

# All Saints Parish Council

## RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT – March 2024

*“....the greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or service expected of the Council by the public....”*

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the premises or practices. Based on the recorded assessment, the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible, making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces in the provision of its statutory obligations as a “Smaller Authority” and to satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. In creating this report, the following steps were undertaken;

- Identify areas to be reviewed
- Identify what the potential risk might be
- Evaluate the management and control of that risk and record all findings
- Regularly review, assess and revise this report as required.

ITEM / SUBJECT	RISK PROBABILITY	RISK CONTROL	DATE REVIEWED
<b>PHYSICAL RISKS</b>			
Village Hall	Low	Insurance, including Public Liability Cover, arranged by All Saints and District Village Hall Committee together with maintenance and repair of the building.	Confirmation of renewal for insurance cover received from Village Hall Committee Q3/2023. Maintenance and repair undertaken by Village Hall Committee on a regular basis.
Pavilion / Rec. Field	Medium	Insurance provided by Parish Council. No maintenance programme yet arranged and building is in poor / average condition, with some dereliction.	Indemnity Cover in place until May 2023. EICR Certificate renewed April 2024.

Village Benches	Low	Maintained and repaired as required. Privately owned.	Noted. Ongoing Additional three picnic benches acquired and situated at Recreation Field.
Parish Notice Boards	Low	Visual inspection by Clerk who would report any defects. Key to locked section held by Clerk.	Noticeboards purchased for Alston and Smallridge Lane, to be installed in May 2024.
Footpaths and signage associated with.	Low	Parish benefits from a volunteer footpath warden who works in co-operation with Devon County Council via P3 scheme. Defects in Rights of Way and/or signage reported to Clerk as they arise.	Annual review January 2024 to February 2024 when P3 survey and grant application completed and submitted
Trees	Low	Checked and maintained on a regular basis by volunteer Tree Warden.	Ongoing. Additional tree planted for Q3/22 in recreation field by EDDC. Two additional trees acquired Q3/23 and Q1/24 and planted.
Street lighting	Low	Maintained and Insured by Devon County Council.  Maintenance and repair contract with Electricity Contractor. Any damage / faults to be reported to Clerk on published contact number.	Ongoing
Street Signage	Low	Some place signage is owned by Parish council. Clerk undertakes annual inspection and is notified of any defects if they arise.	Annual Inspection completed March 2024. Ongoing checks. Some cleaning required by DCC and others by Parish Lengths man. Two 30mh signs need replacing. DCC aware.

War Memorial (Church)	Low	Covered by Parochial Church Council insurance policy. Maintenance undertaken by volunteers.	No review necessary as no direct Council responsibility. Ongoing
Parish Council Assets	Low	Annual review of assets required by Clerk. Regular publication of Asset register by RFO as part of internal financial controls	Annual review May completed 2022 Next in May 2023 Ongoing publication of asset register on website. Review complete in March 2024 (needed for Annual Accounts)
Defibrillator	Low	Located at Village Hall.	Checked by Clerk weekly, monthly and annually for battery and pad expiry, readiness for deployment.
Meeting Venue for Parish Council	Low	Meetings take place in Village Hall and occasionally in Pavilion. Clerk has seen both insurance policies. Maintenance of ASVH as detailed above	Existing procedure adequate.  RFO to review external policies as appropriate
Council's paper records	Low	Parish Council records are stored at the Clerk's office address. Archive / non-statutory materials are stored in sealed plastic containers and recent / statutory records are kept in lockable metal filing cabinet (Clerks own).	Damage (aside from fire) is unlikely. Property has smoke fire alarm in room files are kept. Most information is held on computer.
Councils electronic records	Low	Parish Council "soft" records are stored on the Clerk's laptop. Back-up of the data is undertaken monthly, and PC is protected by upto date Anti-Virus software.	Files are backed up regularly. Existing procedures are considered adequate. Data also saved to Google Drive.
Clerk's Working Environment	Low	The Clerk or Proper Officer works from office and thus is aware of their own risks in that environment. As an employer,	ASPC does have a H&S policy which incorporates home working and lone

