

**STOKEINTEIGNHEAD PARISH COUNCIL**

**RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

**21 May 2018**  
**(Readopted 8 April 2025)**

## **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Stokeinteignhead Parish Council is committed to identifying and managing risks, using the following procedures, and to ensuring that risks are maintained at an acceptable level. Any action that is felt necessary will be taken up by Stokeinteignhead Parish Council.

The Parish Councillors will review risks at a minimum yearly, including any newly identified risks. The review will include identification of unacceptable levels of risk.

The approach to local council audit requires councils to provide an assessment of the ways in which business and other risks are managed in order that corporate governance arrangements are strengthened, stewardship of public funds are improved, and assurance provided to taxpayers. The failure to manage risk effectively can be expensive in terms of litigation and reputation as well as an impediment to the achievement of the desired aims of the Council.

The Local Councils Governance and Accountability Guidance makes the following observations regarding risk management.

1. Risk management is not just about financial management; it is about setting objectives and achieving them to deliver high quality public services.
2. The new approach places emphasis on local councils strengthening their own corporate governance arrangements, improving the stewardship of public funds, and providing assurances to taxpayers.

It goes on to state that members of the Parish Council are ultimately responsible for risk management because risk threatens the achievement of objectives. Stokeinteignhead Parish Council is well placed to undertake this as many features of risk management are already well established and are effectively part of the day-to-day operations undertaken on behalf of the Parish Council by the Chair, the Clerk (also RFO). The Government's requirement for the preparation of a formal document outlining a Council's assessment of its risk management process does afford the opportunity to adapt, improve and document existing processes. Members of the Parish Council should, therefore:-

- a) Take steps to identify key risks facing the Council.
- b) Evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place.
- c) Decided upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce, or control the risk or its consequences.

## **STOKEINTEIGNHEAD PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT – APRIL 2025**

This document has been produced to enable Stokeinteignhead Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed.
- Identify what the risk may be.
- Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings.
- Review, assess and revise if required.

<b>FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>Likelihood H/M/L</b>	<b>Management / Control of Risk</b>	<b>Status</b>
Business Continuity	Risk of the Parish Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	<p><u>Loss or long-term incapacity of the Clerk</u> In the event of the Clerk being indisposed the Chairman to contact DALC who can provide a list of locum clerks.</p> <p><u>Loss of Councillors</u> Temporary Councillors to be co-opted as necessary by District Council if inquorate. Eligible persons to be co-opted in event vacancies arise following an election</p>	<p>Existing procedure adequate.</p> <p>Existing procedure adequate.</p>
Council records - paper	Loss through theft, fire, damage	L	<p>The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk.</p> <p>Records include historical correspondence, minute books and insurance and accounts documents.</p>	<p>Loss through theft or damage is unlikely.</p> <p>Existing procedures adequate.</p>
Council records - electronic	Loss through theft, fire, damage or corruption of computer	M	<p>The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the clerk's computer which is kept at home.</p> <p>Back-ups of the files are held in OneDrive within O365</p>	<p>Existing procedure adequate</p>

Website	Clerk not being able to function Loss of passwords	L	Clerk is able to maintain website. Copy of all passwords used by the website to be kept by Clerk and a Councillor.	Existing procedures adequate. Consideration should be given to councillor being trained to maintain website.
Meeting Location	Adequacy of Health & Safety	L	Meetings are held in the Village Hall. The premises and facilities are adequate for the Clerk, councillors and any Public who attend from a health and safety and comfort aspect. A Health & Safety review is made annually by the Village Hall Committee	Existing location is adequate.
Precept	a)Adequacy of precept  b)Requirements not submitted to Teignbridge District Council c)Amount not received from Teignbridge District Council	L	a) To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information, and the precept is an agenda item at the January meeting. Amount requested is based on actual spend and estimated expenditure for the ensuing year. b) this figure is submitted by the RFO in writing to Teignbridge District Council. c) The RFO informs the Council when the monies are received (by way of budget update report)	Existing procedure adequate.  Existing procedure adequate. Existing procedure adequate.

