



Scotton Parish Council

Caring for Community Together

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Risk Management Policy Scotton Parish Council

**A policy which sets out how the Council will identify, quantify,
manage, assess and review risks**

Adopted February 2026

1. Introduction

1.1. Scotton Parish Council has adopted this risk management policy in accordance with guidance set out in Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide (England) issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG) and also to give effect to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

1.2. This document sets out the:

- Parish Council’s Risk Management Policy
- Objectives of Risk Management
- Types of Risk
- Roles and responsibilities
- Risk Management process
- Approach to future monitoring

1.3. This policy aims to further develop risk management and raise its profile across the Parish Council by:

- Integrating risk management into the culture of the Parish;
- Embedding risk management through the ownership and management of risk as part of all decision making processes;
- Managing risk in accordance with best practice.

2. The Policy

2.1. Scotton Parish Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employees, assets, liabilities and community against potential losses, to minimise uncertainty in achieving its goals and objectives and to maximise its opportunities.

2.2. The Parish Council is aware that some risks can never be eliminated fully and its strategy provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk.

2.3. Risk Management is an integral part of the Parish Council’s management processes.

3. Objectives of Risk Management

3.1. The objectives of risk management are to:

- Identify, evaluate and manage the opportunities and risks to which the Parish Council is exposed, at strategic and operational level;
- To protect physical assets, promote employee and public safety and maximize resources;
- Embed risk management into day to day management and working arrangements;
- Enable effective and safe delivery of services to local people and to minimize the risk of significant failures

- Enable the identification of opportunities and risks associated with the Council's budget options and business planning to ensure that opportunities and risks are controlled;
- Enable better, more informed decision making at all levels;
- Review, evaluate and implement issues identified from past experience;
- To promote good corporate governance;

3.2. It is the responsibility of all Members and staff to have regard for risk management whilst carrying out their duties.

3.3. This Strategy will enable risks and opportunities to be identified, evaluated, controlled, monitored and reported.

3.4. Seek assurances that action(s) are being taken on risk related issues identified by auditors and inspectors.

4. Types of Risk

4.1. In order to manage risk, the Council needs to know what risks it faces. Identifying risks is therefore the first step in the risk management process.

4.2. The Council will identify the key risks to achieving its priorities and service objectives:

- i. financial - loss of money;
- ii. security - fraud, theft, embezzlement;
- iii. property - damage to property;
- iv. legal - breaking the law or being sued;
- v. IT – failure of IT systems or misuse; and
- vi. reputational – actions taken could harm the authority's public reputation
- vii. loss of key staff.

5. Roles and Responsibilities for Risk Management

5.1. All Members and staff of the Parish Council are responsible for risk management.

5.2. All Members:

- Have collective responsibility in understanding the strategic risks which the Parish Council faces.
- Ensure that all identified risks have been considered in decision making and countermeasures and controls are defined.
- Agree and publish a clear Risk Management Policy and oversee the effective management of risks by the Parish Clerk.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Parish Council's risk management arrangements by reviewing any risk management reports to Council.
- Know how the Parish Council will manage and operate in a crisis through an approved Emergency Plan.

5.3. Parish Clerk:

- The lead officer for risk management and owner of the Risk Management Strategy.
- Has the responsibility to understand the strategic and operational risks that the Parish Council faces and to oversee the effective management of these risks by officers.
- Leads on the corporate governance agenda which includes risk management and with the Council's Chair approve the Annual Governance Statement.
- Ensures that risks are fully considered in all strategic decision making and that the Risk Management Policy helps the Parish Council to achieve its objectives and protection of assets.
- Provides advice as to the legality of policy and service delivery and updates the Parish Council on the implications of new or revised legislation.
- Assesses and implements the Council's insurance requirements.
- Assesses the financial implications.

5.4. Parish Council:

- Support the Parish Clerk in all aspects of risk management.
- Understand the strategic and operational risks that the Parish Council faces.
- Ensure that a structured and systematic approach is in place for the identification, recording and reporting of risks and opportunities.
- Ensure that the arrangements for risk management and the associated risk registers are regularly reviewed.
- Ensure that risks are fully considered in all decision making and that the Risk Management Strategy helps the Parish Council to achieve its objectives and protection of assets.
- Assist in embedding a culture of risk management through the Parish Council and encourage appropriate training, including induction and refresher training for staff.

5.5. All Employees:

- Understand how they can enable continuous improvement of risk management.
- Understand that risk management and risk awareness are a key part of the Parish.
- Report systematically and promptly to the Parish Clerk any perceived new risk or failure of existing control measures.
- Record areas of risk which fall directly within their day to day areas of control and review in line with agreed target dates.
- Provide a pro-active role in the reporting and assessing of physical risks in respect of public, staff and property.

