



WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY & RISK REGISTER 2024

REVIEWED	CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC SECTION	NEXT REVIEW DATE
June 2023	Adopted and Added June 2023	20th May 2025

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
Precept	Request not submitted	L	Full Parish Council minute showing complete precept. Diary note.	
	Not paid by Borough Council	L	Checked and reported to full council. Reserves held. Diary note. Paid by BACS.	
	Adequacy of precept	M	Review of income & expenditure against budget at every full council and finance meeting	
Investment Income	Loss of surplus funds due to bad investments	L	Policy reviewed annually. Diary note.	West Swindon Parish Councillors to review their investment strategy
Reserves – General	Inadequate to cover possible expenditure	L	Considered at Budget setting and all other Finance Committee meetings. Opinion of Internal Auditor also considered.	Parish Council can look at the Public Works loans if required.
Reserves – Earmarked	Inadequate to cover possible expenditure	L	Considered at Budget and at year end. Diary note.	
Assets	Loss, Damage etc.	M	Quarterly inspections, insurance in force and sums insured checked annually. Asset register updated annually – internal audit	West Swindon Parish Council to update the format of its current Asset Register to reflect hours/mileage
	Risk or damage to third party property or individuals	M	Adequacy of Public Liability Insurance reviewed annually. Diary note.	
Loss	Consequential loss due to critical damage or third-party activity	L	Adequacy of insurance cover reviewed annually. Diary note.	

Cash	No cash held currently.	N/A		
Maintenance	Wear and Tear/Damage to assets/amenities causing loss of income	L	Regular inspections undertaken by the Parish tea.	
Borrowing	No borrowing currently.	N/A	Financial review and cashflow quarterly forecasting	
Lending	No loans currently	N/A	Loans Policy to include: View of Constitution View of Annual Accounts Request forecast for repayments.	
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payment	L	Council informed as to legal powers as and when required by the Clerk. New Councillors to attend relevant training.	
Best Value	Overspend on services	M	Ensure correct tendering for services. Quotes obtained prior to precept if possible.	
Salaries	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.
	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.
	False employee	L	Checked to PAYE Records & lists. Checked by Internal Auditor.	
Direct Costs and overhead expenses	Goods not supplied to Parish Council	L	Clerk confirms, Member verifies.	
	Invoice incorrectly calculated	L	Arithmetic checked by Clerk; invoice sampling by Internal Auditor.	
	Cheque/payment payable is in excess of budget	M	Reports identify budget allocations for payments. Payment authorised by 2nd councillor signature. Council informed via monthly payment schedule submitted for approval.	
	Cheque/payment made to wrong party	L	Banking system counter checks the recipient bank account	
Grants & Support	No power to pay or payments outside of grant agreement	M	Grants detailed in a formal grant agreement. All agreements must provide receipted expenditure.	

Election Costs	Estimate only given by GBC – Late submission of Borough Council invoice therefore cost not fully covered by budget	H	Finance Committee and full Council checks/considers budget. Any discrepancy reported to full Council.	
VAT irrecoverable	VAT element not recorded on cashbook	M	All items listed in cash book and VAT expenditure reported via monthly payments schedule. Submission of return agreed quarterly. Verified by Internal Audit.	
	Exemption doesn't apply	L	Clerk/Deputy Clerk verifies.	
	Not claimed within time limits	L	Reported to full council – minute. Subject to internal audit. Diary note.	
2. Governance				
Invoices and Receipts	Inadequate records	L	Checked annually internal audit.	
Minutes	Failure to be accurate and legal	L	Reviewed by Council/Committee at following meeting.	
Members interests	Conflict of interest	M	Declarations of interest updated at each Council meeting.	
RFO/Councillors committing fraud	Parish Precept/public funds Reputation of Parish Council	L	Fidelity Insurance cover, monthly bank reconciliation, Finance Regs and Internal Audits in operation	Amount of Fidelity Insurance to be reviewed annually

Loss of money at bank	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 £85,000 per authorised bank or building society	Investment Strategy to review distribution of Reserves.
Lack of forward planning and budgetary controls	Lack of direction and prioritisation; insufficient funds to cover spend	L	Budget in operation and regularly reviewed.	
Poor reporting to council	Poor quality decision making Council becomes ill informed	L	Timely and accurate financial reporting. Clear instructions to staff. Matter raised at meeting	
Failure to keep proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements	Inadequate financial control	L	Proper arrangements for the notification of income and approval of Expenditure. Review of internal controls in place and their documentation. Internal auditor.	
Failure to respond to electors' wish to right of inspection	Loss of confidence. Loss of reputation	L	Operating protocols set by Government & external auditor	
Poor document control	Deadlines missed. Lack of accountability.	L	Clear job descriptions, training and review	

<p>Failure to ensure that the Council complies with law in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Health and Safety *Equal Opportunities *Data Protection *Human Rights *Disability Discrimination *Employment Law *Racial Discrimination 	<p>Fines and Penalties from regulation bodies</p> <p>Loss of reputation</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Clear policies and procedures</p> <p>Regular review of law.</p> <p>Training</p>	
<p>Failure of the provision of services being carried out under agency/partner agreements with principal authorities</p>	<p>Loss of reputation</p> <p>Poor public image</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Clear statement of management responsibility for each service when first taken on.</p> <p>Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers</p>	
<p>Failing to ensure that all business activities are within legal power</p>	<p>Illegal expenditure</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Recording in the advisory reports the precise power under which expenditure is being approved</p>	
<p>Failure to provide proper, timely and accurate reporting of Council business in the minutes</p>	<p>Confusion and misunderstandings</p> <p>Actions not reflecting the intentions of Council</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Draft Minutes published within 10 working days after the meeting. Approval by Committee/Parish Council.</p> <p>Minutes properly numbered. Master copy kept in safekeeping</p>	
<p>Failure to meet the timeframes responding to consultation</p>	<p>Affect reputation and quality of services</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Agenda to state closing date for responses.</p>	

