

Standish Parish Council Risk Register

Reviewed October 2023, Approved November 2023

Risk management is the process whereby local councils methodically address the risks associated with what they do and the services which they provide. The Parish Council should identify potential risks, then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks associated with working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors, as far as is practically possible. This document should enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

Assessment Scoring: 1 = low; 2 = low/medium; 3 = medium/high; 5 = high

Activity	Risk	Cause	Effect	Likelihood	Actions/ comments
1. Finances	Sudden large expenditure required or excessive under budgeting	Unforeseen problem / Poor budgeting	Service not provide. Lack of confidence in council. Inability to carry out functions. Insufficient funds for contingencies	2 - Low/Med	<p>Council has some reserves. Insurance in place to cover major risks. Careful budget planning with contingency built in each year.</p> <p>Clerk builds bank reconciliation figures into new format spreadsheet cashbook and has separate cashbooks for each of two accounts. Budget planning commences in November so that budget considerations can be spread over 2 to 3 months ahead of required precept application. Clerk produces expend against budget ahead of budget setting.</p>
2. Finances	Adequacy of Precept	Precept not submitted to Stroud District Council. Precept not received by Parish Council	No income for parish council to continue its work	1 – Low	<p>RFO to prepare budget, considering expenditure + projects. Full review of proposed budget by Council in November. Regularly review of budget v spend. RFO to submit precept figure before deadline.</p> <p>RFO to advise council of receipt of precept at next available meeting.</p> <p>Council agreed to review method of accounting, clerk has subscribed to free trial of Scribe and has attended demonstrations of this new tool for</p>

					councils. Scribe have just issued a low-cost tool aimed at smaller councils. The clerk to consider and compare to other suitable products. Council has managed its reserves retaining more than sufficient according to guidelines, but also drawing on some reserves for current budget commitments. The precept is adequate for budget commitments.
Activity	Risk	Cause	Effect	Likelihood	Actions
3.Finances	Fraud	Inadequate controls/ record	Loss of funds Financial irregularities	1-Low	Financial Regulations reviewed annually to ensure they are adequate. Annual internal & external audit. Bank balances reported at every meeting with bank reconciliation. BACS and Cheque payments authorised by 2 councillors upon sight of original invoice and cheque stub initialled. Most payments now by BACS. Original invoices for councillor expenses now circulated before meetings at auditor's request.
4.Finance - VAT	VAT not re-claimed within time limit	Poor accounting	Loss of funds Financial irregularities	2- Low/Med	All VAT receipts to be recorded. Separate spreadsheet shows VAT Payments with information to reclaim VAT RFO to produce refund analysis and make claim to HMRC for recovery of amounts within time scale. All documentation for this process to be maintained in council records.
5. Finance - Payroll	Payroll incorrectly processed – staff over/under paid	Staff errors	Loss of funds Financial irregularities	1 - Low	Payroll outsourced to PATA who manage on behalf of the parish council, producing a salary slip and HMRC payment required.

6. Assets	Damage, theft Vandalism, accident, storms	High cost of repair or replacement.	Loss of Assets. Disruption. Damage to public property or person	2 – Low/Med	Maintain up to-date register of assets. Annual review of risk and adequacy of insurance cover. Visual check of trees on regular basis particularly after storms. Qualified arboriculturist to assess condition of trees at least every 3 years. Council agreed bi-annual inspection of physical assets. A list of physical assets constitutes Appendix A. A schedule of notes for recording of asset inspections allocated to councillors constitutes Appendix B.
Activity	Risk	Cause	Effect	Likelihood	Actions
7. Insurance	Inadequate Insurance cover for the Council, its employees and assets	Failure to renew insurance policy. Cover on policy inadequate.	Council is uninsured and liable to insurance claim.	2 – Low/Med	An annual review to be undertaken of all insurance arrangements in place. Insurance cover reviewed 2023 in anticipation of possible threshold to cover employment situations as past experienced.
8. Electronic Records	Loss of documents on Clerk's computer	Computer crash, fire, theft, flood	Loss of records	2 – Low/Med	Anti-virus software installed. Minutes kept as hard copies and copies emailed to all councillors. Minutes & policies held on parish council website. Backups copied to separate memory sticks at regular intervals and retained in a separate room to council laptop. New laptop purchase agreed rather than reconditioned. This ensure speed and security of work.
9. Clerk to the Parish Council	Unavailability	Resignation, illness	Work of the Parish Council cannot be carried out	2 – Low/Med	Urgent work carried out by Councillors. Contact GAPTC about availability of temporary cover or contact local Clerks

10. Membership of the Parish Council	Vacancies on council	Resignation, retirement, insufficient nomination at elections	Meetings cannot be held due to not being quorate	2 – Low/Med	<p>Ensure council meetings are run smoothly and business is relevant to retain the interest of serving councillors. Promote vacancies widely around the parish especially at election time.</p> <p>Council has co-opted three councillors to maintain quoracy and continue council business. No meeting in recent times has been inquorate.</p>
11. Members Interest	Member has not disclosed a Declaration of Interest relating to an agenda item	Conflict of Interest by Member	Resolutions cannot be met due to insufficient number of Councillors	2 – Low/Med	<p>Standard agenda item for members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they have, and the need to disclose of matters to be discussed. Minutes to record details.</p> <p>New co-opted DPIs uploaded to website.</p>