5.6. Role of Internal Audit:

- Provide a scrutiny role by carrying out audits to provide independent assurance to Members, via the Internal Auditor's annual audit plan and post audit report that the necessary risk management systems are in place.

6. The Risk Management Process

6.1. The process of risk management is straight forward and involves a number of key steps which are outlined below.

7. Step 1: Identification of Risks

7.1. The Parish Clerk is responsible for identifying and recording any risks.

Identification will be either via a formal process of planned inspections or ad hoc requests or risks being noted through everyday working situations.

7.2. When changes to working arrangements, new initiatives, events or projects are to be undertaken the Clerk will seek to identify any risks early in the planning process and prior to implementation.

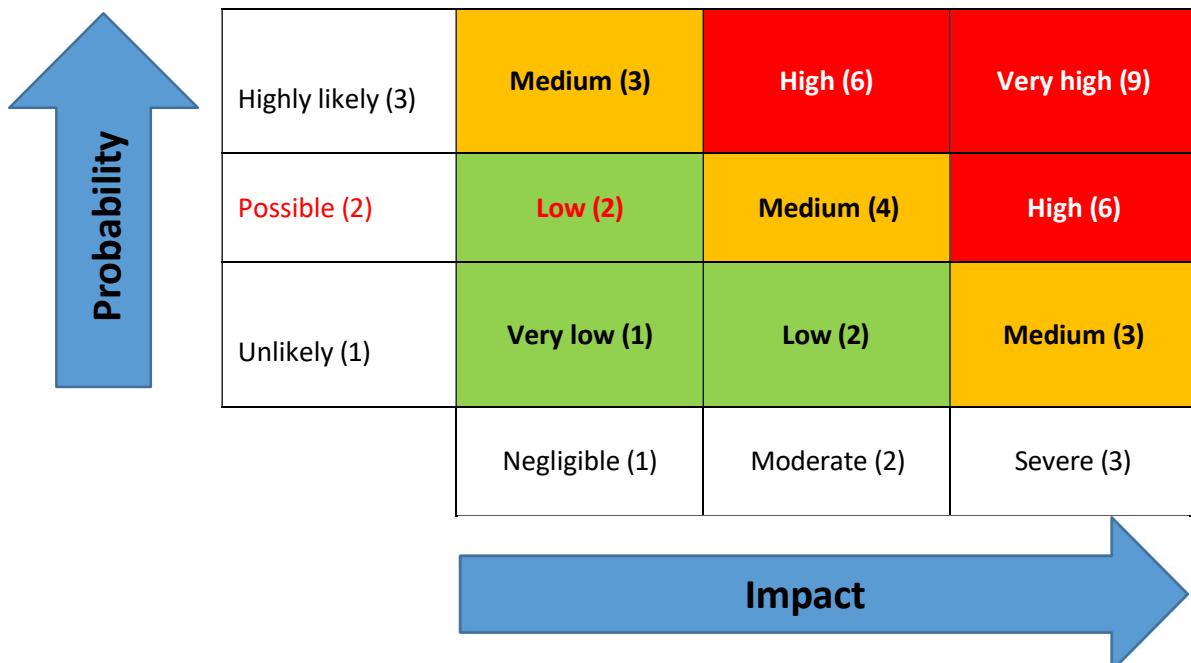
7.3. Each risk should be described and set out on a risk assessment form.

7.4. All risks identified must be recorded on the risk register.

8. Step 2: Evaluation of Risks

8.1. On identification of a risk the Clerk will assign a risk factor by reference to the risk matrix.

8.2. The risk matrix considers the likelihood of a risk materializing and the impact it would have.



8.3. According to the level of risk identified appropriate action should be taken.

8.4. If the level of risk is high it may not be possible to wait until a formal response or action has been agreed by the Council. The risk factor table below provides guidance in assessing appropriate action.

Risk Factor		Action
Red	Very High/ High	Immediate notification to Chair and Vice Chair Expedite Steps 3 and 4 to identify additional controls for consideration and implementation
Amber	Medium	Immediate notification to Chair and Vice-Chair
Green	Low	Notify Chair and Vice-Chair

9. Step 3: Mitigation of Risk

9.1. The Parish Clerk should consider what controls are in place to mitigate the risk. These could include controls to reduce the likelihood of a risk occurring or to reduce the impact on the Parish Council.

9.2. Only existing controls that are already in place should be considered and included on the risk assessment/notification form.

10. Step 4: Decide on Any Further Action to be Taken

10.1. Following evaluation there are four main control options to manage the risk:

Terminate the risk –	take a decision to discontinue the activity.
Transfer the risk –	the risk is 'passed' on e.g. to an insurer.
Treat the risk –	put in place additional controls to reduce the impact or likelihood.
Tolerate the risk –	accept the risk but continue to monitor and evaluate.

