



**West Swindon Parish Council**

**Risk Management  
Policy & Risk  
Register 2024**

Adopted June 2024

## **What is Risk Management?**

Risk is a threat that an event or action will adversely affect the Council's ability to achieve its objectives, implement its strategies and provide its services. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated, addressed and reviewed. The Council recognises that it has a responsibility to take all reasonable and practical measures to safeguard its employees, the people it works with and provides services for; and to protect the natural and built environments for which it is responsible.

The Council is aware that some risks cannot be eliminated Fully and has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk and including where necessary, the introduction of internal controls and/or appropriate use of insurance cover.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the risk management policy are to:

- Integrate risk management into the culture of the Council
- Manage risk in accordance with best practice and legislative requirements
- Minimise loss, disruption, injury and damages
- Inform policy and operational decisions by identifying risks and their likely impact
- Raise awareness of the need for risk management

## **These objectives will be achieved by:**

- Identification of risk
- Undertaking risk assessments
- Managing the risk and recording actions
- Incorporating risk management considerations into Council processes
- Providing appropriate training
- Establishing clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines
- Effective communication with, and active involvement of, employees and other stakeholders

## Risk Register

The risk register enables the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and confirm that it has taken appropriate steps to manage those risks. The Council has broken the risks into **FIVE** areas:

1. Finance
2. Governance & Management
3. Volunteers
4. Parish Depot/Workplace
5. Accidents

Play areas and maintenance is dealt with under the Play Management Policy.

The risks are identified, described and evaluated according to the potential consequence of the risk occurring (impact) and how likely this is (likelihood) i.e. high, medium or low risk. The response to risk may involve one or more of the following responses:

- **Tolerate the risk** – for the risks where the downside is containable with appropriate contingency plans or if the controls cannot be justified (e.g. because they would be disproportionate; and for unavoidable risks, e.g. terrorism.
- **Address the risk** – by imposing controls so that the Parish Council can continue to operate; or by setting up prevention techniques
- **Transfer the risk** – by buying a service from a specialist external body or taking out insurance
- **Terminate** the activity giving rise to the risk (or not start) which involve intolerable tasks or those where no response can bring the risk to a tolerable level.

**The risks are identified, assessed and recorded on the following risk register and will be reviewed by the Council not less than annually.**

1. FINANCE				
Topic	Risk	L/M/H	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
<b>Precept</b>	Request not submitted	L	Full Parish Council minute showing complete precept. Diary note. Aim for December Full Council to allow for changes before the deadline.	Tolerate
	Not paid by Borough Council	L	Check correct bank account details are held, any delays to be reported to Full Council. Reserves held to mitigate. Diary note for when payment is due in April/Sept. Paid by BACS.	Tolerate
	Adequacy of precept	M	Review of income & expenditure against budget at quarterly Finance & Staffing Committee meeting.	Address through reporting.
<b>Investment Income</b>	Loss of surplus funds due to bad investments	L	Policy reviewed annually. Diary note.	West Swindon Parish Councillors to review their investment strategy
<b>Reserves – General</b>	Inadequate to cover possible expenditure	L	Considered at Budget setting and reviewed periodically by Finance & Staffing Committee meetings. Opinion of Internal Auditor also considered.	Parish Council can look at the Public Works loans if required.
<b>Reserves – Earmarked</b>	Inadequate to cover possible expenditure	L	Considered at Budget and at year end. Diary note.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Assets</b>	Loss, Damage etc.	M	Quarterly inspections of vehicles, daily log books, insurance in force and sums insured checked annually. Asset register updated annually – internal audit	Tolerate with checks in place
	Risk or damage to third party property or individuals	M	Adequacy of Public Liability Insurance reviewed annually. Diary note. Indemnify where appropriate.	Transfer – liability with insurers.

