

Stoke Goldington Parish Council

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Risk Assessment Policy

Adopted **June 2022**

Next Review **May 2023**

Purpose

The Council in May 2022 considered and supported preparation of a risk register for the Council. This report asks Councillors to review the draft risk register and:

- Identify any risks that should be identified that have not been
- Identify any risks that have been listed that are not considered risks to the Council
- For the agreed risks, comment on the impact of the risk and the chance of its materializing
- Comment on the validity of the controls identified against the risks
- Comment on the residual risk and whether any further actions are needed.

Risks Identified

The risks identified are in five groups and are risks to:

- The Council's assets through loss or damage
- The health and safety of members of the public who use the Council's assets or rely upon the services we provide
- Councillors personally in carrying out their duties
- Council funds due to actions of the Clerk
- The health and safety of the clerk as our employee.

The draft risk register sets out these groups of risks. I have tried not to overcomplicate the register to make it manageable for us.

Explanatory Notes

Column	Note
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A A simple statement of what the risk is. Ideally, we should have an owner for each risk. This person should lead on getting actions done where needed.

B How much harm the risk could cause. NALC suggests a six-point scale:

- 1 Trivial injury or loss to a person or the PC
- 2 Minor injury or loss to a person or the PC
- 3 Major injury to one person or significant loss to a person or the PC
- 4 Major injury or loss to many people
- 5 Death of one person or loss sufficient to exhaust PC reserves
- 6 Multiple deaths

C How likely a risk is to materialize. Again, NCALC suggests a six-point scale:

- 1 Improbable
- 2 Possible
- 3 Occasional
- 4 Frequent, irregular
- 5 Frequent and regular
- 6 Common

D The risk score is the product of impact and likelihood. Scores above 5 need action.

E Actions are:

- Terminate: stop doing it the way we are get rid of the asset
- Treat: prevent access to the hazard, organize to reduce exposure, issue personal protective equipment
- Transfer: insure the risk if possible
- Tolerate: do nothing while the score is below 5.

For each actionable risk we need an action that is practical, affordable and we are minded to do if we have to do it.

H This is how much of a risk we feel remains after our actions. A red, amber, or green rating might be useful with amber or red needing further action.

	Risk to People or Property	Our Assessment		Risk Score	Our Actions	Residual Risk
		Impact	Chance			
	A	B	C	D	E	H
1	<p>Members of the public injure themselves using any of the equipment we provide, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Recreation Field and its equipment • The bus shelter. • The notice boards • The Reading Room. <p>Risk owners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The playing field and its equipment • The bus shelter. • The notice boards • The Reading Room. 	5	2	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect the equipment frequently and report faults to the clerk for action • Get a periodic professional safety review of the playing field and its equipment • Maintain and replace as needed the notice boards, bus stop equipment and chairs • Restrict access where possible to the Reading Room to prevent injury from equipment there • Maintain Reading Room equipment • Insure against injury • Alert playing field users that access is at their risk • 	Green
2	<p>Council assets are damaged or lost because of wear and tear, accidental or deliberate damage or theft.</p> <p>Risk owner:</p>	5	2	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant assets are insured at replacement value • Where possible assets are held with reasonable security with keys held by responsible people • The Council holds limited reserves to replace worn out assets or low value assets. 	Green
3	<p>Councillors are held personally liable for surcharges by members of the public or the Audit Commission for their actions or their failure to act in accordance with their statutory responsibilities.</p>	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective induction for new Councillors</i> • Clear Standing Orders in accordance with good practice • The Council recruits and retains an experienced, competent clerk • The clerk is given effective introductory training and ongoing professional 	Amber

	Risk to People or Property	Our Assessment		Risk Score	Our Actions	Residual Risk
		Impact	Chance			
	A	B	C	D	E	H
					<p>development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clerk can call on specialist advice from MKC or other bodies' specialist knowledge • The clerk attends all and every meeting and is free to advise and speak • Meetings have clear agendas, are well minuted and are publicly available • The public may attend meetings to speak on pre-notified items • Councillors may attend training in their duties • Proposals to commit Council funds or take other actions in the Council's name can only be made by a consensus of the Councillors on the advice of the clerk • Council cheques must be signed by two Councillors • It is probably not public policy to allow unpaid volunteers to be held liable for fear of discouraging the rest • The Council's spending is subject to annual audit by an independent auditor appointed by the Audit Commission. 	
4	The clerk carries out all the Council's administration, removing segregation of duty and increasing opportunity for misuse of funds.	5	1	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council funds are limited and may not be worth the risk • The Council has fidelity insurance • All Council spending is by cheque signed by two Councillors • Payments are backed by vouchers 	Green

