Sidlesham Parish Council

Risk Management Policy

1. Introduction to Risk Assessment and Management

The failure to manage risks effectively can be expensive in financial terms and also in terms of service delivery. It is important therefore that Parish Councils have in place a system to help them access and manage risks. Ultimately risk management is the responsibility of Members because risks threaten a council's ability to achieve its objectives.

Assessment and Management of risk is one of the mandatory areas addressed on Internal Audits. The Risk Assessment system and associated Risk Register will be used by Internal Auditors to assess whether the Parish Council takes seriously its possible exposure to risk and has put in place actions to limit the consequences of potential risks.

For smaller parishes, this system will be relatively simple. It can essentially be broken down into the following 3 main steps:

- Identifying the key risks facing the Parish Council
- Evaluating the potential of one of these risks occurring
- Managing the risk: agreeing measures to avoid reduce or control the risk or its consequence.

2. Risk Identification

Risks can be divided into a number of categories and the following have been used here:

- Physical assets – buildings, equipment, IT hardware etc.
- Finance – banking, loss of income, petty cash etc.
- Injury to the public and/or staff – in halls, playgrounds and recreation grounds, etc
- Complying with legal requirements – agendas and minutes, records, etc

- Councillor propriety – declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality etc

3. Risk Evaluation

Risk Evaluation is essentially a 2-part exercise, answering the questions:

- What is the chance of the risk occurring?
- What is the likely impact if it does occur?

In smaller Parish Councils it is only necessary to classify the answers to each of these questions as Low – 0 – 30%, Medium – 31 – 70% or High – 71 – 100%.

4. Risk Management

There are three main ways of managing risks:

- Manage the risk yourself
- Take out insurance to cover the risk
- Agree with another party that they will manage the risk on your behalf; this may include rewarding them for so doing

5. Risk Register

Identified risks are documented in a Risk Register. The attached Register needs to be considered by members, changed where necessary and then formally adopted by members for the financial year 2026-27.

It should be noted that Risk Assessment and Management is not a one-off exercise; risks should be constantly kept under review, especially as the business of the Parish Council changes and new projects are undertaken.

Alison Colban
Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer to the Parish Council

RISK REGISTER – 2026-27

Category	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Management Control
ASSETS	Damage to Sidlesham Memorial Recreational Ground Hall – Community Hub	L	M	Covered by 'all-risks' insurance policy, see Policy schedule. A fire alarm system is fitted, and an agreement is in place with Sidlesham Community Association. A yearly check will be carried out by C & M Fire Alarms.
	Damage to – or loss of – fixtures and fittings	M	M	Fixtures and fittings inspected monthly for signs of wear and tear and replaced accordingly. Review/stock take of Asset register and inventory done annually. Damage/theft Insurance cover – see Policy schedule.
	Damage to property, or loss of business, caused by a contractor	L	M	Insurance cover in place, contractor insurance and PLI certificates obtained and held on file ahead of work. Appropriate recourse for compensation investigated.
	Loss of data - physical	L	L	All confidential and important files are held in a fireproof filing cabinet. Legal documents are lodged with Chichester District Council's Archive Office.
	Loss of data - electronic	M	H	All electronic data is backed up remotely via the Council's IT provider, Scanstation. Parish Council office laptop is finger print & Pin protected.
	SMRG buildings deteriorate	L	L	The building is approx. 60 plus years old. Annual inspections are performed to identify and deal with any actual or potential deflects. Replacement of fixtures and fitting are carried out as and when required, or identified as being faulty, or requiring remedial action.
	Asset Register not up to date	M	M	Clerk/RFO conducts an inventory of all Parish Council assets annually.

	Computer Security	L	M	The Parish Council has an annual Proactive Care Managed Services contract with Scanstation. The Parish Council's laptop is fitted with the latest anti-virus software and is regularly reviewed and monitored. The laptop is ID authenticated protected. Advanced Email Threat Protection (AETP) cloud subscription is in place to protect against scam/phishing. A cyber protection insurance policy and software programme is in place to mitigate against potential cyber threat.

FINANCE	Parish Council financial controls and accounting records are inadequate to prevent financial irregularity Parish Council funds are not properly managed.	L	H	Reconciliation of all financial transactions and those pending are carried out monthly. All findings and internal audit checks are recorded within the Parish Council Minutes. The Parish Council holds valid insurance cover for loss of non-negotiable money and robbery, misappropriation of funds by staff or Councillors. Staff file containing references and contracts is complete and secure. Internal and External audits are carried out annually. Two signatories are required to sign cheques and authorisations are approved at meetings. Sidlesham Parish Council has electronic/online banking in place: The Clerk/RFO is the administrator to set payments up, and two Councillors are required to authorise payment release.
	Parish Council Financial Regulations are inadequate	L	M	Sidlesham Parish Council adopted the NALC (model) Financial Regulations on the October 2009 and subsequent updated versions have been adopted. These are reviewed annually and adopted.
	Loss of Cash due to Bank failure	L	H	Presently all funds fall below the 120K and are with Unity Trust Fund Bank who are approved by the Prudential Regulation Scheme (PRA) and therefore covered by the Financial Services Compensation scheme.
	The Council uses its funds in an inappropriate way	L	M	A budget is prepared annually and is approved by the Parish Council. This is used to calculate the Parish portion of the Council tax. All items within the budget are within the powers and duties & Statutory Provisions legislation for Parish Councils.