Financial records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements. These financial regulations are reviewed annually for adequacy and improvements.  The Council has appointed both internal and external auditors.	Existing procedure adequate.  Existing procedure adequate.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has no petty cash or float. Any cash transactions are made by the Clerk using PC Debit Card BACS.	Existing procedure adequate.
Banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques, and reconciliation of accounts. The Parish Council has two bank account and an NS&I savings account. Cheques require two signatures, there are three nominated Councillors as signatories (any two to sign). BACS payments are made by the clerk (RFO)	Existing procedures adequate. Review the Financial Regulations and bank signature list annually, especially after an AGM and an election. BACS payments are monitored monthly. BACS payments to be setup for Clerk to initiate payments, two Councillors to authorise
Direct costs and Overhead expenses Debt	a) Incorrect invoicing b) Cheques incorrect c) Debts outstanding	L	a) and b) All payments to be approved by Councillors at a meeting and all invoices to be checked. All payments must be clearly minuted. Two authorised signatories are required to sign cheques.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations annually.

			c) The Council does not allow debt	
Remuneration and other costs	a) Remuneration calculated and paid incorrectly b) Tax and NI implications	L	The Parish Council has one regular employee, the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk's remuneration is reviewed annually and is based on NALC / NJC remuneration scales. Payments are calculated by the clerk and are approved at the Council meeting.  Tax and NI matters are dealt with by the clerk in conjunction with Council payroll	Existing procedures adequate
Insurance	Inadequate cover Competitive costs  Councillors declared bankrupt or unable to meet other declarations as part of insurance cover	L	A review of insurance cover and premiums is carried out annually prior to renewal  Council to note requirements of insurance policy annually at annual meeting and alert Clerk in-year should situation change	Existing procedures adequate  Existing procedures adequate
Data Protection	Policy and provision	L	The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency	Registration to be renewed annually
Freedom of Information Act	Policy and provision	L/M	The Council has a model publication scheme for local councils in place. The Council is able to request a fee if the work required to provide information would take more than 15 hours. The Clerk will monitor and report the impact of any requests made.	Existing procedures adequate.

VAT	Failure to maintain proper records and to reclaim VAT where appropriate	L	The Parish Council has controls and procedures in place to ensure that VAT is reclaimed as appropriate. The RFO reviews the position and makes a claim where necessary	Existing procedures adequate
Annual Return	Failure to submit within time limits	L	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 the time limit	Existing procedures adequate
Election Costs	Risk of election cost	M	Risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election. A contingency fund should be established to meet the costs in the relevant financial year.	Include in budget when setting precept.
Councillors and employees	Loss of Clerk Fraud Actions undertaken	M L L	Adequate training to be arranged for Clerk and for Councillors to be provided with the necessary information for them to carry out their duties effectively. Insurance requirements to be adhered to.	Monitor working conditions Membership of DALC and SLCC maintained
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Maintenance of Parish Council assets	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks are made on all benches, equipment etc by members of the Parish Council	Existing procedures adequate

Notice Boards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	The Parish Council has four notice boards sited around the parish. Locations have approval by relevant parties and are inspected regularly by the Clerk – any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Keys are held by the Parish Clerk and a Councillor.	Existing procedures adequate.  Noticeboards are insured.
<b>LIABILITY</b>				
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at full Parish Council Meetings	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes/Agendas/ Statutory Documents	a)Accuracy and legality b)Business conduct	L L	a) Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. b)Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair	Existing procedures adequate. Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Legal Liability	Legality of activities	M	Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice from Teignbridge DC where necessary	Existing procedures adequate

			Insurance cover of £250,000 for Libel and Slander	
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with employment law	L	Employers Liability Insurance is in place with £10,000,000 indemnity limit. Undertake adequate training and seek advice from DALC/District Council where necessary.	Existing procedures adequate
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	L	Public Liability Insurance cover of £6,000,000 is in place	Existing procedures adequate
<b>COUNCILLORS PROPRIETY</b>				
Members interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members Interests	M L	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of a meeting or where an interest in an item of business becomes apparent Register of Members Interests form to be reviewed at least on an annual basis	Existing procedures adequate Members to take responsibility to update their register