

Creech St Michael Parish Council

Policy Title	Risk Register
Applies to	All Parish Councillors and Employees
Date Created	01 September 2023
Date Approved by Council	02 October 2023
Minute Reference	9
Author	Clerk and RFO
Review Cycle	Twice per Year
Review Dates	



1.0 Introduction

Risk is a threat that an event or action will adversely affect the Parish Council's ability to achieve its objectives and deliver its services. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated, addressed and reviewed. The Parish Council recognises that it has a responsibility to take all reasonable and practical measures to safeguard its employees, the people it works with and provides services for and to protect the natural and built environments for which it is responsible.

The Parish Council is aware that some risks cannot be eliminated fully and has in place a process that provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk and including where necessary, the introduction of internal controls and/or appropriate use of insurance cover.

The risk register enables the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and confirm that it has taken appropriate steps to manage those risks.

2.0 Risk Management Objectives

The objectives of the Risk Register are to.

- Integrate risk management into the culture of the Parish Council.
- Enable the Parish Council to manage risk in accordance with best sector practice and legislative requirements.
- Minimise loss, disruption and the likelihood of claims against the Parish Council and its employees.
- Inform policy and operational decisions by identifying risks and their likely impact.
- Raise awareness of the need for risk management.

The objectives will be met by a process of identifying, understanding, managing and mitigating risks, through a series of actions.

- The identification of risk.
- Undertaking risk assessments and/or the assessment of the likelihood of a risk occurring and the impact of that risk.
- Managing the risk and recording actions taken.
- Incorporating risk management considerations into Parish Council processes.
- Providing appropriate training.
- Establishing and maintaining clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines.
- Encouraging communication with, and active involvement of, employees, volunteers and other stakeholders.

3.0 Risk Register Process

The risks are identified, described and evaluated according to the potential consequence of the risk occurring (impact) and how likely this is (likelihood) i.e. high, medium or low risk.

The response to risk may involve one or more of the following responses:

- Monitor and Review. Risks should continue to be monitored and reviewed regularly.
- Mitigate the Risk. Risks should have robust actions in place to mitigate against the impact on the Parish Council.
- Robust Action Plan. Risks are significant and require a robust action plan to be in place to ensure that the impact of the risk is effectively managed.

The risks are identified, assessed and recorded on the risk register and will be reviewed by the Parish Council not less than twice per year.

Financial Risks

Topic	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level Score	Impact Score	Overall Risk Rating	Management & Control of Impact of Risk	Lead Responsibility	Frequency
Precept	Precept request not submitted or submitted late.	1	7	7	Clerk and RFO and Finance Committee to ensure Precept request is approved by the January of each financial year. Once submitted the Clerk and RFO to ensure a record of the submission is retained. A general reserve of between 20% and 30 % of the annual budget must be retained.	Clerk and RFO	Annual
	Payment of precept to the Parish Council not processed.	1	8	8	Clerk and RFO to confirm receipt of payment to full council by 30 May each year.	Clerk and RFO	Annual
	Precept not adequate.	1	8	8	The precept is decided in conjunction with the annual budget during the period from November the January. The budget is scrutinised by the Finance Committee and approved	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	Annual

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Topic	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level Score	Impact Score	Overall Risk Rating	Management & Control of Impact of Risk	Lead Responsibility	Frequency
					by full council in January each year.		
	Precept increase capped or restricted.	1	6	6	Clerk and RFO to report any changes to legislation that may impact on precept to full council. A general reserve of between 20% and 30 % of the annual budget must be retained.	Clerk and RFO	Annually
Other Income	Other income streams do not meet expected levels.	1	6	6	Clerk and RFO to report income received at each full council meeting. Invoices for charges are issued in a timely manner and records retained. All income received is reported in the financial transactions report at each full council meeting. A general reserve of between 20% and 30 % of the annual budget must be retained.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly

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	Cash and cheque management.	2	6	12	Cheques received are banked as soon as possible by the Clerk and RFO and reported in the financial transactions report at each full council meeting. Petty Cash is kept a minimum of below £50.00. All transactions are recorded in the financial records.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly
Salaries	Incorrect salary payment made.	2	6	12	Salary calculations produced annually and hours and rate checked to contract. Salary scale and agreed pay rate approved by full council. Salaries always paid via online bank transfer.	Clerk And RFO/Staffing Committee	Annually
	PAYE administered incorrectly.	2	6	12	PAYE administered internally through HMRC Basic Tools. Details presented via the financial transactions report at each full council meeting.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly
	Pension administered incorrectly.	2	6	12	Pension administered internally through NEST website. Details presented via the financial transactions report at each full council meeting.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly

