of the virus may be particularly challenging. There are currently one in eight children aged 5-19 in England who have a diagnosable mental health condition. This has resulted in heightened feelings of anxiety, stress and worries. School closures,

whilst an important way to stave the spread of Covid-19, has for many increased social isolation for young people. Some families earnings have decreased which has impacted on family budgets.

Forest School is a great experience and has many benefits for Childrens wellbeing and confidence. During the lockdowns, I was able to run some forest school/outdoor activities for the children of key workers and vulnerable families. This was a much welcome distraction and respite from the worries and concerns surrounding us through this pandemic.

Myself and the Schools Parents and Family Support Advisor Andy Leafe, have secured funding, to accommodate 10 children a day for six days during the Summer holidays. These days will be run weekly on every Wednesday, during the summer holidays at Elmhurst Junior School. These children are all attending Schools within Street area.

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I am asking the Street Parish Council for additional funding to enable me to invite the parents and main caregivers of these children. I currently only have funding for the children to attend, as the bid doesn’t fund adults. I feel that it is really important to invite the parents and main care givers, because this will give the whole family an opportunity to further connect, and provide them with a positive outdoor experiences. It will give the adults additional knowledge and skills that they will be able to undertake in the future. Utilising knowledge about our woodlands and green spaces is free, it is both mindful and has a positive impact on our wellbeing. It is an opportunity for peer mentoring and socialising. Some of the families have experienced trauma and neglect.  The value of Forest School for providing an alternative model of ‘being with children’, in a predominant education culture of target setting, which stresses children and the staff working with them, cannot be underestimated. Providing access to safe, natural  space for adults and children where they playfully challenge themselves, learn together and connect with nature is now recognised by many, including government in the [25 year Environment Plan](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2F25-year-environment-plan&data=04%7C01%7Cstreet.parish%40street-pc.gov.uk%7Cbf75cf8cddb24f0e000e08d93ba9581a%7C1b2a435d8c0c4c29a248215370c6a4ab%7C0%7C0%7C637606420784103593%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=%2Fv8VNUrauAPYO3ZnaJE4TFS7sKEOFfpZQHEdOTl99cA%3D&reserved=0) (chapter 3), as a valuable way of addressing the crisis of mental health, whilst engendering care and responsibility for the environment.

I know many of the year 3 children specifically identified by the School, who have been spending time, over this year, with me at forest school would very much enjoy showing their families and main caregivers the skills they have gained. More importantly will be teaching the adults these skills.  This builds self-esteem and resilience which is really required given the current challenging circumstances. Children who have experienced poverty, bereavement trauma and adversity need a platform to build on and Forest School is a proven intervention to help address these experiences.

I am looking at inviting up to 10 adults to each day session, at a cost of £10.00 per adult. This will include Staffing costs, providing a healthy lunch, additional resources and equipment. I need to point out that Andy Leafe is the Schools PFSA (Parent and Family Support Advisor) he is not included in any staffing costs what’s so ever. The funding from SASP or if this bid is successful, by the Street Parish Council doesn’t go to making any financial payment towards him. Andy is part of this project because he has the skills and knowledge to support families whom have experienced Adverse Childhood/Adult experiences.

L.A. Ruff

Clerk

06.07.21

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 AGENDA ITEM NO: 10

To: Policy and Finance Committee

From: Clerk

Subject: Budget 2022/23

It was agreed previously that initial consideration be given to the budget for the following financial year at this meeting ahead of the detailed report submitted to the November meeting. I have attached the Estimates for 2021/22 for information. The grant of £10,000 for Mendip YMCA to be added to the Annual Grants. The Christmas lights for the High Street and Parish Rooms now cost around £11,100 to hire and the Cracker event costs around £3,000 so an allocation of £15,000 for Christmas from 2022/23 would be sensible + any proposed additions.

It was agreed to set the precept for the current financial year at £471,500 to balance income and expenditure.

L.A. Ruff

Clerk

06.07.21

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 STREET PARISH COUNCIL - ESTIMATES 2021/2022

1. ADMINISTRATION

**STAFFING**

Net Salary Clerk )

PAYE/NI/Pension )

Assistant Clerk ) 109,642

PAYE/NI/Pension )

Assistant Clerk and Projects Officer )

PAYE/NI/Pension )

