

STICKNEY PARISH COUNCIL

RISK ASSESSMENT – GENERAL

Reviewed 08 May 2025

STICKNEY PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

<u>Aim</u>	<u>Risk</u>	<u>Method used to minimise risk</u>	<u>Person(s) responsible</u>
1. To ensure compliance with the Acts of Parliament, Council's Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct (2007)	1. Lack of knowledge of regulations and codes.	Ensure that ALL Councillors have copies of relative Acts, Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. Highlight essential parts and provide training where necessary.	Clerk Councillors
	2. Absence of Standing Orders	Ensure that Standing Orders are produced, understood by Councillors and reviewed at Annual Parish Council meeting.	Clerk Councillors
	3. Actions by the Parish Council Outside its powers laid down by Parliament.	As at 1 above, but ensure that powers are highlighted or extracted into effective summary.	Clerk Councillors
	4. Lack of commitment to regulations and procedures	Regular reference to appropriate regulations in agenda items. Delegation of responsibilities to individual Councillors	Clerk Chairman Councillors
	5. Items purchased without proper tendering procedures, resulting in accusations of commercial favouritism.	Ensure that all Councillors are aware of regulations regarding estimates and full tender procedures. Introduce practice of estimates for all purchases over an agreed figure.	Clerk Councillors
	6. Payments made without prior approval and adequate control	Ensure that all payments are approved at Council meetings and recorded in the minutes. Keep cash payments to a minimum, avoid where possible.	Clerk Councillors
	7. Lack of Control of signatories to cheques.	Three of all Councillors as signatories to sign cheques, all cheques to be signed at Parish Council meetings.	Clerk
	8. VAT not properly accounted for, resulting in over claims and large demands from Customs & Excise	Ensure appropriate publications are held and that the Clerk has good knowledge of regulations.	Clerk

<p>2. To identify and regularly review the Council's priorities</p>	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of how to set objectives, set priorities and identify risks to their achievement.</p> <p>2. Lack of commitment by Council members</p> <p>3. No risk analysis carried out.</p> <p>4. No steps taken to combat identified risks.</p>	<p>All Councillors to be made aware of need for objectives and identification of risk. Attend training sessions where practicable.</p> <p>Add risk assessment to agenda at least quarterly, reviewing particular items and results against those items.</p> <p>As at 1 above. Ensure that completion of the Risk Assessment is given high priority, as a requirement of the Audit Commission.</p> <p>As at 2 above.</p>	<p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Chairman</p> <p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Chairman</p>
<p>3. To influence other Council departments and Government organisations to fulfil the requirements of the Parish population</p>	<p>1. Lack of effective lines of communication with other organisations.</p> <p>2. Lack of effective lines of communication with parishioners</p> <p>3. Lack of preparation on subjects requiring influence</p> <p>4. Lack of confidence by Parish Councillors</p>	<p>Note all communication lines which are essential or beneficial and make information available to all Councillors. Establish contacts by name and, where possible, face to face.</p> <p>Take every opportunity to publicise role of Parish Council. Create Parish Newsletter if none exists. Effective use of notice boards and 'flier'. Use key issues to raise profile of Parish Council and to rest parishioners' views. Add social event to occasional meeting. Create Annual Parish Council Plan and put to parishioners for comment.</p> <p>Ensure that all Councillors are aware of need for careful research and are guided as to where to obtain relevant information on issues under discussion.</p> <p>As at 1 above. Experienced Councillors to assist newcomers to establish essential contacts. Delegate responsibility for specific contacts to individual Councillors.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Councillors</p> <p>Clerk</p>

<p>4. To ensure that all Councillors are aware of their responsibilities and possible liabilities and to provide adequate insurance cover for all possible risks.</p>	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of possible culpability of Councillors.</p> <p>2. Lack of education of Councillors regarding culpability</p> <p>3. Inadequate insurance cover taken out – property, personal liability, employers liability.</p>	<p>Creation of Standing Orders and familiarisation with those where greatest risk occurs.</p> <p>As at 1 above. Delegate responsibility to one or two Councillors to assist newcomers to understand culpability. Attend any training courses available.</p> <p>Review risk assessment by including on agenda of Parish Council meetings at least quarterly. Delegate responsibility for keeping up to date with insurance requirements to an individual Councillor.</p>	<p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p> <p>Clerk Chairman Councillors</p>
<p>5. To keep appropriate books of account accurately and up to date throughout the financial year.</p>	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of accounting requirements.</p> <p>2. Lack of commitment to accounting requirements</p> <p>3. Bank Charges unnecessarily incurred</p> <p>4. Inaccuracies in recording amounts, totals in books of account and bank reconciliation</p> <p>5. Inaccuracies and interest losses caused by account transfers.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Councillors are familiar with current financial regulations and include them in Standing Orders. Regularly review Standing Orders. The Clerk is the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).</p> <p>As at 1 above. RFO to produce financial reports at all meetings. Internal Audit reports to be made available to all Councillors and any recommendations to be acted upon promptly.</p> <p>RFO to carry out regular inspection of books of account. Internal Audit to be undertaken periodically during the current financial year.</p> <p>RFO to ensure that books of account are formatted in such a way that internal controls are included and activated. Regular internal controls required.</p> <p>Keep number of accounts to a minimum but ensure that any large credit balances are deposited in an interest bearing account.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk Councillors</p>

