



SLAUGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Villages of Handcross, Warninglid, Slaugham & Pease Pottage

Miss S Mclean Clerk & Responsible Officer

Email clerk@slaugham-pc.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.slaughampc.co.uk>



SLAUGHAM PARISH COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

This document forms Slaugham Parish Council's Risk Management Strategy. It sets out:

- What risk management is
- Why the Parish Council needs a risk management strategy
- The Parish Council's statement on risk management
- Roles and responsibilities
- Future monitoring

The objectives of this strategy are to:

- Further develop risk management and raise its profile across the Parish Council
- Integrate risk management into the culture of the organisation
- Embed risk management through the ownership and management of risk as part of all decision-making processes
- Manage risk in accordance with best practice

WHAT RISK MANAGEMENT IS

“Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements.”

Audit Commission, Worth the Risk: Improving Risk Management in Local Government (2001: 5)

Risk management is an essential feature of good governance. An organisation that manages risk well is more likely to achieve its objectives. Risk management applies to all aspects of the Parish Council's work, not solely health and safety.

Risks can be classified into various types, and while financial losses may be the most visible, indirect costs such as service disruption can be equally significant. Examples include:

- **Strategic Risk** – Long-term adverse impacts from poor decision-making or implementation, resulting in reputational damage or loss of public confidence.
- **Compliance Risk** – Failure to comply with legislation, policy or regulation, resulting in exposure to prosecution, judicial review, employment tribunals or fines.
- **Financial Risk** – Fraud, corruption, waste or poor financial management resulting in audit investigation, reduced service delivery or increased precept.
- **Operational Risk** – Failure to deliver services effectively, hazards to users or staff, or damage to property resulting in insurance claims, increased premiums or lengthy recovery processes.



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Not all risks are insurable, and in some cases insurance premiums may not be cost-effective. Even where insurance is available, financial compensation may not fully address the impact. The emphasis is therefore on eliminating or reducing risk before considering transfer to another party.

Risk also includes missed opportunities. Effective risk management supports proactive decision-making.

WHY THE PARISH COUNCIL NEEDS A RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Risk management strengthens the Council's ability to achieve its objectives and enhances the value of services provided to the community.

A clear Risk Management Strategy ensures that all service areas understand risk and that the Council adopts a consistent approach to identifying and prioritising risks. This leads to informed choices about how each risk should be managed.

Strategic risk management is an important element of continuous service improvement.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require local councils to establish and maintain a systematic strategy, framework and process for managing risk.

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

Slaugham Parish Council recognises its responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employees, assets, liabilities and community against potential losses, to minimise uncertainty in achieving its aims and objectives, and to maximise opportunities to achieve its vision.

The Council acknowledges that some risks cannot be fully eliminated. It therefore maintains a structured, systematic and focused approach to managing risk, which may include elimination, reduction, transfer or acceptance.

Risk management is an integral part of the Council's management processes.

RISK CONTROL

Risk control involves taking action to minimise the likelihood of a risk occurring or reducing the severity of its consequences. This may involve revised operating procedures or, in exceptional cases, more significant action to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Options for control include:

- Elimination
- Reduction
- Transfer
- Sharing
- Insuring
- Acceptance



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RISK REGISTER

The Strategic Risk Register (Appendix A) will be regularly reviewed, refined and updated.

RISK MONITORING

Risk management does not end with the implementation of control measures. Their effectiveness must be monitored and reviewed, and risks reassessed over time.

The Risk Register and all risk assessments will be reviewed at least annually by the Clerk/Chief Officer and/or the relevant committee.

ASSESSING RISKS

Risk assessment will follow these steps:

- **Risk identification** – understanding all risks associated with actions or assets.
- **Risk analysis** – assessing likelihood and severity to produce a risk score using the risk matrix.
- **Controls** – identifying measures to reduce the risk to a tolerable level.
- **Final analysis** – reassessing likelihood and severity after controls are applied.

(Risk matrix and scoring tables remain unchanged from the original document.)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Embedding risk management into the Council's culture and performance processes is essential. The following roles ensure that risk is managed effectively across all operations.

The Council promotes an environment where individuals and groups are encouraged to report adverse incidents promptly and openly.

Councillors

Councillors play a key stewardship role and are expected to lead and monitor the Council's approach to risk management, including:

- Approval of the Risk Management Strategy
- Analysis of key risks in reports on major projects
- Ensuring all future projects and services are adequately risk-managed
- Consideration and endorsement of the Annual Governance Statement
- Assessment of risks during budget setting, including resource bids to address specific issues

Employees

Employees will undertake their duties within risk management guidelines, using their skills and experience effectively. They will:

- Maintain awareness of risks and their impacts
- Feed relevant information into the formal risk process



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- Work to control risks within their roles
 - Monitor progress and report risks to their line manager or the Clerk/Chief Officer

Clerk/Chief Officer

The Clerk/Chief Officer acts as the lead officer for risk management, supported by relevant staff. Responsibilities include:

- Advising on the legality of policy and service delivery options
- Advising on risk implications for service areas and Business Plan actions
- Updating the Council on implications of new or revised legislation
- Assisting with litigation claims
- Advising on HR and health and safety risks
- Assessing and implementing insurance requirements
- Assessing financial risks of strategic decisions
- Advising on budget planning and control
- Ensuring effective financial systems and processes
- Maintaining the Council's Risk Register
- Managing the Council's investment/loan portfolio

Internal Audit

Internal Audit provides independent assurance that risk management systems are in place and effective. It assists the Council in identifying financial and operational risks and in developing proper arrangements to manage them.

Internal Audit reports support the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

Finance & Policy Committee (or equivalent)

This Committee will oversee the review and future development of the Risk Management Strategy, with recommendations and final approval and adoption by Full Council.

Training

Staff and councillors will receive risk management training as required to ensure they can identify, evaluate and control risks associated with their roles.

REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

Subject to any new legislation, statutory changes or Council requirements necessitating earlier amendment, this Strategy will be reviewed within two years of adoption.

Date of Adoption: 15th January 2026

Reviewed: January 2027