		the Parish Council has an obligation to consider H&S aspects of the work.	working sections. Existing arrangements are considered adequate.
<b>FINANCIAL RISKS</b>			
Non-negotiable Money  Negotiable Cash/Uncrossed cheques held at Clerk's home	Low	Covered by Parish Council insurance policy up to £250,000  The Parish Council does not hold any Petty Cash and in the normal business of the council, the only monies received are by way of direct payments into the Council's bank account from other higher local authorities, or by way of crossed cheque remittances which the RFO would bank as soon as is practicable. Subject to Internal Financial Control as per adopted Financial Regulations	Council Insurance Policy covers such items and is reviewed annually.  Cover runs from 1/6 to 31/5 annually.  Existing procedures considered adequate.
Financial Records	Low	The Council's financial records and bank documents are kept in accordance with Council's paper records (as above)	Existing procedures considered adequate
Financial Regulations	Low	Council has adopted a set of Financial regulations which are available to the public and which are regularly reviewed by full council.	Annual review.  Resolution to adopt in May each year at Annual Meeting
Public & Employers Liability	Low	Covered by Parish Council insurance policy (see attached).	Renewal due May 2024, and cover amended re: new recreation area risks.
Libel and Slander and other Litigation	Medium	Covered by Parish Council insurance policy for council business but excess is very high and does not cover spurious or frivolous claims. Councillors advised of discretion in the course of their participation at meetings and in correspondence.	Renewal due May 2024.  Councillors aware of rules pertaining to Libel and Slander whilst acting as members of Council. LTN30 to be considered and reviewed at AM May 2024.

Legal Expenses	Low	Covered by Parish Council insurance policy	Renewal due May 2024
Legal Documents	Low	Parish Council has none. Signed lease document for field from Diocese Solrs. held here.	Copy of signed Lease document for Pavilion and field held on computer.
Precept	Low	To determine the precept demand necessary for the financial year, the Council meets to discuss its forthcoming budgetary needs. RFO provides all relevant data. A formal resolution of Council is then sought to support the submission of Precept Demand in writing to the Billing Authority (EDDC) within the timescales allowed. Clerk informs council when monies received from Billing Authority – 2 instalments, usually APR and SEP.	Jan 2024 completed. Precept for FY24/25 is £16,500. Existing procedures considered adequate Budget / Precept discussions scheduled November-December 2024 for 24/25 FY.
Bank Account & Banking	Low	Council has adopted financial regulations which cover aspects of this risk. RFO is responsible to provide regular reconciliations to Council to be verified as per the regulations.  RFO also checks bank statements for veracity upon receipt and reports any anomalies to Council.	Existing procedures considered adequate  New banking mandates applied for to reflect departing and incoming Cllrs.
Loss of Bank Signatories	Medium	Council has 2 bank signatories but another 2 are needed to approve payments. The loss of one member would affect Council's ability to make payments in accordance with its obligations.	Existing procedures considered inadequate  Another 2 signatories are in the process of being added Apr 24.

Reporting and Auditing	Low	<p>RFO regularly provides financial reports and monitors and bank reconciliations to Council as part of internal financial controls.</p> <p>Internal Auditor also verifies these controls independently. Compliance with these regulations affords cover under insured Fidelity Guarantee.</p>	<p>Existing procedures considered adequate Financial Regs. are reviewed annually</p> <p>Internal Auditor reports at least annually and is reappointed annually.</p> <p>Annual Return and Governance Statement completed annually and Entered into public domain.</p>
Council Expenditure	Low	All Council Expenditure must be supported by either an existing Financial Regulation or by a minuted resolution of Council.	Existing procedures considered adequate
Grants payable and/or receivable	Low	<p>All Grants made by the Council must be in accordance with the adopted Grant Application Policy.</p> <p>The Clerk / RFO will conform with all necessary legislation and requirements of any organisations from which the Council seeks Grant Funding in order to support the business of the Council.</p>	<p>Existing procedures considered adequate</p> <p>Grant Application Policy is reviewed annually</p>
VAT	Low	<p>RFO keeps financial records of VAT paid on expenditure in relation to Council business.</p> <p>A VAT claim in accordance with Financial Regulations is regularly made. VAT refund paid into bank account upon receipt.</p>	<p>Subject to annual review of Financial Regs.</p> <p>VAT claim made in accordance with HMRC requirements.</p>