<b>Loss</b>	Consequential loss due to critical damage or third-party activity	L	Adequacy of insurance cover reviewed annually. Diary note. Team members reminded about careful practice. Locker boxes used in down time.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Cash</b>	No cash held currently.	N/A		
<b>Maintenance</b>	Wear and Tear/Damage to assets/amenities causing loss of income	L	Regular inspections undertaken by the Parish team to major assets eg. Play equipment	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Borrowing</b>	No borrowing currently.	N/A	Financial review and cashflow quarterly forecasting	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Lending</b>	No loans currently	N/A	Loans Policy to include: Review of Annual accounts. Request forecast for repayments. Be informed of the requirements and timing of the process for applying for public loans.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Legal Powers</b>	Illegal activity or payment	L	Council informed as to legal powers as and when required by the Clerk. New Councillors to attend relevant training.	Payment schedule reviewed monthly alongside reconciliation.
<b>Best Value</b>	Overspend on services	M	Ensure correct tendering for services. Quotes for proposed large scale expenditure obtained prior to precept setting if possible.	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>Salaries</b>	Wrong salary paid	L	Payroll initiated by the Deputy Clerk by BrightPay – counter checked by Clerk for payment. Reported on monthly payment schedule. Verified by internal auditor checks.	Minor errors can be corrected by the Clerk.
	Wrong rate of pay	L	Payroll initiated by the Deputy Clerk by BrightPay – counter checked by Clerk for payment. Reported on monthly payment schedule. Verified by internal auditor checks.	Minor errors can be corrected by the Clerk. Tolerate with checks in place
	Wrong deductions PAYE	L	Payroll initiated by the Deputy Clerk by BrightPay – counter checked by Clerk for payment. Reported on monthly payment schedule. Verified by internal auditor checks.	Minor errors can be corrected by the Clerk. Tolerate with checks in place
	False employee	L	Checked to PAYE Records & lists. Checked by Internal Auditor.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Direct Costs and overhead expenses</b>	Goods not supplied to Parish Council	L	Clerk confirms, Member verifies.	Tolerate with checks in place
	Invoice incorrectly calculated	L	Arithmetic checked by Clerk; invoice sampling by Internal Auditor.	Tolerate with checks in place
	Cheque/payment payable is in excess of budget	M	Quarterly Reports identify budget allocations for payments. Reports to Committee reference budgets as appropriate. Council informed via monthly payment schedule submitted for approval.	Tolerate with checks in place
	Cheque/payment made to wrong party	L	BACs banking system counter checks the recipient bank account name	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>Grants &amp; Support</b>	No power to pay or payments outside of grant agreement	M	Grants detailed in a formal grant agreement. All agreements requested to provide receipted expenditure for goods and services. No approval of expenditure dated earlier than the grant agreement.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Election Costs</b>	Potential for late communication of changes to estimated costs – Late submission of Borough Council invoice therefore cost not fully covered by budget	H	Finance Committee and Full Council checks/considers budget. Earmarked reserves annually reduce impact of elections. Any discrepancy reported to Full Council.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>VAT irrecoverable</b>	VAT element not recorded on cashbook	M	All items listed in cash book and VAT expenditure reported via monthly payments schedule. Checked by RFO prior to submission. Submission of return agreed quarterly. Verified by Internal Audit.	Tolerate with checks in place
	Exemption doesn't apply	L	Clerk/Deputy Clerk verifies.	Tolerate with checks in place
	Not claimed within time limits	L	Subject to internal audit. Diary note.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Invoices and Receipts</b>	Inadequate records	L	Clerk/RFO reviews monthly. Checked annually internal audit.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>2. Governance</b>				
<b>Minutes</b>	Failure to be accurate and legal	L	Reviewed by Council/Committee at following meeting.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Members interests</b>	Conflict of interest	M	Declarations of interest updated at each Council meeting.	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>RFO/Councillors committing fraud</b>	Parish Precept/public funds Reputation of Parish Council	L	Fidelity Insurance cover, monthly bank reconciliation, Finance Regulations and Internal Audits in operation. Monthly payments and invoices checked by counter signatory and Committee.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Loss of money at bank</b>	Parish Precept/public funds	L	Division of reserves between 3 banks spreads the risk to minimise financial loss. Financial Services Compensation Scheme covers up to <b>£85,000</b> per authorised bank or building society	Investment Strategy to review distribution of Reserves.
<b>Lack of forward planning and budgetary controls</b>	Lack of direction and prioritisation; insufficient funds to cover spend	L	Budget management in operation and quarterly reviewed.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Poor reporting to Council</b>	Poor quality decision making  Council becomes ill informed	L	Timely and accurate financial reporting. Clear instructions to staff. Matters raised at meeting	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failure to keep proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements</b>	Inadequate financial control	L	Proper arrangements for the notification of income and approval of expenditure. Annual review of internal controls in place and their documentation. Internal and external auditor checks.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failure to respond to electors' wish to right of inspection</b>	Loss of confidence. Loss of reputation	L	Operating protocols set by Government & external auditor	Tolerate with checks in place



