

**Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council Business and Governance Risk Register - March 2026**

Risk Number	Risk Description	Risk Owner(s)	Category	Likelihood of Occurrence	Impact	Score	Level (pre-control measures)	Control Plan
F01	Precept request does not provide sufficient funding to meet the plans of Council for future years	Council	Financial	1	3	3	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed budget for future financial year produced, matching the Council's delivery plan.</li> <li>Earmarked reserves shall be identified for future projects. In some cases reserves will be built up over many years.</li> <li>Quarterly budget reports presented to Council detailing expenditure against budget.</li> <li>In year cash flow forecasts presented to Council on a quarterly basis.</li> </ol>
F02	In the event that a financial institution that holds Council funds goes into administration, Council funds may not be recoverable.	RFO/Council	Financial	1	3	3	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure deposits are in line with Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) which compensates customers up to a maximum of £120,000 per financial institution, if a bank, building society or credit union has stopped trading or does not have enough assets to pay claims made against it.</li> </ol>
F03	Unauthorised expenditure made that is not visible to Council	RFO/Council	Financial	1	3	3	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All expenditure requests to be presented to council meetings, approved and minuted.</li> <li>Issuing of Cheques and BACS transfers to be in accordance with Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council Financial Regulations.</li> <li>All invoices to be checked and initialled by the two Councillors.</li> <li>Monthly bank reconciliations to be presented to Council, checked and authorised by a Councillor.</li> <li>Quarterly Monitoring Statements issued to Councillors.</li> <li>Any Councillor can request visibility of any/all financial documents</li> <li>A minimum of two Councillors have 'real time' access to on-line accounts.</li> <li>RFO to update on Council's financial position at each full council meeting.</li> </ol>
F04	The RFO fails to keep proper and appropriate financial records	RFO/Council	Financial	1	2	2	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excel cashbook completed monthly and made available for all members to view when requested</li> <li>Financial records to be maintained at all times and to a high standard</li> <li>Internal and external audits to provide Council with assurance that records are being kept appropriately.</li> </ol>
F05	Members are unaware of level of funds held impacting decisions of Council	RFO/Clerk/Council	Financial	1	3	3	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Position of the Council's financial position to be reported each month to Council.</li> <li>Monthly bank reconciliations to be presented to Council, checked and authorised by a Councillor.</li> <li>Quarterly Monitoring Statements issued to Councillors.</li> <li>Council to formally appoint a lead Councillor to each Cost Centre who has detailed access in funding levels and future expenditure plans.</li> </ol>

F06	Insufficient reserves to enable the Council to carry out its functions	RFO/Clerk/Council	Financial	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. Council to ensure that reserves are part of the annual budget setting process and align to future delivery plans. Earmarked reserves shall be identified for future projects. In some cases reserves will be built up over many years.</p> <p>2. Reserve lines and the drawing down of them to be controlled by full Council with any decision made formally recorded in meeting minutes.</p>
F07	Risk of election cost not being affordable	RFO/Clerk/Council	Financial	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. Where applicable, election cost to be included within the annual budget.</p>
L01	Inland Revenue requirements not made to time and quality (PAYE and VAT Claim)	RFO/Council	Legal	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. Council to ensure the RFO is trained in the use of HMRC basic pay tools.</p> <p>2. PAYE payments to be approved by Council, direct debit to be set up to ensure payments reach HMRC in line with their timeline requirements</p> <p>4. VAT calculated and claimed at a minimum once a year.</p> <p>5. Internal auditor to provide assurance to Council that both VAT claims and PAYE payments are made correctly.</p>
L02	Risk Assessment not adequately reviewed in accordance with The Guidance on Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in England	Clerk/Council	Legal	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. Council to review its risk assessment at a minimum once a year - Council must respond yes or no to the following questions at the meeting where the risk assessment is reviewed:-</p> <p>a. Does Council agree that the council have adequately identified its current risks?</p> <p>b. Does Council agree that the scoring and level associated with the identified risks are correct?</p> <p>c. Does Council accept that appropriate mitigation plans are in place for each identified risk, if not a forward action plan to be agreed and recorded?</p> <p>d. Does the Council agree to adopt the presented risk assessment in its entirety or propose amendments?</p>
L03	Council activities/decisions fall outside their legal powers	Clerk	Legal	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. Clerk to clarify legal position of any new proposal and seek legal advice where necessary.</p> <p>2. Council to ensure the Clerk and RFO has access to appropriate training.</p>
L04	Minutes do not accurately reflect meeting decisions or actions and are not distributed in a timely manner	Clerk	Legal	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. Council meets as a minimum once a month.</p> <p>2. Formal draft Council minutes shall be distributed in a timely fashion to Councillors, approved and signed at a full Council meeting.</p> <p>3. Master copies of minutes to be signed and retained.</p> <p>4. Minutes are made available to the press and public via the Parish Council website.</p>
L05	Non compliance with employment law	Council	Legal	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. The Council is to ensure that the Clerk and RFO has received adequate training and has access to appropriate bodies for advice.</p> <p>2. The Clerk and RFO are members of SLCC.</p> <p>3. A Staffing Committee is nominated annually and will engage with the Clerk and RFO at regular intervals.</p> <p>4. Members of the staffing committee to receive appropriate training in employment law.</p>
L06	References not obtained for employees (insurance requirement)	Council	Legal	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. Currently in place for existing Clerk and RFO - part of interview process for a new employee</p>
L07	Data and information not controlled	Clerk	Legal	1	2	2	Low	<p>1. The council has a Data Protection Policy, which is reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>2. The Clerk is registered with the ICO as the Data Controller for Council</p>