Election Costs	Low	Risk is HIGH in an election year but risk still exists as current legislation allows for a bye-election in the event of a casual vacancy on the council. RFO can obtain indicative costs from the District Council of such an event and a suitable amount can be precepted each year and then ring-fenced in specific reserves to cover such costs if and when they arise.	Members considered as part of precept discussions and felt that level of reserves negated need for earmarked fund for such an event. Council re-elected without contest. Funds still held in reserves.
PAYE / NI; payment of	Low	RFO makes the necessary payments to HMRC as per the calculations of the desktop software provided by HMRC for this purpose. Financial records of all payments made are kept in accordance requirements and an annual return is also made, which generates an official HMRC personal statement for each employee which can be used to reconcile all other records.	Existing procedures considered adequate
Internal Auditor	Low	Internal Auditor (IA) is appointed by way of a resolved engagement at Council, reviewed annually. Internal Auditor is supplied with all necessary records by the RFO and IA completes and signs relevant section on Annual Return.	Steve Warwick resigned as IA in November 2020. Replacement IA was appointed in December 2020 – Beth Webb, not re-appointed for 2023/24. Replaced by Paul Russell February 2024.
Annual Return	Low	Annual Return is completed within legislative timeframes and according to ASPC Standing Orders and Financial Regs. This is then submitted to Internal Auditor for their completion and signature, and then signed by RFO and Chairman and submitted to External Auditor within time limits, and subject to provisions of Public Exhibition legislation.	Existing procedures considered adequate.  Council qualified for External Audit exemption for 2022/23 financial year.  Exemption qualification for year end 31/3/2024 now confirmed. AGAR2 required,

Insurance	Medium	Annual review of insurance is undertaken prior to renewal date and all statutory insurances are included. RFO to ensure that Council is never uninsured. Policy also includes suitable Fidelity Insurance.	Annual renewal.  RFO to report to Council when insurance is renewed and costs involved.  RFO obtaining quotes from present provider and two others for May 2024/25.
Members Allowances	Low	Members are entitled to draw an allowance at rates set by EDDC. Currently, no members draw this allowance but no formal resolution exists to support this position	RFO to ensure that May AGM 2024 includes a suitable agenda item to formalise arrangement. Similarly, matter of Chairman's Allowance.
Loss of Key Personnel	Medium	Clerk / RFO is newly appointed but Council should be aware that costs of a locum Clerk / RFO in the event of sickness / absence / suspension would impact on Councils financial position.	No reserves exist to cover this position. RFO has approached Insurance provider to enquire about Key personnel cover. None available. Councillors could provide short term cover.
Business Continuity	Medium	All Saints Parish Council does not have a specific Business Continuity Plan in place currently. In the event of catastrophic / tragic events, no plan exists to respond / ensure the onward operation of the Council.	The recent COVID 19 pandemic proved that even without a dedicated Business Continuity Plan the Parish Council managed to function and meet its obligations successfully.  Council to consider this further in 2024/25.