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	HMRC liabilities not recorded and paid.	2	7	14	PAYE administered internally through HMRC Basic Tools. Details presented via the financial transactions report at each full council meeting. Payments made via Direct Debit authorised via HMRC.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly
Direct costs and overhead expenses	Goods or services not supplied to the Parish Council.	3	6	18	Purchase orders used where appropriate and orders tracked. Payments confirmed via quarterly reconciliation against goods and services received.	Clerk and RFO	As required
	Invoice incorrectly calculated or recorded.	3	6	18	Clerk and RFO to undertake an arithmetic check against all invoices, prior to payment.	Clerk and RFO	As required
	Payment processed is excessive or to wrong party.	2	7	14	Three signatories sign cheques or authorise online payments and Clerk and RFO to check against finance records prior to the creation of a payment.	Clerk and RFO/Authorising Signatories	As required

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					All payment details presented via the financial transactions report at each full council meeting.		
Cheque and online Payments	Cheques and online payments paid by Clerk and RFO without consent of Council	1	9	9	Three signatures are required to process any transaction. All payments are listed and presented via the financial transactions report at each full council meeting. Digital records of all invoices are available for scrutiny by Councillors online. Cheques are numbered in income and expenditure records.	Clerk and RFO/Authorising Signatories	As required
Grants to Parish Council	Inaccuracy in application or incorrect completion of application.	1	7	7	Terms and conditions of any grant received to be met as and paperwork completed and checked prior to deadlines. All grant applications to be approved by full council prior to submission.	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	As required

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Grants and donations from Parish Council	Incorrect powers used to award grant	2	7	14	Applications to be submitted in line with Grants Policy and approval for the award to be approved by the full council.	Clerk and RFO	As required
	Fraudulent or incomplete application received.	1	7	7	Applications to be submitted in line with Grants Policy and approval for the award to be approved by the full council.	Clerk and RFO	As required
Insurance	Inadequate cover for assets and general activities. No public liability available.	1	9	9	<p>Public Liability Insurance (PLI) policy in place for general activities and assets.</p> <p>The Clerk and RFO is responsible for maintaining the asset register adding any changes to the insurance schedule. The asset register is published on the parish council's website.</p> <p>Policy wording is checked each year to ensure that proposed cover is adequate. Insurance is obtained from a reputable provider.</p>	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	Annual

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	Claim rejected by insurers.	1	8	8	<p>Policy wording is checked each year to ensure that proposed cover is adequate. Insurance is obtained from a reputable provider.</p> <p>All claims are verified by the Clerk and RFO and supported by appropriate evidence, including a Police Crime number if appropriate.</p>	Clerk and RFO	As required
Financial Records	The records held are inaccurate or inadequate.	1	8	8	Clerk and RFO keeps full records in accordance with retentions of records advice, Councils Financial Regulations, and other regulations. Internal audit is scheduled to ensure recommended practices are being followed.	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee/Internal Auditor	Annually
	Sufficient information available for confidence in the decisions made.	1	7	7	Clerk and RFO produces a report each month to the full council for approval. The report includes bank reconciliation, payments made, actual income and expenditure against budget.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly

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	Loss or corruption of financial records.	1	8	8	All records are stored on two separate cloud drives and backed up to a physical hard drive at least twice per year.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly
	Access to bank records and maintenance of bank accounts.	1	7	7	Online banking adheres to Financial Regulations. All Councillors invited to be authorised signatories and have access to view statements electronically all the time.	Clerk and RFO/Authorised Signatories	As required
Bank Account	Account is hacked or corrupted.	1	8	8	Individuals accessing the account ensure that they have the appropriate virus software installed on all devices. Three signatures are required to process any transaction. All payments are listed and presented via the financial transactions report at each full council meeting.	Clerk and RFO/Authorised Signatories	As required
Debit Card	Debit card is misused or used inappropriately.	1	8	8	Pre Paid Debit Card Use Policy is adhered to. Debit card is immediately cancelled and replaced following evidence of misuse.	Clerk and RFO	As required

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					All payments are listed and presented via the financial transactions report at each full council meeting.		
	Debit card is lost or stolen.	1	7	7	Loss or theft is reported to the card provider and card is immediately cancelled. Pre Paid Debit Card Use Policy is adhered to.	Clerk and RFO	As required
Elections	Increased costs to manage an election are not met by reserves.	1	6	5	Reserve funds earmarked and considered annually as part of the budget setting process.	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	Annually
VAT	VAT analysis is incomplete or inaccurate.	1	6	6	All transactions are recorded in income and expenditure records, with VAT separated out where appropriate.	Clerk and RFO	Monthly
	VAT reclaim processed within time limits.	1	6	6	Returns submitted each half year and must be claimed within 3 years of transaction.	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	Every six months