L08	Councillors involved in decisions who have an interest	Clerk/Council	Legal	1	2	2	LOW	1. Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of the meeting. 2. Disclosure of interests is an agenda item at the start of every meeting and declarations recorded in the minutes
L9	Register of Interests and gifts and hospitality in place/not in place	Clerk/Council	Legal	1	2	2	Low	1. Register of Interest for each Councillor completed within 28 days of taking office and amended throughout the year as necessary. 2. Gifts and hospitality are recorded on Register of Interest form. 3. Going forward annual agenda item at the Annual Parish meeting May for Councillors to review their Register of Interest form.
L10	Council do not take appropriate actions to minimise (ALARP) a Health & Safety related issue occurring	Council	Legal	1	2	2	LOW	1. Clerk and RFO to undertake annual risk assessment of office environments and share with Chair of Staffing Committee. 2. Clerk or RFO to notify a Councillor when he attends an out of office meeting
L11	Meeting venue may not be accessible for some members of the public	Council	Legal	3	2	6	High	1. When advertising public meetings a note to be added that states 'meeting venue has access restrictions, if you would like to attend, but have an accessibility issue, please contact the clerk who will endeavour to find a mutually suitable solution'.
L12	Non Compliance with Procurement law	Council	Legal	1	2	2	Low	1. The Council is to ensure that the Clerk and RFO has received adequate training relating to current legislation. 2. Councillors to ensure that any procurement decisions taken are done so in accordance with procurement legislation.
P01	Council assets not fully protected against physical damage, fire and theft	Clerk/Council	Property	1	2	2	Low	1. Asset Register updated and presented to Council at a minimum once a year. 2. Annual review of insurance policy made with Council assuring the policy covers the value of Council owned assets unless Council decides by resolution to exclude certain assets from the policy.
P02	Risk to third party, property or individuals	Council	Property	1	2	2	Low	1. Council to ensure appropriate Insurance cover is in place, with monthly inspections of play areas and defibrillators undertaken. Quarterly and annual inspections by an independent organisation of the play areas to be undertaken with findings and associated actions reported to Council. 2. Council to consider as a matter of urgency any reported health or safety related matter and take appropriate action. 3. Clerk to be delegated to deal with/with any health and safety issue in line with adopted in financial regulations 4. Council to ensure quarterly risk assessments are undertaken for buildings used, managed or owned.
S1	The Council suffers loss of funds through theft or dishonesty	Clerk/RFO/Council	Security	1	3	3	Medium	1. No cash to be handled. 2. All financial transactions require approval (BACS/Cheques) by two Councillors who shall ensure payments are made in accordance with Council's instructions. 3. A minimum of two Councillors have 'real time' access to on-line accounts
S2	Loss through theft or damage	Clerk/Council	Security	1	2	2	Low	1. Council to ensure an appropriate record retention policy is in place. 2. Council to ensure records are stored in a safe and secure location.
S3	Computer - loss, damage, corruption or ransomware	Clerk/RFO/Council	Security	1	2	2	Low	1. Appropriate antivirus software is installed. 2. Data backed up monthly to external drive.
St1	Salary payments paid incorrectly	RFO/Council	Staff	1	2	2	Low	1. Council to approve all salary payments at a full Council meeting ensuring such payments are in line with contractual agreements.
St2	Long term absence of Clerk and/or RFO	Council	Staff	1	3	3	Medium	1. A business continuity plan to be developed by the Chair of Staffing Committee and updated every six months.