	6. The most beneficial interest terms not being employed	Ensure that favourable interest rate is obtained in deposit accounts and review against alternatives, but bearing in mind the risks in changing accounts.	Clerk
	7. Inadequate control of cash receipts and payments	Avoid cash payments and receipts if possible. Where cash payments and receipts are unavoidable use a properly controlled petty cash account with a set maximum balance.	Clerk
	8. Books of account not kept up to date, invoices not posted properly.	Regular checks by RFO and internal auditor. Financial reports at all Parish Council meetings.	Clerk
	9. Internal controls not in place or operated	As at 8 above.	Clerk
	10. Payments missed or delayed due to inadequate filing of invoices.	As at 8 above.	Clerk
	11. Clerk taken ill or leaves without replacement.	Appoint a Councillor as RFO to be familiar with all aspects of financial matters.	Councillors
7. To ensure that the annual precept requirement results from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget is regularly monitored; reserves are appropriate.	1. Lack of knowledge of budgetary process and Council regulations.	Include regulations in Standing Orders issued to all Councillors. Place item on agenda in November to discuss budgetary process and actions required. Delegate responsibility for managing budgetary process to one Councillor or to Councillor appointed as RFO.	Councillors
	2. Lack of commitment to budgetary process.	As at 1 above. Involve all Councillors in budgetary process not solely the Clerk	Clerk Councillors
	3. Inadequate consideration of requirements for annual precept.	Place item on agenda in November to remind Councillors of budget process and actions required. Delegate responsibility for managing budgetary process to one Councillor or Councillor appointed as RFO. Start consideration of calculation at least 3 months prior submission date. Create annual and 2/3 year plan to assist in process.	Clerk Chairman Councillors

	<p>4. Calculation not in accordance with Council regulations.</p> <p>5. Inadequate internal controls with regard to monitoring expenditure.</p> <p>6. Reserves too low</p>	<p>Checks by RFO and internal auditor</p> <p>Checks by RFO and internal auditor. Financial and budgetary progress reports to all Parish Council meetings.</p> <p>As at 5 above.</p>	Clerk
8. To explore all possible sources of income and to ensure that expected income is fully received.	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of possible sources of income eg grants.</p> <p>2. Lack of commitment to pursue possible sources of income.</p> <p>3. Receipts not banked or not banked promptly.</p> <p>4. Debts not pursued promptly.</p> <p>5. VAT Claims not made promptly or made incorrectly</p>	<p>Appoint a Councillor as Grants Officer to gain experience of all grants available and application procedures.</p> <p>As at 1 above.</p> <p>Regular checks by Councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks.</p> <p>As at 3 above.</p> <p>Ensure Clerk has appropriate up to date VAT official publications. Regular checks by Councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks.</p>	Councillors
9. To ensure that salaries paid to employees and amounts paid to contractors are paid in accordance with Council regulations and adequately monitored.	<p>1. Inappropriate rates of pay to employees.</p> <p>2. Tax and National Insurance not in accordance with regulations.</p>	<p>Ensure employees regulations are available and understood by the Clerk. Checks by Councillors appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks.</p> <p>As at 1 above.</p>	

	3. Amounts paid to contractors not in accordance with contract and inadequately monitored.	Internal audit checks. Checks by Councillor appointed as RFO. Appoint Councillor to monitor contract work carried out.	
10. To ensure that year end accounts are prepared on the correct accounting basis, on time and supported by an adequate audit trail.	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of Council regulations and procedures.</p> <p>2. Late or non-submission of annual accounts.</p> <p>3. Year End Accounts not prepared, inaccurate or not in accordance with Council requirements.</p> <p>4. Inadequate audit trail from records to final accounts.</p>	<p>Include financial regulations in Standing Orders. Attend training seminars where available.</p> <p>Include a timetable in Standing Orders. Councillor appointed as RFO to monitor progress against timetable and report to Parish Council Meetings.</p> <p>Checks by Councillor appointed as RFO. Internal audit checks.</p> <p>As at 3 above.</p>	
11. To identify, value and maintain all the assets of the Parish Council and ensure that asset and investment registers are complete, accurate and properly maintained.	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of assets of Parish Council.</p> <p>2. Assets lost or misappropriated.</p> <p>3. Inadequate or inaccurate valuation of the Council's assets.</p> <p>4. Asset register not established or inadequately maintained.</p>	<p>Ascertain and record all assets for which Parish Council is responsible. Create permanent asset register.</p> <p>Establish who is responsible for security and maintenance of each asset. Appoint Councillor responsible for regular monitoring of location and use of assets.</p> <p>Arrange for periodic review of valuations and arrange for professional valuation where necessary. Internal audit checks.</p> <p>Create asset register in accordance with Audit commission requirements.</p>	<p>Clerk Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p>

<p>12. To comply with appropriate Government legislation regarding disability, racial equality, safeguarding children etc.</p>	<p>1. Lack of knowledge of applicable legislation.</p> <p>2. Lack of public awareness of applicable legislation.</p> <p>3. Failure to comply with applicable legislation</p>	<p>Clerk to have all appropriate legislation available. Review liabilities and responsibilities periodically at Parish Council meetings.</p> <p>Include, as appropriate, in any public consultations.</p> <p>As at 1 above.</p>	<p>Clerk Councillors</p>
<p>13. To carry out adequate safety checks on all buildings, properties and equipment for which the Council is responsible.</p>	<p>1. Lack of information on properties, building and equipment.</p> <p>2. Lack of knowledge of safety requirements.</p> <p>3. Lack of commitment to carrying out safety checks.</p>	<p>Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by the Clerk. Include in asset register all properties for which Parish Council responsible.</p> <p>Ensure that all current legislation and advice is held by Clerk. Place subject as item on Parish Council meeting agenda at regular intervals.</p> <p>As at 2 above. Delegate responsibility for particular properties to individual Councillors.</p>	<p>Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p> <p>Councillors</p>