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	Parish council is not correctly registered with HMRC for VAT.	2	8	16	VAT Status reviewed in line with best guidance, HMRC Advice Notices and legislation.	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	Annually
Reserves	The adequacy of the level of the reserves held.	1	7	7	General reserves to be increase annually from precept or other income. Budget setting process takes account of future needs of reserves.	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	Annually
Employing Contractors	Not seeking or obtaining value for money.	1	6	6	The parish council's Financial Regulations advise on protocol for seeking quotes and tenders to obtain value for money and should be adhered to. Any decisions to appoint a contractor must be approved by the full council.	Parish Council	As required
Internal Audit	Internal auditor unavailable or no suitable candidate available.	1	7	7	Auditor is selected from a pool of qualified individuals sourced via the SLCC Internal Audit Forum. All records to be made available digitally to allow for a distance orientated audit.	Clerk and RFO/Finance Committee	Annually

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External Audit	Late submission incurring fees, incorrect submission incurs fees.	1	7	7	The Clerk and RFO is responsible for the submission of the external audit documentation within the prescribed deadlines. Internal Auditor assigned carries out the end of year audit ready for submission to external auditor, within the required timescales.	Clerk and RFO/Internal Auditor/Finance Committee	Annual
	Inaccuracies in the annual return.	1	6	6	RFO balances accounts with bank statements each month. The Internal Auditor assigned carries out the end of year audit ready for submission to external auditor, within the required timescales.	Clerk and RFO/Internal Auditor/Finance Committee	Annual

Administrative and Management Risks

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Topic	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level Score	Impact Score	Overall Risk Rating	Management and Control of Impact of Risk	Lead Responsibility	Frequency
Assets	Damage or theft of assets or property.	1	7	7	<p>An annual inspection of all significant assets is undertaken and any defects reported to the Clerk and RFO for repair or replacement plan.</p> <p>The asset register is maintained and published on the parish council's website.</p> <p>Individual risk assessments if necessary.</p>	Clerk and RFO	At least Annually
	Poor maintenance of assets leading to loss of value, damage or injury.	3	8	24	<p>Weekly visual inspection of recreation park and play equipment, supplemented by a quarterly and annual independent inspection of playground equipment.</p> <p>Play equipment repair and maintenance budget agreed annually.</p> <p>All minor repair issues dealt with by Grounds and Maintenance Operative work plan.</p> <p>All play equipment and buildings on the recreation park risk assessed annually.</p>	Clerk and RFO/Grounds and Maintenance Operative/Caretaker	Daily/Quarterly/Annually

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					All other assets inspected annually and any repair works scheduled in to the work plan of the Grounds and Maintenance Operative.		
Public Liability	Risk or damage to third party property or individuals from contact with assets.	2	7	14	Review adequacy of Public Liability Insurance annually, regular maintenance checks, reporting of hazards. Risk Assessments for events carried out and kept as evidence.	Clerk & Council	Annually
Employees	Loss of key personnel.	2	9	18	All employees subject to an annual review and ongoing monitoring of workload, performance and employment satisfaction. Employment terms and conditions reviewed annually to ensure they remain competitive and attractive to employees. All employees are offered the appropriate training and development and are provided with the resources to fulfil their roles effectively.	Chair of Staffing Committee/Clerk and RFO	Annually

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					Back up plans in place to cover for loss of key personnel.		
	Absence of key personnel as a result of illness or injury.	2	7	14	Employees and/or members used to provide short term cover for absence. Use of external contractor for extended period of absence to be considered.	Chair of Staffing Committee/Clerk and RFO	As required.
	Fraud, illegal or disreputable activities conducted by employees.	3	9	27	All employees subject to an annual review and ongoing monitoring of performance. Financial controls in place to reduce the risk of fraudulent or illegal activities being pursued.	Finance Committee/Clerk and RFO	Annually
Health and Safety	Health and Safety Policy inadequate or parish council is found to be negligent in the event of an incident or accident.	2	9	18	The Health and Safety Policy is reviewed annually. The Clerk and RFO is the lead for health and safety and is responsible for undertaking risk assessments where necessary.	Clerk and RFO/Employees	As required

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					All employees undertake health and safety training to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety Policy. The parish council holds Public Liability Insurance to protect against claims.		
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or Incident of an individual(s) acting outside of their powers.	1	9	9	Council Members to be supported to understand their legal powers through training and review of policies and standing orders. Clerk and RFO to maintain awareness of changes to legislation and sector practice through membership of SLCC, NALC and local groups.	Clerk and RFO	As required
Minutes, Agenda and Policies	A failure to produce agenda, minutes and policies that are accurate and legal.	1	6	6	Agenda planning is completed each month with the agenda distributed to members at least one week prior to a meeting. All agenda and supporting papers sent to Councillors via email or a shared drive. Draft minutes are circulated normally no later than ten days following a meeting and are agreed by Councillors at the next meeting, then signed. The	Clerk and RFO/Chair	Monthly

