

## Sandford Parish Council Risk Assessment

Adopted on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025. Review September 2026

### Notes

***“The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council.”***

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and to manage them. To exercise, the following plan was followed:

and record all findings.

Financial			
Subject	Management/Control of Risk		
Budgetary control	All files and recent records are kept at the Clerk's home. The Clerk makes regular back-ups of files on an external hard drive. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed the Chairman to contact the Devon Association of Local Councils for advice.		
Precept	Order for the Council to carry out its statutory duties. Requirements not submitted to MDDC Amount not received by MDDC	L L	The Council reviews the Precept requirement annually at the November / December meeting and reviews the presented budget update information, including actual position and projected position to year end and estimated figures for the next financial year. With this information the Council then agrees the amounts set for the specific budget headings for the following year, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from MID DEVON District Council. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to MDDC. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (end of April).
Financial records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.

Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The bank does make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts when the statements arrive, these are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction. The Clerk reviews the Councils banking arrangements regularly.
<b>FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT</b>			
<b>Supplies</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>		
Cash	<p>The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.</p> <p>No cash is received.</p> <p>The Council's insurance policy has a Fidelity Guarantee.</p>		
Revenue and	<p>A budget monitoring statement is produced regularly and circulated to members with an agenda. A full list of payments and receipts and cheques to be signed is provided on the Agenda. All invoices are checked against the figures on the agenda by the Chairman.</p> <p>Bank Statements are examined by the Chairman.</p> <p>The Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee.</p>		
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Cheque payable incorrect Loss of stock	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. The Council has minimal stocks, these are checked and monitored by the Clerk.
Grants and support - payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval and minuted. Cheque numbers are shown on the Minutes.
Grants - receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Parish Council receives grants from MDDC, DCC and outside bodies any monies received are reported to the Council at a meeting.

Charges - Rentals payable	Payments of leases/rentals	L	Negative. The Parish Council does not currently have any lease or rental agreements.
Charges - Rentals receivable	Receipt of rental Insurance implication	L L	Negative. The Parish Council does not currently have any lease or rental agreements.
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	As per Financial Regulations normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council.
<b>FINANCIAL</b>			
<b>Support</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>		
Salaries as cost	<p>The Parish Council authorises the appointment of a part-time employee at Council meetings when necessary.</p> <p>Salary rates are assessed annually by the Council.</p> <p>Salary is paid as per the contract of employment.</p> <p>The Tax contributions due are reported to the Council and signed at each meeting, following a PAYE return with relevant HMRC software.</p> <p>All Tax payments are made and signed at the meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk has a contract of employment and job description.</p>		
Clerk/Other workers (voluntary/casual)	Loss of Clerk Fraud Actions undertaken Health & Safety	L L L L	<p>A contingency fund should be established to enable training for the CiLCA qualification in the event of the Clerk resigning.</p> <p>The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud.</p> <p>The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.</p>
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	L	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors.

Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	Risk is higher in an election year. When an election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the District Council for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election as this is a democratic process and should not be stifled. Consideration should be given through the budgeting process for an election-by-election.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.
Annual return	Submit within time limits	L	The Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent to the External Auditor within time limit.
<b>FD</b>			
<b>Su</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>		
Le	all activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council Meetings.		
Co pa	The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, ownership of property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. Materials are in a metal filing cabinet (not fire proof).		
Co ele	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerk's computer at the Clerk's home. Back-ups of the files are taken at regular intervals on to external hard drive.		
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L M	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.
Data protection	Policy Provision	L	The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency.
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L M	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. The Council is able to request a fee for any information requested to cover the cost of consumables and the clerk's time.

Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	<p>The Parish Council Meetings are held at the Sports Pavilion or Village Hall</p> <p>Parish Council Members do have a key to the Sports Pavilion</p> <p>The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health &amp; Safety and comfort aspects.</p>
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A			
S	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>		
S P E C	<p>An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks made of all equipment by Members of the Parish Council.</p>		
N	<p>Parish Council has a notice boards sited in the Parish. The location has approval by relevant parties, insurance cover, is inspected regularly by Councillors - any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council.</p>		

L			
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted.
Minutes/Agendas/Notices/Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	L L	<p>Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements.</p> <p>Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.</p> <p>Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements.</p> <p>Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.</p>

Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	M	Insurance is in place. Risk assessments regularly carried out to comply with requirements.
Employer Liability	Non compliance with employment law	L	Undertake adequate training and seek advice from the Devon Association of Local Councils.
Legal Liability	Legality of activities Proper and timely reporting via Minutes Proper document control	M L L	Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice if necessary. Council always receives and approves Minutes at monthly meetings. Retention of document policy in place.

## COUNCILLORS' PROPRIETY

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk
Members in	Conflict of interest	M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interests at the start of the meeting or during the meeting if it is realised that a Councillor has an interest. Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed regularly by Councillors.