<b>Poor document control</b>	Deadlines missed. Lack of accountability.	L	Clear job descriptions, training and review. Hard copy and digital Minute Book. Documents retained on the shared drive for secure access and recovery.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failure to ensure that the Council complies with law in particular:</b> *Health and Safety *Equal Opportunities *Data Protection *Human Rights *Disability Discrimination *Employment Law *Racial Discrimination	Fines and Penalties from regulation bodies Legal action costs.  Loss of reputation	L	Clear policies and procedures Regular review of law. Training. Partner with an HR consultancy who release key information and changes to the the law. Regular liaison with SBC and other Clerks. The Parish Council is bound by and adheres to the legal requirements of both the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a Data Controller.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failure of the provision of services being carried out under agency/partner agreements with principal authorities</b>	Loss of reputation Poor public image	L	Clear statement of management responsibility for each service when first taken on.  Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failing to ensure that all business activities are within legal power</b>	Illegal expenditure	L	Recording in the advisory reports the precise power under which expenditure is being approved where it is out of the ordinary or new.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failure to provide proper, timely and accurate reporting of Council business in the minutes</b>	Confusion and misunderstandings  Actions not reflecting the intentions of Council	L	Draft Minutes published within 10 working days after the meeting. Approval by Committee/Parish Council. Minutes properly numbered. Master hard copy kept in safekeeping.	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>Failure to meet the timeframes responding to consultation</b>	Affect reputation and quality of services	L	Agenda to state closing date for responses.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Council lacks relevant skills and commitment</b>	Decision making bypasses Council. Poor value for precept money.	L	Training for Councillors. Review of attendance and attendance tracker. Clerk to ensure consistency and clarity of information for decision making.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Councillors benefiting from being on the Council</b>	Affect reputation  Conflicts of Interest	L	Clear Standing Orders. Declarations of interest on every formal Agenda. Code of Conduct adopted May 2024	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failure to register Members' interest, gifts etc</b>	Member could make inappropriate gains Could affect reputations	L	Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' interests and gifts	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Lack of maintenance of Council owned land or property</b>	High cost of repair. Injury to third party leading to claims. Damage to property.	L  L	Regular routine inspections.  Maintenance when required. Insurance cover	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>amage or loss to Council owned property by third party or act of God</b>  <b>Insufficient Insurance for physical assets owned by the Council – furniture, play equipment, benches etc.</b>  <b>Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership</b>	High cost of repair	M	Insurance cover. Police report or damage report. Good fire alarm. Serviced bi-annually	Tolerate with checks in place
	Loss of Assets	L	Maintain an up to date register of assets	
	Disruption	M	Regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets	
	Damage to public property or person	L	Annual review of risk and adequacy of insurance cover	
<b>Damage to third party property or individuals, due to service or amenity provided</b>	Claim against Council	L	Public Liability Insurance  Regular checks of facilities. Ensure all amenities/facilities are maintained to appropriate level	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Loss of funds through fraud or dishonesty</b>	Loss of reputation	L	Clear financial procedures. Adequate insurance cover (Fidelity Guarantee)	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Inadequacy of Precept. Failure to ensure the adequacy of the annual precept is within the sound budgeting arrangements</b>	Services not provided. Lack of confidence in Council. Inability to carry out functions. Insufficient funds for contingencies	L	Regular in-year budget progress reports. Regular inspection and comments from auditor	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>Problems due to borrowing or lending. Failure to provide sufficient banking arrangements, including borrowing or lending.</b>	Inability of Council to repay a loan	L	Include in annual budget. Clear Standing Orders. Prepare & adopt codes of practice prior to taking out a loan. Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Failure to use grants for intended purposes.</b>	Lack of funds for project for which grant was intended  Investigation into the use of funds	L	Clear minutes. Ensure funds are ring fenced.  Clear financial procedures. Record clearly in minutes. Obtain signed agreement from organisation.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Loss of records</b>	Services not provided? Inability to carry out functions? Loss of historical records (irreplaceable)	L	Copies of important documentation issued to Cllrs. Councillors have access to a group sharepoint. All Council reports and documents are maintained in hard copy (Minute Book) and on the cloud. Ensure regular backups undertaken (copies to be kept in separate locations)	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Cyber Security</b>	Loss of sensitive information Loss of funds Lack of confidence in the Council. Disruption of services	L	Use a good quality paid for Anti-virus. Full firewalls in place. Encryption on the hard drives in place, to prevent access if the computers are stolen	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Safeguarding – Assault/injury</b>	Injury/assault on a member of staff or Councillor	L	Councillors and staff note the lone working policy and risk assessment.	Tolerate with checks in place

3. VOLUNTEERS				
Topic	Risk	L/M/H	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
<b>Toxocariasis</b>	Infection	M	Rubber gloves worn and litter pickers used Informed volunteers of equipment & safe system of working	Volunteers must observe the safe system of working. Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Outdoor conditions</b>	Slipping on wet surfaces	M	Appropriate clothing for the conditions as per the safe system of working	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Needles drug paraphernalia HIV/Hepatitis Infection</b>	Infection when disposing of item	M	Any paraphernalia found to be notified to the out of hours team or Parish Team and left in situ.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Litter and Broken Glass</b>	Cuts/Infection Back Problems	M	Remove and dispose of using thick gloves and litter picker to prevent close contact with litter and bending.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Accidents</b>	Any accident to volunteers	L	Protective clothing to be worn. No electrical work to be carried out. No roadside work carried out. First aid equipment issued. No power tools.  Report any accidents to Clerk. Insurance cover in force	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Assault</b>	Assault on volunteers	L	Safe system of working. Volunteers to take action to avoid confrontation. Insurance cover in force	Tolerate with checks in place

