

**STONE RURAL PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT 2024-25**

**Mission Statement of Parish Council**

To provide services for and manage and maintain the assets of the Parish Council, within the resources provided by the annual precept and other incomes, taking into account the wishes of the residents and obtaining value for money.

Risk	Method to minimise risk	Persons responsible	COMMENTS	Risk Rating
<b>Aim 1 To ensure compliance with Acts of Parliament, Council’s financial regulations, standing orders and code of conduct</b>				
Lack of knowledge of regulations and codes	<p>Ensure that all Councillors have copies of relative Acts, Code of Conduct and Standing Orders or know where they can find these on the Parish Council website.</p> <p>Provide training where and when required.</p>	Council	<p>All new Councillors to attend new Cllr course.</p> <p>All existing Councillors have copies of Good Cllr Guide – issued in 2018. Recommended that new councillors be provided with a copy</p> <p>All Cllrs reminded annually to refresh their awareness of relevant acts</p>	LOW
Standing orders remaining up to date	Ensure that Standing Orders are produced, and reviewed once every years or as deemed necessary.	Clerk/Chairman Council	Standing Orders reviewed in May 2022 and will be reviewed in May 2023	LOW
Council Business not recorded properly	<p>Resolutions recorded within minutes. Councillors have the opportunity to comment on draft minutes prior to the presentation of formal adoption. Minutes signed, numbered and retained.</p> <p>Minutes are made available to the public via the website.</p>	<p>Clerk/Council</p> <p>Clerk</p>		LOW

**STONE RURAL PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT 2024-25**

Ensuring activities are within legal powers	Clerk to clarify legal position of any new proposal and seek legal advice where necessary.	Clerk		LOW
Councillors involved in decision who have an interest	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting. Disclosure of interests is an agenda item at the start of every meeting and declarations recorded in the minutes.	Clerk	Declaration of interests to remain as an agenda item at each meeting	LOW
Risk of election costs and by-elections	Cost of by-election cost considered annually and should be considered within/budget/reserves level.  Cost of ordinary elections to be included/considered in relevant years.	Clerk/Council	Budget to reflect	LOW
<b>Aim 2 – To identify and regularly review the council’s priorities.</b>				
Lack of knowledge of how to set objectives, set priorities and identify risks to their achievements	All councillors to be made aware of the need for objectives and identify risks. Attend training sessions if required.	Clerk	Risk assessment to be reviewed at Annual Meeting in May. Last fully reviewed May 2022 (to be reviewed in May 2023).	LOW
Lack of commitment by Council members.	Attendance at meetings monitored and addressed accordingly.	Clerk	Clerk to monitor and bring any concerns to the attention to the Parish Council.	LOW
No risk assessment carried out.	All councillors to be made aware of the need for objectives and identify risks.  Attend training sessions if required.  Ensure risk assessment is given priority and reviewed annually.	Clerk	Training available for Cllrs	LOW

**STONE RURAL PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT 2024-25**

<b>Aim 3 - To keep appropriate and detailed accounts accurately and up to date throughout the financial year.</b>				
Lack of knowledge of accounting requirements.	Ensure all councillors are familiar with current regulations and with the Parish Councils accounts.	Clerk Chair	Ongoing.	LOW
	Full bi-monthly bank reconciliations and budgeting to be presented to the Council to ensure all Councillors are aware of the Councils accounts.  Bank reconciliations to be reviewed by a Member and signed.	Clerk	Bi-monthly Reconciliation Reports presented at appropriate meetings and full report at APA.  Council to annually nominate a member to review and sign bank reconciliations before/at each meeting.	LOW
Lack of commitment to accounting requirements	Clerk to produce a financial report at all Parish Council Meetings identifying receipts and payments– Payments Authorisation	Chair	In addition to above, the Payment Authorisation report has been presented at each Parish Council Meeting and signed.	LOW
Payments made without prior approval and adequate control.	Ensure all payments are approved in Council meetings and recorded in minutes.  Where Clerk has delegated responsibility to make payments, ensure payments are reviewed at the next meeting.  Review direct debits annually.  No cash payments made and no petty cash.	Clerk Chair	Payments authorisation reports presented at every meeting.  Bank transfers/cheques are encouraged for village hall bookings.  2 signatures required for each cheque payment. Signatories should check all payments presented for signatory.	LOW
Loss of funds – theft, dishonesty, financial instability	No cash payments to be accepted for the hire of the village hall.	Clerk	All other bookings to be made by bank transfer or cheque.	Low