Contracts	Low	The necessary procedures for the advertising, tendering & awarding of contracts at each level of financial exposure are detailed in the adopted Financial Regulations of ASPC.	Review annually.  Existing procedures considered adequate
ASPC Major Policy Documents	Low	These are regularly monitored by the Clerk.  Reviewed by Internal Auditor each year.	All major policy documents are reviewed annually. Next due after May 2024 at an EM Policy meeting, called for the single purpose, i.e. Policy Review.
<b>MANAGEMENT RISKS</b>			
Councillors / Members	Low	If a casual vacancy arose, the Council would still effectively be quorate until the casual vacancy was filled. Same applies to 2 casual vacancies simultaneously.  However, if more than 2 casual vacancies existed at the same time, then EDDC would invoke their legal powers to appoint members and ensure continuity of legislative process / conformance.	Existing procedures considered adequate.  4 places on Council were filled in Uncontested election (pre-May 2023) and Council can seek to co-opt a 5 <sup>th</sup> (2023)  Council's request for an additional member have been declined by EDDC CEO via Community Governance Review
Minutes / Agenda & other Statutory Notices	Low	Minutes and Agendas (summons) are produced by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements and best practice guidelines. Minutes are reviewed, approved and signed at the following Council meeting. Minutes and Agenda are displayed according to legal requirements. Business at Council is in accordance with the prescribed agenda and is managed by the Chair.	Existing procedures considered adequate  Public Participation at Council meetings is encouraged and minuted.  Members to conform to adopted Code of Conduct when in Council is in session.

Members Interests	Low	Members are reminded of the need to declare any pecuniary / personal interests as per the adopted Code of Conduct at the start of every Council meeting.	Existing procedures considered adequate  Onus is on members to conform.
Acceptance(s) of Office	Low	All relevant paperwork is in order and is held by Clerk for inspection.	Existing procedures considered adequate
Data Protection Act / GDPR 2018	Medium	Council is registered with DPA	ICO membership Jan23 but inception of GDPR affected Council's admin. requirements. From 25/5/18. Council fully compliant with current regs. for Parish Councils.
Freedom of Information Act	Low	ASPC has an adopted Publication Policy in place to enable the provision of information that is available to the public if requested.	Review Publication Policy and re-adopt annually (due May/June 24)
Emergency Plan	Medium	Emergency Plan drafter in 2016.	Council looking at adopting a Community Resilience Plan to replace the outdated unadopted Emergency Plan, which the Clerk is in the process of drafting.
Website	Low	Council pays an annual fee to secure the website domain name.  All content on the website is approved by Clerk and is processed by a volunteer WEBMASTER under the overall control of the Clerk.	Website is under constant review and is in the public domain.  Parish council has limited Social Media status.  New GOV.uk website established in 2023 to conform with new

		New content is reviewed before “going live” and site conforms to the requirements of the newly created TRANSPARENCY CODE and ACCESSABILITY CODE for Smaller Authorities.	Accessibility Regulations.
Emails	Low	<p>Clerk circulates externally received emails to members as required / in accordance with relevance and importance.</p> <p>Clerk signs all official Council correspondence to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties as Clerk / RFO in accordance with good practice.</p> <p>Email account is password protected and is covered by a valid Anti-virus software package.</p>	Current procedures considered adequate.
Village Plan	Low	Current adopted plan is in need of updating at some point although recent decision to NOT proceed with NHP and to undertake Community Survey negates need for another VP while Local Plan in force.	No action required.
Planning: Consultee Comments	Low	The Parish Council is a statutory consultee in respect of planning applications within the Parish and is also consulted on major applications in adjacent parishes and is advised of any changes in planning legislation by other 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties such as EDDC, LGBC, DCC, BDHAONBP etc	<p>Each application is considered by members and discussed prior to comments being submitted either supporting or objecting.</p> <p>Comments are submitted within the established time parameters and these comments are</p>

		<p>The Parish Council attempts to offer a consensus of views, balanced between members and the residents of the Parish</p> <p>The EDDC Ward member has final say over planning decisions (in conjunction with EDDC Officers) and Council should always seek the WM opinions if decision is likely to be contentious or at odds with parish opinion and views.</p>	<p>available for public view either via the LPA website or via the Clerk</p>
--	--	---	--