4. PARISH DEPOT/WORK PLACE				
Topic	Risk	L/M/H	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Review
Steps into upstairs office.	Trip/Slip	L	Disabled access available in the downstairs meeting room.	Tolerate with checks in place
Flooring and Stairs	Trip/Slip	L	Stairs to be kept clear of objects. Carpets to be kept defect free. Depot garage kept dry and spillage kits to be used.	Tolerate with checks in place
Equipment	Damage to person	L	Equipment examined regularly. Repairs carried out. Risk assessments for individual equipment shared with users/staff.	Tolerate with checks in place
Electrical Equipment	Burns/Electrocution	L	Visual inspection monthly Circuit breakers installed. Individual risk assessments	Tolerate with checks in place
Dangerous substances	Dangerous cleaning materials	L	Dangerous cleaning materials kept in locked cupboard. Key in keysafe.	Tolerate with checks in place
Structure of Building	Falling debris	L	Exterior of Building & inspection to be carried out by the team and the landlord.	Tolerate with checks in place
Legionella	Risk to public health	L	Legionella Policy to be implemented by Operations Supervisor.	Tolerate with checks in place
Car Park	Trip/Slip	L	Examined regularly Any problems rectified or car park closed if this is not possible.	Tolerate with checks in place
Security	Break in	L	All staff aware of security code system. Security alarm activated out of hours.	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>Fire Equipment</b>	Failure of equipment	L	Fire Alarm serviced every 12 months, Fire Extinguishers serviced every 12 months. Fire blanket and signs reviewed every 12 months.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Fire</b>	Fire damage or injury	L	Fire instructions issued to staff. Meeting points identified in car park.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Medical emergency</b>	Severe illness	M	Call ambulance immediately, call designated First Aider, first aid kits in kitchen and depot.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Burns</b>	Burns from hot water	L	Call designated First Aider, first aid kit in kitchen.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Workstation</b>	Repetitive strain injury Eye damage/VDU Screen	L	Computer screen free from defect. Keyboard adequate. Good lighting. No glare. Adjustable chair, footrest. Staff eligible for paid sight test. VDU policy reviewed and updated Annual inspection of office to be carried out by Operations Supervisor.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Accident occurring in office`</b>	Injury to staff or visitors	L	Flooring inspected regularly for defects.  Filing cabinets closed when not in use and only one drawer open at one time.  Windows and doors checked regularly for defects.  First Aid equipment & insurance cover provided.	Tolerate with checks in place

<b>Accident occurring outside the office</b>	Injury on site visit	L	Staff to follow risk assessments and safe systems or working including outdoor litter picking, lone working and weather conditions.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>5. ACCIDENTS &amp; FIRST AID</b>				
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>L/M/H</b>	<b>Management/control of risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
<b>Accident</b>	Accidents to Staff/Public/contractors	M	Individual risk assessments in force and reviewed annually by appropriate Committees. Independent annual inspection of playground risks by accredited specialist e.g. RoSPA  Full Council verify annually that risk assessments have been reviewed and all inspections have been undertaken.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Visitors</b>	Accidents to Staff/Public	M	First Aid Box in depot & kitchen.  Risk Assessment & regular inspections carried out.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Claim against Council</b>	Council's reputation and possibly financially	L	Risk Assessments in place.  Public Liability Insurance cover in operation.	Tolerate with checks in place
<b>Trees/Rivers</b>	Public perception of the Council's responsibilities. Council's reputation and possibly financially	L on the basis of it being primarily another organisation's responsibility	Risks to Parish Council assets within the areas prone to flooding or fallen trees are mitigated by insurance. Flooding, drainage or tree related matters elsewhere in the Parish are monitored regularly and issues brought to the attention of appropriate authorities e.g. Environment Agency/Swindon Borough Council.	Necessarily, the risks are monitored constantly. Responsibilities for action are mostly outside the control of the Parish Council.



<b>Defibrillators</b>	Accessible for use in an emergency situation – failure could harm the Council's reputation	L on the basis of it being primarily another organisation's responsibility	Necessarily, the device is housed in a readily accessible location but one in which it could be damaged. Host organisation monitors its condition and any potential problems, it is hoped, would be identified and subject to immediate remedial action.	Responsibilities for action are mostly outside the control of the Parish Council. Council team members conduct routine visual observations.
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End.