**STONE RURAL PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT 2024-25**

	<p>Deposits with Bank to be kept below the FSCS limit for protection.</p> <p>Fidelity cover level in insurance adequate</p>		<p>Current balances within the Unity Trust Bank are below £85,000 limit.</p> <p>Fidelity cover in insurance is £100,000</p>	
Lack of control of signatories to cheques	<p>Keep list of authorised signatories and ensure it is up to date.</p>	Clerk	<p>Signatory list kept with Clerk.</p>	MED
VAT not properly accounted for.	<p>Ensure appropriate evidence and documentation is maintained and Clerk has good knowledge of regulations.</p> <p>VAT claim is carried out online, due to the amounts claimed this is carried out annually in April/May.</p>	Clerk	<p>VAT claimed successfully for 2022/23</p>	LOW
Assets not fully protected against physical damage, fire and theft.	<p>Asset register updated annually.</p> <p>Annual review of insurance policy and value of assets. Changes to asset schedule to be updated as required throughout the year.</p>	Clerk	<p>Village hall currently insured with Allied Westminster. Parish Council insurance with Zurich. Both policies are tailored packages.</p>	LOW
Loss of council records	<p>Minutes and financial information to be backed up at least bi-monthly. Virus protection to be installed on council laptop. Hard copy of files to be kept in locked office only accessible by Clerk and authorised Councillors.</p>	Clerk		LOW

**STONE RURAL PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT 2024-25**

<b>Aim 4 – To ensure that the annual precept requirement results from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget is regularly monitored and reserves are appropriate.</b>				
Lack of knowledge of budgetary process and commitment to it.	Place item on agenda early enough to remind Councillors of budgetary process and actions required.  Include all councillors in the process.	Clerk	Budget discussed at Nov and agreed at Jan meeting.  New regulations require an agreed budget to be signed by the Chairman.	MED
Inadequate consideration of requirements for annual precept.	Place item on agenda early enough to remind Councillors of budgetary process and actions required.  Delegate responsibility for preparing budgetary documents to Chair and Clerk.  Start consideration of calculation at least 2 months prior to submission date.	Clerk Chair		LOW
Inadequate internal controls with regards to monitoring expenditure.	Checks by Chair and Internal Auditor.  Financial or budget process reports to all Parish Council meetings.		Done throughout the year.  Review of bank reconciliations bi-monthly.	LOW
Parish Council reserves too high/low.	The Parish Council has reduced its reserves and are now at an acceptable level.  Ensure that reserves reflect emergency funds for liabilities arising in connection to the village hall		Earmarked reserves to hold at least £10,000 for emergency liability arising from the village hall	MED

**STONE RURAL PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT 2024-25**

<b>Aim 5 -To ensure that the Parish Council’s activities are compliant</b>				
Uncontrolled data and data protection laws not considered	The council has a Data Protection Policy. The clerk is the Data Controller.	Clerk	Review documents/processes annually  Electoral information is password protected	LOW
Lack of health and safety compliance	Safety assessments should be completed and safety equipment provided if required.  Contractors to ensure that they have their own risk assessments to cover work undertaken.  Groups using the hall to have risk assessments in place to cover activities.	Clerk	Village hall risk assessments in place.	MED
Non compliance with employment law and PAYE	Council has adequate employer liability insurance.  Clerk’s salary payments to be processed by an external payroll services company.  HR policies in place.  Provision of pensions to be reviewed regularly.	Clerk	HR policies reviewed at July 2022 meeting (to be reviewed in July 2024).	LOW
Business Continuity should the Clerk be absent from position for a period exceeding 2 weeks (other than arranged holiday).	Chairman/Vice Chairman to have access to email account, laptop, council file until temporary replacement can be found.  Arrangements for sealed envelope with passwords in files should Clerk be unable to provide these.	Clerk/Council	Sealed envelope with passwords in files should Clerk be unable to provide these.	MED