**GENERAL**

Payroll Costs 416

Telephone/Broadband 3,800

Insurance 2,550

SALC/SLCC/Com. Council subscriptions 2,821

Audit 1,632

Print/Post/Stationery 2,000

Binding Council Minutes 145

Advertising and Publicity 204

Room Hire 200

Computer Aid/RBS/Data Protection 3,468

Travel and Subsistance 400

Training – Staff/Members 1,000

Furniture/Equipment/Improvements 2,000

Chair’s Allowance 750

**SPC BUILDING**

Rates 10,650

Electric/Gas 3,000

Water/Sewerage 380

Waste Collection 1,736

Janitorial 3,376

Maintenance/Renovations 3,000

Legal/Professional 400

LOAN 1 SPC BUILDING REPAYMENTS 22,222

LOAN 2 SPC BUILDING REPAYMENTS 7,985

CONTINGENCY FUND 43,500

 **TOTAL 227,277**

2. GRANTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

GENERAL GRANTS 25,000

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**OTHER GRANTS**

Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau 10,000

Twinning Association 1,000

Crispin Community Focus 10,000

Strode Theatre 20,000

Library - Staffing 30,100

GREENBANK SWIMMING POOL 32h,000

COMMUNITY SAFETY 1,000

 **TOTAL 115,100**

3. COMMUNITY

CCTV MONITORING 9,475

HIGH STREET ENHANCEMENT 15,800

LITTER AND DOG BINS 2,000

HIGHWAYS 2,500

ISSUES FOR STREET – YOUTH, VULNERABLE 55,000

STRODE ROAD ALLOTMENTS 860

CYCLEWAY EXTENSION 100,000

 **TOTAL 185,635**

4. STREET SKATE PARK **9,000**

5. MERRIMAN PARK **32,000**

6. EVENTS

Chair’s Investiture/Awards 1,200

Christmas Event/Lights/Party 11,000

Merriman Park Fun Day 6,000

Remembrance/Other 3,000

 **TOTAL 21,200**

**TOTAL GROSS PAYMENTS 590,212**

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 AGENDA ITEM NO: 11

To: Policy and Finance Committee

From: Clerk

Subject: Investment of Funds

The Annual Investment Strategy for 2021/22 was agreed in February and is attached for information. Funds are being held as set out below to spread the risk of losing funds in a major financial crisis. Interest rates with CCLA are slightly higher than at Nat West as the risk is probably slightly higher. The CCLA website states that the purchase of PSDF shares is not the same as making a deposit with a bank and is not a guaranteed investment. The main objective of the Council is to seek security for funds.

CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund at about 0.0283% £453 interest 2020/21

£229,107 at 31st May

Nat West Business Reserve Acc. at about 0.01% £29 interest 2020/21

£125,941 at 31st May

£51,146 in Current Acc. at 31st May.

It is recommended that funds are invested as already agreed until it is appropriate to consider investing some funds for a longer period, changing accounts or paying off some of either of the 2 loans with the Public Works Loan Board.

L.A. Ruff

Clerk

06.07.21

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Annual Investment Strategy 2021/2022

It is recommended that the AIS for the next financial year, as set out below, is approved and recommended for adoption by the Council.

ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2021/2022

STREET PARISH COUNCIL

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 section 15(1)(a) the Council on 18th November, 2004 adopted the Guidance on Local Government Investments by agreeing to draw up an Annual Investment Strategy for the financial year 2005/2006 and by agreeing that the AIS should be approved each February thereafter for the next financial year.

ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2022

The general policy objective is that the Council should invest prudently the surplus funds held on behalf of the Street community. The Council will seek the highest rate of return consistent with proper levels of security and liquidity. The Annual Investment Strategy must be approved by the Full Council and can be varied during the year subject to Council approval.

At present most funds are held in the Nat West current and Business Reserve accounts and the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. The British Government has guaranteed deposits of up to £75,000 for some parties and it seems that this does apply to parish councils. Interest rates in various accounts are still very low but CCLA PSDF offers a gross interest rate of around 0.0361% (changes daily) compared to 0.01% with Nat West Business Reserve Account. More funds have been transferred to CCLA to gain over £1,000 per annum in interest provided funds remain at about the same level.

1. For the financial year ended 31st March, 2022 the balances, other than sums transferred from time to time to the National Westminster Bank current account to pay invoices etc. shall be held as follows -

Up to £2,000 in the Nat West Debit Card current account (for online payments made by the Clerk and Assistant Clerks)

Up to £60,000 in the Nat West current account

£75,000 + in the Nat West Business Reserve account

£225,000 + in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

The interest rate on the fixed annuity loan of £250,000 with the Public Works Loan Board is 3.56% with half yearly payments of £11,111.11. The loan will be repaid on 13th November, 2023. The second fixed annuity loan was taken out on 24th July 2020 with the PWLB of £100,000 over 14.5 years to part fund the alteration of the Parish Rooms for library/council/community use. The interest rate is 2.01% with half yearly payments of £3,992.

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Money will still be held in reserves for the following -

Gratuity £ 2,295

Future fund for Skate Park and Scout Hut £ 23,000

Neighbourhood Plan Grant £ 4,890

Parish Rooms 5 Year Exterior Paintwork 2025 £ 5,000

Post Covid Celebration £ 10,000

Replacement Fund Skate Park £ 10,000

New Services Unitary changes/community support £ 55,000

 TOTAL £110,185

General Revenue Reserves £188,276

 TOTAL £298,461

2. As considered appropriate, the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council, will ask the Committee to review the investment of some funds in a Time Deposit, Bond etc. bearing in mind funds received and required and to make a recommendation to the Council.

3. All accounts shall be operated by the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer or the Assistant Clerk and Projects Officer who shall report transferson a quarterly basis to the Policy and Finance Committee. In the absence of the Clerk/RFO and the ACPO the accounts shall be operated by the Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee and either the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council and that RBS Software be engaged as necessary to give professional assistance.

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 AGENDA ITEM NO: 12

To: Committee

From: Clerk

Subject: Bi-Annual Review of Risk Assessment

As agreed by Council the Committee is asked to carry out the bi annual review of risk assessment and management. Under Financial Regulations when any new activity is being considered the Clerk/RFO is required to prepare a draft risk management policy addressing the legal and financial liabilities and risk management issues for consideration and adoption by the Council. Separate reports on managing risks associated with projects such as the Parish Rooms are submitted as necessary.

In accordance with advice contained in the Local Councils’ Governance and Accountability Guidance, the Committee is asked to -

1. identify and update key risks facing the Council in achieving its priorities and service objectives

2. evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place

3. decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

Risks can be placed in high, medium and low categories according to how likely they are to occur and their potential impact. The bi annual risk assessment is attached for review.

L.A. Ruff

Clerk

06.07.21

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