



Whixall Parish Council

Business Continuity Plan

1. Background

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on a local authority to be prepared, as far as reasonably practical, to continue to provide functions/services in the event of disruption by whatever cause. Even though this is not a statutory duty for Parish Councils, it is Whixall Parish Council's intention to maintain a Business Continuity Plan to be prepared for events which may disrupt the normal running of the Council.

This plan identifies the instances of disruption, the immediate responses, the procedures to follow to maintain continuity of service and the follow-up procedures and necessary changes to service delivery, where such services are disrupted by factors within the Council's area of responsibility.

2. Core Business of Whixall Parish Council

The Council provides local services to its electorate which includes:

- Provision of a Website, noticeboards, newsletters and the use of other social media to communicate relevant matters
- Maintenance of grassed areas at Moss Cottages, Hollinwood Green and the Old Burial Ground (adjacent to the Social Centre)
- Provision of equipment and reimbursement of expenses to the Marlot Conservation Group for the upkeep of the Marlot LNR which is a Council-owned asset.
- Maintenance of the redundant telephone box at Welsh End
- Acting as a consultee on planning applications, to represent Parish interests
- Managing the finances of the Council and using the precept for community benefit
- Liaising with Shropshire Council and other partners on issues that affect the Parish

3. Potential Causes of Disruption

These can be categorised as damage, failure, or loss:

Damage	Failures	Loss
Caused by: Extreme weather Fire Terrorism Accident or omission	Of equipment Of public services	Staff through death, illness, injury or resignation Councillors (risk of leaving the Council inquorate) Volunteers Contractors through injury or failure to renew existing contracts



Whixall Parish Council

Event	Minimise Impact	Immediate Action	Continuity	Longer Term
Loss of Clerk due to death, sudden/ longer term illness, incapacity or resignation	•Clerk to ensure that the annual calendar of actions is up to date and all key tasks are listed. •Council to ensure that financial records are kept up to date throughout the year (through regular reporting process) •Chair to have a copy of all passwords and logins in sealed envelope. •Clerk to keep a record of where PC documents and equipment are located in their home (to be filed with the latest annual return folder) •Clerk to develop handover notes as soon as possible. <u>Contact information</u> Clerk's home no: 01939 234830	•Chairman and Vice Chairman to be informed. •Chairman to inform Council. •Contact SALC for advice. •Call extraordinary meeting to confirm appointment of temporary cover. <u>Contact information</u> alc@shropshire.gov.uk	•Recruit temporary replacement or locum • Seek and employ permanent Clerk	Review procedures to ensure minimal impact from loss.

Event	Minimise Impact	Immediate Action	Continuity	Longer Term
Loss of Councillors due to multiple resignations (causing Council to be inquorate)	•Co-option of councillors who may be in reserve; or •Regular promotion of the work of the Council to attract candidates as required	•Clerk to inform remaining councillors & employees of the Council. •Clerk to inform Shropshire Council Election Team Contact information elections@shropshire.gov.uk	Shropshire 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 regularly review procedures for recruitment of councillors
Loss of Council documents due to fire, flood or other causes	•Upload key documents to the website •Scan documents and store on laptop •Follow procedure for archiving documents.	Clerk to inform Council and insurance company if necessary. Contact information The insurance certificates are uploaded to the website	Council to discuss at next meeting.	Review procedures to ensure improvements and security.
Loss of Council electronic data due to fire, fault or breakdown	•Make back up (at least monthly) •Clerk to report any technical issues promptly to the Council.	Clerk to inform Council and insurance company if necessary.	Use cloud back up.	Review as required

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Loss of Council equipment including laptop due to theft, fault or breakdown	•Back up data regularly. •Ensure virus software up to date •Ensure online data protected by robust passwords which are regularly updated •Purchase of surge protected equipment	Report theft to police and insurance company. Decide on immediate replacement. Divert calls to mobile phone.	Replace in accordance with current financial regulations.	Review procedures to ensure improvements.
Temporary loss of internet access or landline	•Clerk to temporarily relocate where free internet is available eg Wem Town Hall or Wem Town Council Offices	•Clerk to contact provider and arrange for service to be repaired •Use mobile phone “hot spot” to connect to internet.	•Consider provision of a pay as you go mobile phone with sufficient data to allow temporary internet use in an emergency.	Review procedures as required
Temporary loss of meeting place – Whixall Social Centre	Clerk to contact Whixall CE Primary School to arrange for an alternative venue	Clerk to inform councillors and public of alternative venue.	Use alternative premises for meetings.	
Loss of Grounds Maintenance equipment due to theft, fault or breakdown	Maintain adequate insurance cover. Ensure regular maintenance carried out. Build up earmarked reserves	Report theft to police and insurance company. Report loss to insurance company.	Arrange hire of equipment if necessary. Arrange purchase of new equipment within current financial regulations. Update asset register	Review risk assessment and security of equipment and maintenance schedule.

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Local Disaster	Maintain adequate insurance cover.	Contact emergency services if required. Liaise with Shropshire Council and provide social media information if appropriate.	Call extraordinary meeting to discuss if any action required.	Review risk assessments
Council unable to meet due to adverse weather conditions.	Clerk and Chair to jointly agree if cancellation/postponement is necessary.	Clerk to update the website and social media to advise residents that the meeting will not go ahead.	Clerk and Chair to agree any actions under the scheme of delegation. Clerk to carry out any urgent work.	Review risk assessment
Contractor unable to fulfill grass cutting contract or Council is unable to let the contract	Ensure contract always includes options for extension.	Clerk to approach neighbouring councils to ascertain willingness for WPC to piggy-back on existing contracts.	Consider joining neighbouring Councils contracts as the normal way of working.	
Marlot Conservation Group ceases to exist due to lack of volunteers	Clerk to ensure that •the requirements of LNR management are understood •The asset inventory is kept up to date	Clerk to •inform Chair and councillors •Arrange for return/collection of tools and equipment and store them temporarily •Identify any urgent actions that need to be carried out •Consider preventing	Council to discuss management options with Shropshire Council and other relevant organisations.	

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		public access to the site if safety is an issue		

Reviewed and Revised	May 2026
Review Frequency	Annually
Next Review due	May 2027