Middleton Stoney Parish Council - Risk Assessment 2025/26

Risk Assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. This document has been produced to enable Middleton Stoney Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. The Parish Council will review all risks annually and annotate actions.

Risk Colour Coding	High	Medium	Low

Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties	**L**	To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget update information. At the precept meeting Council will receive a budget report, including the actual position and projected position to the end of the year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information, the Council will map out the required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from Cherwell District Council. The figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received.	Existing procedures adequate
Budget Provision and Reserves	Insufficient available funds	L	A full budget needs to be submitted to the Council prior to the Precept request. This should include funds placed in reserve for future projects, a contingency fund and three months' running costs.	
Financial Records	Inadequate records	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Review the Financial Regulations when necessary - Yearly if possible
	Financial Irregularities	L	Internal Auditor and appointment of a Councillor responsible for internal Financial Control	Appoint a Councillor annually with Internal Control responsibility

Bank and banking	Inadequate Checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the banking requirements.	The procedures will be adequate
	Bank Mistakes	L	Every 2 months a reconciliation is completed by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate
	Cheque Mistakes	L	Cheques are to be written by the Clerk. Following an inspection of the invoices, they must be signed by two Councillors on the production of the Payment Schedule agreed at the PC meeting. Cheque, cheque stub, invoice and schedule to be signed or initialed.	Existing procedure adequate
	Credit References	L	The Bank performs credit references on cheque signatories.	Existing procedure adequate
Reporting and auditing	Information communication	L	Financial information is a regular agenda item (Finance Report) and discussed/reviewed and approved at each meeting.	Existing procedure adequate
Grants	Receipt of grant	L	Parish Council received the grass cutting grant from OCC. Clerk to ensure received by August	Existing procedure adequate
Charges-rents receivable	Payment of rents	L	None rent income for Village Hall - as per agreement	Existing procedure adequate
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure	Existing procedure adequate
Best Value accountability	Work awarded Incorrectly	L	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, at least three quotations for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major work competivtive tender would be sought.	Existing procedure adequate
	Overspend on services	M	If problems are encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	Procedure in Financial Regulations adequate
Salaries and assoc. costs	Salary Paid incorrectly	L	Salary level agreed once NALC briefing has been published. The salary cheque was agreed and signed at the PC meeting with the information supplied by the payroll accountant.	Existing procedure adequate
	Unpaid Tax to Inland Revenue	L	Tax amount (if any) arranged by payroll administrators and paid by cheque, agreed and signed at PC meeting	Existing procedure adequate

Employees	Fraud by Staff	L	Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance adhered to with regards to fraud.	An internal financial control system is advised
	Health and Safety	L	All Employees (currently only the Clerk) are to be provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles.	Monitor health and safety requirements and insurance annaully
	Clerk resignation/sickness	L	Councillors may act in a temparary capacity at nil pay, provision needs to be made for pension / retirement gratuity. Contingency required for advertising, sickness cover etc	Existing procedure adequate
VAT	Reclaiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. The Council has no requirement for charging VAT	Reclaim should be undertaken annually
Annual Returns	Submit within time limits	L	Employers Annual Return is completed and submitted online with the prescribed time frame by payroll administrators	Existing procedure adequate
	Submit within time limits	L	External Audit Annual Return completed and signed by the Internal Auditor and then completed and signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO before **30 June** and published on the website.	Existing procedure adequate
			If the PC payments and receipts fall below £25,000 the PC may agree that there is no need for a Limited Assurance Review and that Exemption is acceptable; the Certification of Exemption must be completed and sent to the External Auditor by **30 June**.	
			All Paperwork must still be completed and published whether or not it is sent to the External Auditor.	
			The PC may still have a Limited Assurance Review (recommend every three years) and the paperwork must be completed and sent to the External Auditor and published on the website in the usual way.	
	Public Inspection of Decuments	L	By appointment only, at the Village Hall. For the Safety of the Clerk, the public are welcome to inspect documents, but in the Village Hall with another Councillor present.	Existing procedure adequate

Legal Powers	Illegal Activity or paymennts	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at full Council Meetings, including reference to the power used under the Finance section of Agenda and Finance report monthly.	Existing procedure adequate

Minutes,/Agendas /Notices Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manner by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements including publishing on the Agenda and Minutes section of the Parish Council website. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.	Existing procedure adequate
	Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	L	Standing Orders adopted in 2021 and reviewed regularly. Financial Regulations adopted in 2023	
	Business Conduct	L	Agenda is displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meeting should be managed by the Chair	Members adhere to Code of Conduct
Councillors	Losing a Councillor	L	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow which leads to either a by-election or a co-option process. The more usual is a co-option which starts with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applicants and co-option vote at a Council meeting. The Council tries to draw members from around the Parish to make sure each area is represented.	Existing procedures adequate including a separate Councillor Vacancy Policy
	Losing more than four Councillors to make the Council inquorate	M	If there are more than four vacancies at any one time, the Council becomes inquorate and the District Council will take over the running of the Council (at the Village's expense)	Procedures of Cherwell District Council are adequate
Election Costs	Risk of an Election cost	L	Risk is higher in an election year, but there has never been an election in the Village in living memory. However, this is no guarantee that it will not happen so the Council has set aside a sum of £1,500 in case of an election.	Existing procedure will be adequate for the four yearly elections but inadequate in the unlikely event of a by-election
Members interests and Code	Conflict of interests	L	Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings	Existing procedures adequate
	Code of Conduct	L	Code issued by CDC, adopted in June XXX and issued to each Councillor on Election to office	

of Conduct	Register of members' interests	M	Register of members' interests forms completed at election to office and reviewed regularly	Members take responsibility to update register with a annual reminder from the Clerk.
Insurance	General Adequacy	L	The insurance arrangements are reviewed fully for three years with interim annual checking. A review of risk and adequacy of cover (loss. damage, public liability, consequential loss and fidelity guarantee) should be conducted annually. Full review of renewal costs every three years - next £1,500	Check Limits annually and review full poicyevery three years. Existing procedure adequate.
	Cost	L		
	Compliance	L	Ensure compliance measures are in place.	
	Public Liability (statutory)	L	Insurance at £10,000,000	
	Employers Liability (statutory)	L	Insurance at £10,000,000	
	Money	L	In the insured location or in locked safe in tansit £1,000	
	Fidelity Guarantee	M	Insurance at £150,000 (Fraud and Dishonesty)	
Date Protection	Policy provision	L	The Parish Council is registered with the information Commissioner and has a Data Protection Policy (adopted xxx). The renewal is paid annually by Direct Debit	Ensure annual renewal of registration
Freedom of Information	Policy	L	The Council has a Model Publication scheme in place. To date there has only ever been requests under FOI.	Monitor any requests made under FOI
	Provision	M	The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours work for the Clerk.	Monitor any requests made under FOI
Document Retention	Policy	L	The Parish Council adopted a Document Retention Policy on the **xxxx**	Existing procedures adequate