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					signed copy is retained. Minutes are published on the website for transparency.		
Parish Council Records	Loss or corruption of electronic records.	1	6	6	All digital records retained on two separate cloud drive and a hard drive back up completed every quarter. All digital records are password protected and covered by appropriate ant-virus software.	Clerk and RFO	Quarterly
	Security of hard copies of records is compromised.	1	6	6	Documents stored in Clerk and RFO's home office, which is secured against theft. Files are stored in a non-conspicuous place. Smoke detectors fitted in Clerk and RFO's home. All hard copies of document are destroyed when no longer required.	Clerk and RFO	As required

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Personal Injury	Injury or harm from misuse, prolonged Use.	3	6	18	The Clerk is aware of best practice whilst using a computer; posture, taking regular breaks, position of screen and has an appropriate home working environment.	Clerk and RFO	As required
Unauthorised Access to Computer or Digital Devices	Digital devices are accessed by unauthorised users.	1	6	6	All employees and members must take steps to secure all digital devices through use of a password and anti-virus/malware software. Passwords should not be shared and should be changed regularly.	Clerk and RFO/Members	As required
Website and Social Media	Incorrect, inaccurate or misleading information published on website and social media channels.	3	6	18	The Clerk and RFO has control of the website and social media channels and is responsible for publishing the contents of the website and social media channels. Access to the website and social media channels is password protected.	Clerk	As required
Freedom of Information	Incidents of not recording or retaining information in line with legislation and Parish Council policy.	1	6	6	The parish council has a publication scheme and keeps records in accordance with data retention guidelines.	Clerk and RFO	As required

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Risk 1/2 = Unlikely to happen in 12 months, 3/4 = Could happen once or twice in 12 months, 5 = Could happen more than twice in 12 months.

Impact (Consequence should identified risk occur): 6 = Low, 7/8 = Medium, 9/10 = High

Impact 6 = Minimal impact to Parish Council, 7/8 = Requires some work and focus by Parish Council, 9/10 = Required significant work, time and effort by Parish Council.

Overall Risk Rating (level of risk x impact) 5 – 10 risks should continue to be monitored and reviewed 11 – 24 risks should have robust actions in place to mitigate against the impact on the Parish Council 25 – 50 risks are significant and require a robust action plan to be in place to ensure that the impact of the risk is effectively managed.

Topic	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level Score	Impact Score	Overall Risk Rating	Management and Control of Impact of Risk	Lead Responsibility	Frequency
					This information is published on the parish council's website.		
Data Protection	Noncompliance with GDPR regulations	1	6	6	The Council registers annually with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). The Freedom of Information Policy and General Privacy Notice are reviewed annually.	Clerk and RFO	Annually
	Breaches of data protection	1	6	6	All digital records are retained in password protected files and paper copies of documents are retained securely and only retained for the necessary period of time required and disposed of securely.	Clerk and RFO	As required
Data Leak or Business Continuity Interruption	Cyber-attack or ransomware attack leading to a loss of confidential data and information or causing a break in business continuity.	1	6	6	The Clerk AND RFO is aware of best practice with data management, cyber risk and data loss, minimal confidential data is held. Stored sensitive information is password protected.	Clerk and RFO	As required

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Topic	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level Score	Impact Score	Overall Risk Rating	Management and Control of Impact of Risk	Lead Responsibility	Frequency
Members' Interests	Failure by a member(s) to complete a declaration	1	6	6	New Councillors are provided with the documents immediately after election or co-option by the Clerk and RFO and these are scanned and published on the parish council's website and sent on to Somerset Council's Democratic Services.	Clerk and RFO	Within 28 days of election of co-option
	Conflict of interest	1	6	6	Interests to be declared at the beginning of meetings and recorded in the minutes and any conflict is addressed as appropriate. Members to update their register as and when required.	Clerk and RFO/Members	As required
Reputation	Loss of reputation leading to negative feedback from the community.	1	6	6	Good communication with the community via the parish council newsletter. The Code of Conduct is adhered to by all members and employees. Use of the website and social media to encourage engagement with the community and to open up the workings of the parish council.	Clerk and RFO/Members	As required

Level of Risk: 1/2 = Low, 3/4 = Medium, 5 = High

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Topic	Risk(s) Identified	Risk Level Score	Impact Score	Overall Risk Rating	Management and Control of Impact of Risk	Lead Responsibility	Frequency
	Medium to long term plans not in place, resulting in lack of vision and planning effectively for the future	2	6	12	Parish Action Plan to be produced and published on website and updated regularly with council approved projects.	Clerk & Councillors	As required

Level of Risk: 1/2 = Low, 3/4 = Medium, 5 = High

Risk 1/2 = Unlikely to happen in 12 months, 3/4 = Could happen once or twice in 12 months, 5 = Could happen more than twice in 12 months.

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