Council lacks relevant skills and commitment	Decision making bypasses Council. Poor value for precept money.	L	Training for Councillors. Review of attendance	
Councillors benefiting from being on the Council	Affect reputation Conflicts of Interest	L	Clear Standing Orders Code of Conduct adopted May 2024	
Failure to register Members' interest, gifts etc	Member could make inappropriate gains Could affect reputations	L	Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' interests and gifts	
Lack of maintenance of Council owned land or property	High cost of repair. Injury to third party leading to claims. Damage to property.	L L	Regular routine inspections. Maintenance when required. Insurance cover	

<p>Damage or loss to Council owned property by third party or act of God</p> <p>Insufficient Insurance for physical assets owned by the Council – furniture, play equipment, benches etc.</p> <p>Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership</p>	High cost of repair	M	Insurance cover. Police report or damage report. Good fire alarm. Serviced bi-annually	
	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	
<p>Damage to third party property or individuals, due to service or amenity provided</p>	Claim against Council	L	Public Liability Insurance	
			Regular checks of facilities. Ensure all amenities/facilities are maintained to appropriate level	
<p>Loss of funds through fraud or dishonesty</p>	Loss of reputation	L	Clear financial procedures. Adequate insurance cover (Fidelity Guarantee)	
<p>Inadequacy of Precept. Failure to ensure the adequacy of the annual precept is within the sound budgeting arrangements</p>	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	

Problems due to borrowing or lending. Failure to provide sufficient banking arrangements, including borrowing or lending.	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.	
Failure to use grants for intended purposes.	Lack of funds for project for which grant was intended Investigation into the use of funds	L	Clear minutes. Ensure funds ring fenced. Clear financial procedures. Record clearly in minutes. Obtain signed agreement from organisation.	
Loss of records	Services not provided? Inability to carry out functions? Loss of historical records (irreplaceable)	L	Copies of important documentation issued to Cllrs. Ensure regular backups undertaken (copies to be kept in separate locations)	
Cyber Security	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	
Safeguarding – Assault/injury	Injury/assault on a member staff or councillor	L	Councillors and staff note the lone working policy and risk assessment.	

3. VOLUNTEERS

Topic	Risk	L/M/H	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Toxocariasis	Infection	M	Rubber gloves worn and litter pickers used Informed volunteers of equipment & safe system of working	

Outdoor conditions	Slipping on wet surfaces	M	Appropriate clothing for the conditions as per the safe system of working	
Needles drug paraphernalia HIV/Hepatitis Infection	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.	
Litter and Broken Glass	Cuts/Infection Back Problems	M	Remove and dispose of using thick gloves and litter picker to prevent close contact with litter and bending.	
Accidents	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	
Assault	Assault on volunteers	L	Safe system of working. Insurance cover in force	

4. PARISH DEPOT/WORK PLACE

Topic	Risk	L/M/H	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Steps into upstairs office.	Trip/Slip	L	Disabled access available in the downstairs meeting room.	
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.	

Equipment	Damage to person	L	Equipment examined regularly. Repairs carried out. Risk assessments for individual equipment shared with users/staff.	
Electrical Equipment	Burns/Electrocution	L	Visual inspection monthly Circuit breakers installed.	
Dangerous substances	Dangerous cleaning materials	L	Dangerous cleaning materials kept in locked cupboard. Key in keysafe.	
Structure of Building	Falling debris	L	Exterior of Building & inspection to be carried out by the team and the landlord.	
Legionella	Risk to public health	L	Legionella Policy to be implemented by Operations Supervisor.	
Car Park	Trip/Slip	L	Examined regularly Any problems rectified or car park closed if this is not possible.	
Security	Break in	L	All staff aware of security code system. Security alarm activated out of hours.	
Fire Equipment	Failure of equipment	L	Fire Alarm serviced every 12 months, Fire Extinguishers serviced every 12 months. Fire blanket and signs reviewed every 12 months.	
Fire	Fire damage or injury	L	Fire instructions issued to staff. Meeting points identified in car park.	
Medical emergency	Severe illness	M	Call ambulance immediately, call designated First Aider, first aid kits in kitchen and depot.	

Burns	Burns from hot water	L	Call designated First Aider, first aid kit in kitchen.	
Workstation	Repetitive strain injury Eye damage/VDU Screen	L	Computer screen free from defect. Keyboard adequate. Good lighting. No glare. Adjustable chair, footrest. Annual inspection of office to be carried out by Operations Supervisor.	
Accident occurring in office`	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.	
Accident occurring outside the office	Injury on site visit	L	Staff to follow risk assessments and safe systems or working including outdoor litter picking, lone working and weather conditions.	

5. ACCIDENTS & FIRST AID

Topic	Risk	L/M/H	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Accident	Accidents to Staff/Public/contractors	M	<p>Individual risk assessments in force and reviewed annually by appropriate Committees. Independent annual inspection of playground risks by accredited specialist e.g. RoSPA</p> <p>Full Council verify annually that risk assessments have been reviewed and all inspections have been undertaken.</p>	
Visitors	Accidents to Staff/Public	M	<p>First Aid Box in depot & kitchen.</p> <p>Risk Assessment & regular inspections carried out.</p>	
Claim against Council	Council's reputation and possibly financially	L	<p>Risk Assessments in place.</p> <p>Public Liability Insurance cover in operation.</p>	