



Ilchester Parish Council Risk Assessment Policy and Register

Adopted 8th August 2024

1. Introduction

‘Risks’ are any threats that adversely affect the council’s ability to achieve its objectives. Ilchester Parish Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employees, volunteers, assets and the community. Risk can never be fully eliminated. However, formal, structured, systematic and focussed processes to identify, analyse and control risk will minimise the chances of injury, failure or unnecessary expense.

The risk assessment uses a traffic-light value for each risk:

- The IMPACT score relates to seriousness of the even should it actually happen. The level of this may be reduced by mitigation the council can put in place.
- Similarly the LIKELIHOOD score may be reduced by the controls the council decides are suitable.

The aim is to reduce known risks to a GREEN score. Council should seek to improve AMBER scores and should have a plan of action for any RED scores.

LIKELIHOOD	Highly Probable	4				
	Probable	3				
	Possible	2				
	Unlikely	1				
RISK ASSESSMENT RATING CRITERIA			1	2	3	4
			Minor	Moderate	Serious	Major
			IMPACT			

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Councillors have collective responsibility for risk assessment and risk management.

2.2 Delegation for risk may be made to the clerk, a committee, sub-committee or working group (where they have responsibility for that activity).

2.3 The clerk is responsible for: understanding strategic and operational risks. They are the lead officer for overseeing effective mitigation.

2.4 The clerk / Responsible Finance Officer leads on corporate governance:

- With the Council's Chair they approve the Annual Governance Statement,
- provide advice as to the legality of policy and service delivery,
- update the Parish Council on the implications of new or revised legislation, and
- ensures the Council's insurance cover is adequate.

2.5. All Employees, councillors and volunteers have a responsibility to reduce their own risk by abiding by rules and regulations, using safety equipment provided and reporting near misses or risks to members of the public, property or themselves that they notice.

2.6. The Internal Auditor provides independent assurance to Members through the internal audit process and report.

3. **Risk reduction** can be by, or through:

- Use of insurance
- robust council internal processes, and
- working with others (where activities or actions are carried out wholly by a third party the risks assessment and management of those organisations will prevail, and they will be responsible for all liabilities arising out of those activities.)

4. Significant activities require their own risk assessment

The risk register is intended to capture the main strategic risks for Council. Some regular activities or asset management will require a more detailed risk assessment by the council or by qualified third parties (such as play equipment inspectors). Events should each have their own risk assessment.

5. New Activities

New or additional undertakings, or activities, not covered by this risk register will be subject to Risk Assessment (before they commence).

6. **Review** This risk register (and any supplementary risk assessments) will be reviewed annually (and immediately after any major incident).

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
1	Finance	Bank collapse	1	3		£85,000 limit per financial institution.	Audit advise no cause for concern.	
2	Finance	Fraud	1	2		Monthly bank reconciliation, councillor access to all records, internal audit. Two councillors authorise each bank payment. Insurance for fidelity	Existing processes adequate Existing process adequate Insurance adequate	
3	Finance	Errors, poor record keeping, loss of records. Late payments past 30 days	2	1		Back up of accounting data to securely store records. Use of delegated authority to pay invoices on time.	Existing processes adequate	
4	Finance	Inadequate funds (or underspend against budget)	1	2		Sound budgeting. Quarterly review of expenditure against budget	Existing process adequate Existing process adequate	
5	Finance	Grants made inconsistently, to non-qualifying bodies, or not assessed adequately. Powers not recorded properly (S137 or others)	1	1		Formal grant application process. Scrutinised by full council.	Existing process adequate Adequate scrutiny process	

