

SOPLEY PARISH COUNCIL – ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Adopted and reviewed 20th November 2025



This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. The Council is aware that although some risks can never be eliminated fully, it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk, which

- Identified the subject
- Identifies what the risk may be
- Identify the level of risk
- Evaluates the management and control of the risk and records, findings, reviews, assesses and revises procedures if required.

SUBJECT	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	Risk Rating	MANAGEMENT/CONTROL OF RISK	REVIEW/ASSESS/REVISE
MANAGEMENT Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to unexpected or tragic circumstances	Low	All files and recent records are kept at the clerk's home in fireproof storage away from the main file store and computer. The clerk makes a weekly back up of files.	Review when necessary
	Council not being able to undertake business without a quorum of 4 councillors	High	Councillors send apologies in advance of meeting if they are unable to attend, and if numbers are low, the clerk contacts the remaining councillors to confirm their attendance. If a meeting is unable to be held, then councillors to be contacted, and agreement to essential business obtained by email or video conferencing and confirmed at the next meeting.	Existing procedure adequate

Meeting location	Adequacy Health and Safety	Low	Meetings are held in the village hall. The clerk and parish councillor hold a key All the premises and facilities are considered adequate by the Clerk, for the Councillors and any Public who attend from a health and safety and comfort aspect. If the village hall is not available, then a suitable alternative would be found.	Existing procedure adequate
Council Records	Loss through theft, fire, damage	Low	Papers are held in a cabinet at the clerk's home.	Existing procedure adequate
Council Records electronic	Loss through damage, fire, corruption of computer	Medium	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the parish council's laptop computer held at the clerk's home. Back-ups of the files are taken at weekly intervals on an external hard drive,	Existing procedure adequate
FINANCE Precept	Adequacy of precept	Medium	Sound budgeting to determine annual precept. The Parish Council receives monthly budget update information and detailed budgets in November or December when the precept is an agenda item at that meeting. The parish council hold reserves adequate to meet some unforeseen or uninsured risks.	Existing procedure adequate

Insurance	Adequacy of insurance	Medium	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements in place. Employers Liability, Public Liability and Fidelity Guarantee are a statutory requirement	Review provision and compliance annually
Banking	Adequacy of controls, risk of loss through dishonesty, fraud	Low	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.	Existing procedures adequate - Review Financial Regulations annually
Financial controls and records	Adequacy of controls, risk of loss through dishonesty, fraud Risks involved with the use of electronic banking	Low	Monthly reconciliation prepared by RFO and checked by the Chair of the Parish Council. Two signatories on cheques and on line payments. Internal and external audit. Any financial obligation must be resolved and clearly minuted before any commitment. All payments must be resolved and clearly minuted. The Village Hall transactions are related to Parish Council accounts for VAT purposes and are also included in the parish council accounts. Electronic banking has been taken up after consideration.	Existing procedures adequate Procedure is reviewed and amended accordingly.

			Lloyds Bank identified, clerk inputs payments but cannot authorise. Two separate signatories make payments. Codes and passwords are confidential. Controls as above maintained.	
ASSETS Street furniture and benches	Damage to benches	Medium	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 equipment by members of the Parish Council.	Existing procedures Adequate – asset register now maintained.
LIABILITY Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments Working Parties taking decisions	Low	All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted.	Existing procedures Adequate – VAT issue now clarified with HMRC.
Legality	Noncompliance with statutory requirements	Low	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements Minutes are approved and signed at the next meeting Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements Business conducted at Council meetings managed by the Chairman	Existing procedures adequate

Public Liability	Public Liability Risk to third party, property or individuals	Low	Public liability insurance is in place. Risk assessment of any individual event undertaken. Risk assessment of trees on parish council-controlled land was done by a tree surgeon in 2024 and action will be taken.	Existing procedures adequate
COUNCILLORS' PROPRIETY Liability	Conflict of interest	Low	Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting Register of Members Interests form to be reviewed at least on an annual basis	Existing procedures adequate
CLERK Liability	Loss of clerk Fraud Actions undertaken	Medium	A temporary clerk should be identified pending advertising for replacement in the event of the clerk resigning or being signed off sick.	Review when necessary. Details of the bank of temporary clerks can be obtained from HALC
			The requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance must be adhered to. The clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice and costs budgeted. Monitor working conditions	HALC provides training courses for the Clerk and Council members.