10.2 Once the proposed action has been reviewed and considered by the Parish Council then the Clerk shall scope, determine the resources (time, effort and funds) required and propose an implementation plan for agreement by Council Resolution, or for a new Red risk with agreement of the Chair (of a committee or council) and with the Parish Council being notified at the next council meeting.

11. Step 5: Allocation of Responsibility

11.1 Each risk should be passed to the Parish Clerk who will be responsible for implementing controls and ensuring they are working. The Clerk will also be responsible for monitoring the risk.

12. Step 6: Completing the Risk Register

12.1 All completed risk assessments must be passed to the Chair of the Council

for checking prior to entering onto the risk register.

13. Step 7: Monitoring and Reporting

- 13.1 An annual review of the risk management arrangements for the Parish Council will be conducted by the Full Council.
- 13.2 Once a year, a meeting of the Parish Council will include an agenda item for risk management to ensure that any developments or issues are considered.
- 13.3 The Parish Council's risk management strategy will be also reviewed as part of the internal control environment within the Annual Governance Statement. This is agreed annually by the Parish Council in June.

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Risk Number	Key Risk facing the Council	Potential consequences	Severity	Mitigations
1.	Ensuring cash & cheques are collected promptly. Theft or dishonesty of the Clerk RFO	Financial loss	Low	Council applies the requirements of the Financial Regulations. An internal and external audit is conducted every year. Council has adopted Scribe, a dedicated accounting package. Cash holdings are kept to a minimum, cash is tracked through the monthly accounting reports and a separate cash book. Bank reconciliations and payments/receipt schedules are produced and reviewed monthly, all payments are authorised by the council.
2.	Vandalism, theft or damage to notice boards, dog waste bins, seats and benches	Repair/replacement costs	Low/Medium	Notice boards are updated at least twice a month and are inspected for any damage which is reported back to the council. Seats and benches are checked once a year and visually checked each week. Waste bins are reported if overflowing. Messages on web site to instruct members of the public to report full or damaged bins.
3.	Inappropriate behaviour by or injury to a Councillor whilst carrying out duties	Claim for compensation	Low	Personal and accident cover for Members and employees taken out.
4.	Injury to persons, third party or vehicles in car park	Claim for compensation	High	£10 million Public Liability insurance cover.
5.	Injury to persons using Play Parks owned by the Parish Council	Claim for compensation	High	£10 million Public Liability insurance cover. Park equipment is checked by NYC and a report is issued, anything Red is fixed. Clerk visually checks parks once a week. In-depth inspection is carried out once a year and all necessary actions are carried out. All equipment is installed by qualified technicians. Self-employed maintenance person contracted to do grass cutting.
6.	Proper reporting via the minutes	Legal requirement	Low	Minutes of both the main Council meeting and the Village Hall and Open Spaces & Play Parks Committee are approved on a monthly basis, signed and published on the website of the Parish Council. The list of Receipts & Payments passed at the monthly meeting are attached to the minutes and published monthly.
7.	Proper document control and computer safety	Legal requirement	Low	Electronic files are stored on a cloud basis monitored by an IT company. The cloud allows access by the Clerk via laptop at home.

				Paper and Electronic files are maintained in line with the Document Retention Timescales.
8.	Precept setting, Internal & External Audit	Legal requirement	Low	The clerk provides an outline budget in November based on current costings which is discussed, amended and agreed. Internal Audit commences as soon as the financial year is balanced after 31st March and the Clerk liaises with the Internal Auditor who has access to Scribe accounts on a Read only basis. The Accounts, signed Internal Auditor's report and completed Annual Return are presented and passed at the Annual Meeting, then sent for External Audit. When completed, the required sections are published on the website together with electors' rights at the appropriate time.
9.	Emails security and confidentiality	Information loss	Low	The Council has recently moved to a .gov email address providing a more secure and formal method of communication. The service is managed by an IT Company WJPS.
10.	Key register	No access to council assets	Low	Register is updated every year with who has what keys.
11.	Village Hall	Maintenance and damage	Low	VH is checked by the caretaker on a weekly basis. Any maintenance identified is brought to the council. All relevant safety checks are done annually and in line with legal requirements. An accident book is present on site.
12.	Contractors	Poor work or damage to council property, injury caused by contractors	Low	All contractors must provide proof of their qualifications and insurance.
13.	Employees not available	Loss of key personnel	Medium	There is a clerk and caretaker employed by SPC. Absence of the caretaker could be covered by the clerk and with the casual assistance of councillors. The clerk uses a SPC laptop which would be made available to a councillor. Passwords are stored in a secure place known by the councillors. Need a process to ensure critical activities can be maintained.
14.	Loss or damage to assets	Key processes not carried out due to loss of personnel	Medium	SPC maintains an asset register which is updated as new assets are purchased or disposed of. Assets such as park equipment is checked monthly

