SMITH'S WOOD PARISH COUNCIL - RISK ASSESSMENT

This document has been produced to enable Smith's Wood Parish Council to assess the financial and management risks that it faces and to satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

Finance and Management				
Subject	**Risk(s) Identified**	**H / M / L**	**Management / Contol of Risk**	**Review / Assess / Revise**
Business continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an Unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	All files and recent records are kept at the Council's office. The Clerk makes regular back-ups of files to a cloud account and removable hard drive. In the event of the Clerk being indisposed the Chair to contact Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council for advice.	Existing procedures adequate. Review scope for sharing information on a shared drive.
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to SMBC An amount not received by SMBC	L L L	The Council reviews the Precept requirement annually at the December meeting and reviews the presented budget update information, including actual position and projected position to year end and estimated figures for the next financial year. With this information, the Council agrees the precept amount to be requested from Solihull MBC. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to SMBC. The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (April/September). The Council needs also to have adequate reserves to deal with an emergency.	Existing procedure adequate
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out requirement and expectations. The Council has appointed an independent internal audit to review processess.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The bank may make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts and when the statements arrive. The Clerk reviews the Council's banking arrangements regularly.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list when necessary, especially after an election. Monitor the bank statements monthly.
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. The Council's insurance policy has a Fidelity Guarantee. Finance is a standing item on Council agenda including reports and access to bank statements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary. Ensure Fidelity Insurance is adequate.
Direct Costs Overhead Expenses Debts	Goods not supplied but billed Incorrect invoicing Cheques payable incorrect Loss of stock Unpaid invoices	L L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. At each Council meeting, the list of invoices awaiting approval is approved. The Council has minimal stocks; these are checked and monitored by the Clerk. Unpaid invoices to the Council are pursued, and progress reported to the Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.

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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 the S137 power of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Best Value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend on services	L M	As per Financial Regulations, normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken for goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender and report to the Council.	Exising procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations regularly.

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Salaries and Associated Costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to HMRC	L L L	The Parish Council authorises the appointment of all employees at Council meetings, and has a contract of employment. The Clerk's salary rates are assessed annually by the Council and based on agreed NJC rates. Other employees wages are assessed annually by the Council.	Existing system generally adequate. Clerk required to prove that TAX & NI have been paid.
Clerk/Other Workers (Voluntary/Casual)	Loss of Clerk Actions are undertaken Health & Safety	L L L	The Chair to contact Solihull MBC for advice for an unexpected loss of clerk. The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role. The Clerk is provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake the role. Membership of the SLCC.	Existing procedure adequate. Monitor working conditions, training and support. The Council has introduced its own system and processes for dealing with Health & Safety including a nominated lead member.
Election Costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	The risk is higher in an election year. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having an election as this is a legal requirement democratic process. Sufficient reserves in place to cover this.	Existing procedure adequate.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate.
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within the time limit. Regular reports to Council on timescales and requirements.	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council meetings	All activities and payments recorded and minuted.

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Council Records - paper	Loss through: theft fire damage	 L M L	The Parish Council records are stored at the Council office. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, documents for ownership of property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. Recent materials are in a filiing cabinet.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provide adequately. Deeds/leases copied and deposited with solicitors.
Council Records - electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire, damage Corruption of computer	 L M	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the computer at the Council's office. Backups of the files are taken at regular intervals onto a cloud account and onto an external hard drive.	Existing procedure adequate.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L M	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance.
Data Protection	Policy Provision	L	The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).	Existing procedure adequate.
Assets				
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Parish Office	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) /property	L L	An asset register is kept up to date, and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks and risk assessment made by the Clerk. Emergency arrangements in place, including reporting of incidents.	Existing procedure adequate. Review of insurance requirements annually.
Community Gym	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) /property	L L	An asset register is kept up to date, and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks and risk assessment made by the Clerk. Emergency arrangements in place, including reporting of incidents. Users of the gym and halls made aware of the arrangements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review of insurance requirements annually.
Playing Field	Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) /property	L L	Grass mowed by grounds maintenance contractors. Hedges and trees cut/pruned when necessary. Trees inspected every 18 months.	Existing procedure adequate.
Liability				
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Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted.	Existing procedure adequate.
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with employment law.	L	Undertake adequate training and seek advice from Solihull MBC of SLCC.	Existing procedures adequate.

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Minutes/Agendas/Notices/Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	L L	Minutes and agenda are produced with the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings managed by the Chair.	Existing procedure adequate. Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Public Liability	Risk of third party, property or individuals	M	Insurance is in place. Risk assessments regularly carried out to comply with the requirements.	Existing procedures adequate. Ensure risk assessments are carried out.
Legal Liability	Legality of activities Proper and timely reporting via Minutes Proper document control	M L L	Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice if necessary. Council always receives and approves Minutes of monthly meeting. Retention of documents policy in place.	Existing procedures adequate.

Councillors' Property				
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Members Interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members' interests	M M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interests at the start of the meeting. Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed regularly by Councillors. Code of Conduct Scheme in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Members to take responsibility to update their Register.

Reviewed on: 15th May 2025 **To be reviewed in:** 12 months