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
6	Finance	Errors in processing, payroll, pension or PAYE payments	1	1		Payroll and Pension outsourced to specialist.	Existing processes adequate	
7	Finance	Returns not made for: precept, VAT, pension regulator etc resulting in loss of income or fines	1	1		Clerks reports action taken at nearest meeting Internal audit	Existing processes adequate	
8	Finance	CIL/ S106 payments kept under review	1	1		No S106 due until development built. No CIL payments due	Adequate process	
9	Finance	Grant applications not made to funding bodies resulting in loss of income / increase in precept	2	2		Clerk alerts Council when grants are available. Clerk applies following resolution from council.	Adequate process	
10	Finance	Service charges not at correct level Opportunities missed for raising revenue	2	2		Annual review of all fees charged. Pro-active approach to revenue generation to maintain low precept	Adequate processes	
11	Finance	Lack of internal controls (or supervision) resulting in errors or non-compliance with Financial Regulations	1	1		Finance representative to provide expertise Annual review of Financial Regulations and other financial policies	Existing process adequate	

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12	Professional services	Audit - Inadequate review	1	1		Using specialist parish council auditor Change internal auditor every 3-5 years (starting 2025) External audit applied	Existing processes adequate	
13	Professional services	Legal representation not available	1	3		Parish Council can use the services of a solicitor.	Existing control adequate	
14	Professional services	Website not working properly, not compliant with accessibility, domain / emails not managed. Website information out of date	2	2		Use of specialist to manage domains and emails and fix reported problems. Regular updates made by clerk/Councillor	Existing control adequate Inadequate clerk time can create time lag for updating	
15	Administration	No one knows who is responsible for what	2	2		Committees / Working Groups have adopted Terms of Reference published on the website. At Annual Council Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillors appointed for areas (Footpaths / Highways etc) • Link Councillors named for other village committees (e.g. IDCA / IRINEC) 	Existing processes adequate	

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
16	Administration	Loss of corporate memory, through poor record keeping or loss of passwords. Lack of access to records if clerk absent.	2	2		Daily back up to cloud of clerk computer files Paper copies of key records kept for future archiving. Passwords double-sealed in envelopes to be opened in presence of two councillors	Existing procedures adequate Existing procedures adequate	Councillors not accessing cloud files – consider group licence Updated passwords to be deposited at least annually with Chair
17	Administration	Papers that should be archived thrown away. Risk of papers being stored that should be in archive. Risk of papers stored by councillors (or community) that should be archived. Risk of loss of access through archiving before scanning	1	2		Clerk follows advice provided by South-West Heritage Trust. Clerk makes annual review of papers to be archived. Unique old documents relating to council property or processes lodged with clerk. Old papers that may need to be referred to by Council again to be scanned before sending to archive	Existing procedures adequate Needs completing. Clerk to scan, (or send for scanning) before deposit. Both electronic copy and original to be provided to the archive	Nothing sent to archive in past few years Councillors to confirm that no unique old documents are held. Plan needed for a quantity of papers

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
18	Administration	<p>Agendas not posted legally, councillors not summoned.</p> <p>Agendas do not tell Councillors what decisions are expected to be made at the meeting / Councillors do not submit motions in advance.</p> <p>Council Minutes not providing a timely and accurate report of the decisions of the council and available to the public</p>	1	1		<p>Sent by email and published to website and noticeboard.</p> <p>Clerk uses SLCC method for writing Agenda and Minutes</p> <p>Minutes posted in Draft on website.</p> <p>Minutes signed (pages initialled) Draft minutes replaced on web with signed.</p>	Existing procedures adequate	
19	Administration	Required policies out of date or not existing	3	2		<p>Clerk adds to Agenda for review at the correct time.</p> <p>Clerk checks for new updates</p> <p>Policies on website for access by Councillors and the public</p>	Existing process adequate	Required policies are not currently in place/ out of date. Process put in place by Clerk & Chair to ensure compliance
20	Property	Play areas not well managed with deteriorating facilities	2	2		<p>Weekly inspections of play areas</p> <p>Detailed health and safety and risk assessment polices</p> <p>Adequate insurance</p>	Existing processes adequate	

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
21	Property	Property assets not adequately recorded, confusion over who owns what leading to legal disputes / lack of asset management Moveable assets not recorded so that items are mislaid or forgotten	3	3		Up to date register of assets Moveable assets recently reviewed Annual review by council and by internal Audit	New process in place. Asset Register is currently being created and reviewed by all Councillors and Clerk.	
22	Property	Ad hoc events for local community not managed properly	2	2		Public liability insurance	Existing cover adequate	
23	Property	Grounds / asset maintenance inadequate Grounds appearance and safety below expectations	2	2		Use of external contractors via process set out in Financial Regulations Volunteers with appropriate training and expertise help	Existing process adequate	
24	Property	Damage or loss TO a third party including members of the public	1	3		Public Liability Insurance	Existing process adequate	