	Risk to People or Property	Our Assessment		Risk Score	Our Actions	Residual Risk
		Impact	Chance			
	A	B	C	D	E	H
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council precept is paid direct to its bank account • The Council does not hold cash • There is an independent audit • The clerk schedules out all spending at each meeting based on Council decisions and provides an annual account for Councillors to review. 	
5	The clerk is the Council's paid employee, and the Council is liable for her health and safety.	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has insurance for liability to employees for injury or loss in performing their duties. • The clerk has been made aware of their responsibility for their own health and safety and has a notice of relative responsibilities posted in her office at home. • The Council is not liable for the self-employed clerk's home working environment • The clerk's other places of work on Council business, the Reading Room or notice boards, are maintained, and insured for injury to users as above • The clerk's home to work travel is covered by their motor insurance policy • The clerk only attends approved training or consultation events on Council business and the venues for these are insured by those <i>operating them</i>. 	<i>Green</i>

PARISH CLERK Loss of Clerk or absence due to illness	Chairman	Operation of Council – not meeting legal requirements	Parish council		
FINANCIAL MATTERS Banking arrangements	Internal verifier		Clerk	Banking in person or by post as required	Quarterly checking of paying in book by Internal Verifier
Insurance provision	Council	Non-renewal of policy	Council/Clerk	Policy considered annually and renewed by minuted agreement.	Annual check by Internal Auditor
VAT return and submission	Internal verifier	Failure to calculate and submit	Clerk/RFO	Generally annual submission by the Clerk. More frequently if large project underway	Computerised accounting system produced detail which is submitted annually as part of annual accounts process
Contingency fund for Clerk's Gratuity and Election fees	Council		Council/Clerk	Written into budgeting process prior to precept submission	Part of budget making process
Budget agreed. monitored and reported	Council		Council/Clerk	Quarterly reporting by Clerk/RFO of income and expenditure against budget	Noted by council on a quarterly basis
Precept requested	Council		Clerk/RFO	Precept agreed post budget making and submitted by Clerk as requested	Submission report to Council and minuted

Payment approval procedure	Council	Failure to minute agreement	Clerk	Payments listed monthly on meeting Agenda	Payments agreed and signed by two Councillors. Cheque subs and accompanying invoices initialled by two Councillors
Bank Reconciliation	Internal verifier	Failure to complete	Clerk/RFO	Balanced on computerised accounting system as and when Bank Statements are received	Quarterly check by Internal Verifier and annual by Internal Auditor.
Clerks Salary	Council	Reviewed annually documented	Council	Review carried out annually Payment in line with agreed NALC/SLC payscales	Minuted annually
Internal check of financial records	Internal verifier		Councillor	Accounts checked quarterly by appointed Councillor (Internal verifier)	Maintain current regime and minute report on findings.
Internal Audit	NALC	Person not competent	External body	Accounts checked annually by independent auditor	
External Audit	PKF Littlejohn		External body	Annual audit carried out by outside appointed official body	Complete Annual Audit Return and submit. Minute findings when received and take any necessary action
RECORD KEEPING	NALC	Failure to keep properly numbered minutes, up to date asset register, financial regulations, standing orders, backed up computer data and archived papers	Clerk	Checks made by Internal Auditor as part of annual process	Maintain current regime

Register of members interest	NALC	No record kept	Clerk	Declarations of interest made are recorded in an interest book. Copies of members declaration of interest under the Code of Conduct are kept by the Clerk. Copies of signed Code of Conduct papers kept by Clerk	Maintain current regime
COUNCIL POLICIES	NALC	Failure to adopt	Members	To adopt any new policies required by law as and when required	Maintain current regime