INJURY TO PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND/OR STAFF	Injury to third parties, members and staff on Council premises	M	H	Insurance has been taken out to cover Public Liability (£10M), Employers Liability (£10M) and Personal Accident. Fire exits are kept clear and fire exits are clearly marked and illuminated.
	Injury to third parties using equipment in play areas in Sidlesham Memorial Recreational Ground.	L	L	The Parish Council has insurance liability for the playground and equipment therein, plus an adult gym together with the playing fields with Clear Councils.
	Fire Risk	L	H	Random fire escape exercises are carried out and all public meetings are preceded by information on assembly points, exits and evacuation procedures. These are listed on the internal notice board. Fire alarm system call points are tested weekly, and emergency lights are tested monthly. Annual professional maintenance checks are carried out on these and on fire extinguishers. All electrical equipment is PAT tested annually and turned off when the building is not in use. Smoking is not allowed within the building. There is gas bottle supply to the building which is safely locked in purpose built shed. There are three kitchens within the building all of which have a fire blanket and smoke alarms. Checks are undertaken by the Clerk/Trustee to ensure no items are stored close to heat sources, such as radiators, and that fire doors/exits are not obstructed.

LEGAL COMPLIANCE	Motions adopted by the Council are not legal	L	H	The Clerk advises Councillors accordingly and if a proposal is considered illegal will not allow it to be placed on the agenda. All Councillors are encouraged to attend Training/Briefing sessions with WSALC or other professional bodies and have been issued with the The Good Councillors guide. Standing Orders, based on the NALC template standard, have been adopted and are reviewed annually. ‘Local Council Administration’ by Charles Arnold-Baker is used as a reference as is consultation with WSALC.
	Committees and officers exceed their terms of reference	L	M	Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers are reviewed annually at the Annual Council Meeting. The Clerk/ RFO has a detailed Job Description.
	Minutes and agendas are not produced in a timely manner or made available to the public	L	M	Signed agendas for all meetings are produced by the Clerk and are made available to members and the Public at least 3 working days before the meeting. Agendas are posted on the Parish Council website and within the 6 Parish Council notice boards. Minutes are produced within 20 days of the meeting and are available for inspection on appointment at SMRG, on the Parish Council’s website and notice boards.
	Council documents are not controlled properly	L	M	All documents are produced and stored in accordance with current regulations ‘Local Council Administration’ by Arnold-Baker as a reference. Title deeds and documents are filed with CDC’s Archive Offices. All confidential documents are locked in fireproof cabinets and only accessible by the Clerk. A Document Retention Policy is maintained by the Clerk. The Clerk is the Data Controller for the Parish Council and deals with FOI requests on behalf on the Council.

COUNCILLOR PROPRIETY	Members do not declare their interests, gifts or hospitality	L	L	The Clerk retains a Register of Members Interests, which all Members are required to complete for keeping the document up to date, by informing the Clerk and Chichester District Council of any changes. An agenda item at each meeting gives members/Officers the opportunity to declare personal/prejudicial and/or prejudicial interests. All Councillors are required to sign and conduct themselves within the Revised Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council in May 2007.

Risk Management Calendar

Risk To be managed	Responsibility	Frequency
Damage by fire to offices	Clerk/SCA	Annual Fire Alarm
	Clerk/SCA	Annual Emergency Lighting service
	Clerk/SCA	Annual Fire Extinguishers service
		Annual PAT Testing
Damage to Community Centre by water	Clerk/SCA	
Damage or loss fixtures or fittings	Nominated Trustees to SCA	Quarterly
Forced entry	Clerk/SCA	As and when required
Building deterioration	Clerk/SCA	Annually.
Asset register	Nominated Councillors and Clerk/RFO	Annually.
Computer security	Clerk & External contract	Constant via fire wall/virus software and external monitoring by Scanstation.
Finance	Clerk/RFO/Council/Finance Working Party/Internal Audit/External Audit.	Recorded on Council minutes Annually - Independent Internal audit Annually - Independent External Audit
Injury on Council Premises	Council/Clerk	Annually. Every day
Fire Safety Briefing	Clerk/SCA	As and when required
Illegal motions	Clerk/Chairs of Committees/Council	Every Agenda and Meeting.
Councillor propriety	Individuals	

Adopted: September 2026

Review: September 2027