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
25	Property	Damage, loss or non-performance BY a third party including members of the public and contractors	2	2		<p>Checks that adequate insurance is held by third party.</p> <p>Guarantee periods for work / goods.</p> <p>Stage payments for major works</p> <p>Physical security measures</p>	Existing process adequate	
26	Property	<p>Health and Safety compliance inadequate increasing risk of injury</p> <p>Responsibility for inspections not clear</p>	2	2		<p>Specific inspection and management processes in place.</p> <p>Play equipment inspected at recommended intervals and remedial work commissioned.</p>	Specific inspections not in place for trees and fences	
27	Property	<p>Safety equipment not working as intended leading directly to injury or loss of life.</p> <p>Grit bins not topped up.</p>	2	2		Grit bins checked each autumn.		
28	Property	Environmentally sustainable management of Grounds not happening	3	1		There could be an action plan to focus attention on improvements	Existing processes adequate	More can always be done to promote wildlife and protect environment

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
29	Employees and volunteers	<p>Inadequate management will impact on entire council.</p> <p>Inadequate management of volunteers will result in loss of helpers, reluctance to engage and increased cost for council (to employ workers instead) Reputational damage likely if staff / employees unhappy</p>	3	2		<p>Management of clerk correctly done by HR Committee</p> <p>Suite of HR policies in place</p> <p>Volunteers are not provided with the Volunteer Policy</p> <p>Responsive assistance provided.</p> <p>Training provided to clerk.</p>	<p>Existing processes adequate</p> <p>Volunteer policy not yet in place</p>	<p>Set up an HR committee</p> <p>Volunteer policy needed</p> <p>Volunteer contact list to be maintained by clerk.</p> <p>Training should be proactively offered to volunteers.</p>
30	Reputation	Inadequate communication with community	2	1		<p>Website generally up to date</p> <p>Regular articles in local newsletter</p> <p>Publication Scheme and Privacy Policy</p> <p>Popular Annual Village Meeting</p>		

Item	Risk area	Risk identified	Probability	Impact	Score	Control	Comment	Action Required
31	Reputation	Interests / gifts not declared	1	1		Register of Interests (ROI) completed by all councillors. Individual interests notified to clerk at meetings as they arise. Clerk reminds councillors annually to: Read Code of Conduct / update ROI /declare gifts.	Duty of clerk to remind Existing processes adequate	
32	Reputation	Complaints from the community not addressed	2	2		Complaints Policy on website Complaints addressed		Complaints Policy to be instated
33	Reputation	Bullying and harassment arising	1	1		Civility and Respect pledge followed and policies in place	Existing processes adequate	
34	Reputation	Shabby public assets give poor impression to public and visitors Poor consideration for less mobile	3	2		Public assets are not only safe, but of smart appearance. Bus stop deaned regularly		Accessibility audit to be considered, more benches may be needed
35	Strategic	No parish council action plan in place	4	3		Without a plan progress will be slower	Plan needs to link directly to budgeting process	A rolling 2-3 year plan is advised
36	Strategic	Long term plan for devolution of services from Somerset Council	4	3		A plan to make a plan is needed	Plan for devolution which will impact on entire village	

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37	Strategic	Horizon Scanning for matters that affect Ilchester, but which the PC is not told about.	4	3		<p>Clerk has alert set up to catch planning applications.</p> <p>Councillors and clerk to engage with new Local Community Network</p> <p>Nearby clerks do pass on information about 'over the boundary' matters.</p> <p>Clerk receives information about national matters / legislation from various sources</p>	<p>Impact may be minor or considerable.</p> <p>Not possible for everything to be caught</p>	Reliant on everyone being alert.

This policy is to be reviewed annually (August 2025)