Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council
Risk Assessment – 2026/27

Reviewed: 12th August 2026

Due for next Review: May 2027

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that if faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. In producing this assessment, the following procedure was followed:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed
- Identify what the risks may be
- Evaluate the management and control of the risks and record the findings
- Review, assess and revise the assessment as required.

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Subject	**Risk(s) Identified**	**Rating**	**Control Measures**	**Status**
Financial and Management				
Precept	(a) Precept inadequate (b) Precept not applied for (c) Precept not received	L	• Quarterly financial statements received to consider adequacy of precept for current year and taken into consideration in budget requirements for ensuing year. • Budget discussions for ensuing year added to Parish Council agenda in November and December before final agreement of budget and precept at January meeting as per forward plan • Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer takes responsibility for notifying Somerset Council of precept request. • Clerk informs Parish Council when monies received.	Existing procedures adequate Precept reviewed annually
Financial Records	(a) Inadequate records (b) Financial irregularities	L	• Parish Council has adopted financial regulations that it reviews on an annual basis. • Records kept according to the financial regulations • Internal and external audit take place annually	Existing procedures adequate Financial regulations reviewed annually
Banking	(a) Inadequate checks (b) Bank mistakes (c) Unnecessary charges	L	• Monthly and Annual bank statement reconciliation • Banking arrangements reviewed on an annual basis	Existing procedures adequate
Reporting and Auditing	(a) Lack of information and communication (b) Compliance	L	• Income and expenditure included on agenda and minutes for each meeting. • Quarterly financial statements received by Parish Council and discussed. • Member Auditor appointed to review financial information on a regular basis	Existing procedures adequate

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Grants	(a) Receipt of grant (b) Power to pay (c) Authorisation of Council to pay	L	• Systems are put in place to ensure that a grant received is administered appropriately and any terms and conditions of spend are met. • All expenditure goes through the Council process of approval, as outlined in the Financial Regulations • It is minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure	Existing procedures adequate
VAT	(a) Failure to maintain proper records and to reclaim VAT where appropriate	L	• VAT forms part of financial records kept. • VAT reclaim forms part of the Clerks ongoing annual work plan and are prepared and submitted quarterly.	Existing procedures adequate
Best Value Accountability	(a) Work awarded incorrectly (b) Overspend on services	L	• The financial regulations detail how many quotes should be obtained (between 2 and 3 quotes) • If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation / tender, research the problem and report to the Council.	Existing procedures adequate
Annual Return	(a) Submit within time limits	L	• Annual return completed and signed by the Parish Council, submitted to internal auditor for completion and signing and then checked and sent to External Auditor within timeframe. • Annual return consideration by Parish Council forms part of forward plan for Parish Council meetings.	Existing procedures adequate
Insurance	(a) Inadequate cover (b) Competitive cost	L	• Annual review of insurance arrangements take place. • Asset register reviewed on a regular basis to ensure adequate insurance cover.	Existing procedures adequate Insurance reviewed annually
Election costs	(a) Risk of an election cost	L	• Risk is higher in election year. • The Clerk has obtained an estimate of costs from Somerset Council for a full election and an uncontested election. A proportion of the annual budget has been allocated for election costs if required. • There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election.	Existing procedures adequate
Freedom of Information Act	(a) Policy and provision	L	• The Council has a model publication scheme for local councils in place. • The Council is able to request a fee if the work required to provide the information would take more than 15 hours. • The Clerk will monitor and report the impact of any requests made.	Existing procedures adequate
Data Protection	(a) Policy and provision	L	• The Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency.	To be reviewed annually.

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Website	(a) Webmaster not being able to function (b) Loss of passwords	L	• Webmaster is able to maintain website • Copy of all passwords used by the website kept by the Clerk.	Existing procedures adequate
Meeting locations	(a) Adequacy of Health and Safety	L	• The Parish Council meeting is held in the Village Hall, a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and general public.	Existing procedures adequate
Clerk	(a) Fraud (b) Actions undertaken (c) Health and Safety	L	• The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to. • Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice. • Clerk provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake her role.	Existing procedures adequate
Assets				
Assets	(a) Loss or damage (b) Risk / damage to third parties or their properties	L	• An annual review of assets is carried out in order to update insurance cover.	Existing procedures adequate Asset Register reviewed annually
Maintenance of property for which the Parish Council is responsible	(a) Poor performance of property or amenities	L	• All of the property and assets that the Parish Council is responsible for are included in the Asset Register which is regularly reviewed and forms the basis of the insurance cover that the Parish Council has. • Parish Lengthsman maintains property of Parish Council on regular basis.	Existing procedures adequate
Notice Boards	(a) Risk of damage	L	• Parish Council has six notice boards. All locations have approval by relevant parties and have insurance cover. • Noticeboards inspected regularly by the Clerk and any repairs / maintenance requirements are brought to the attention of the Parish Council / reported to the Parish Lengthsman	Existing procedures adequate
Play Areas – Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)	(a) Risk of users injuring themselves (b) Risk of damage to the equipment, play surface or fencing.	L	• An Accident Book is available in the MUGA shed for those using MUGA equipment. • The MUGA committee inspect the MUGA weekly. Any issues are raised with the clerk for resolution. The clerk checks the inspection records at least 4 times a year. • A MUGA Inspection is completed annually by a professional contractor. • A separate MUGA Risk Assessment document is available which is reviewed annually. • An MUGA Earmarked Reserve Fund is available for repairs.	Existing procedures adequate
Council records – paper	(a) Loss through theft, fire or damage	L	• The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk, including historical correspondences, recent minutes, insurance and bank records.	Existing procedures adequate

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			• Historical minutes and financial records are held at the County Archives.	
Council records – electronic	(a) Loss through theft, fire damage or corruption of the computer	L	• The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Council laptops held by the Clerk and RFO at their home address. • Electronic files are held in either the OneDrive Microsoft or the Parish Online cloud storage areas. • Accounts and the asset register are stored in the Scribe Accounts cloud storage area. • Back-ups of electronic data are made at regular intervals. • Virus protection is maintained on the laptop.	Existing procedures adequate
Liability				
Public Liability	(a) Risk of injury to members of the public when using Assets and Buildings	L	• Regular check carried out of buildings and assets by Parish Lengthsman. • Adequate public liability insurance cover in place.	Existing procedures adequate
Comply with Employment Law	(b) Financial penalties	L	• Membership of SALC / SLCC • Contract of employment for Clerk	Existing procedures adequate
Comply with HM Review and Custom and PAYE requirements	(a) Financial penalties	L	• Monthly real time reporting to HMRC using Basic PAYE Tool • Internal and External Audit check	Existing procedures adequate
Legal Powers	(c) Illegal activity or payments	L	• All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council will be resolved and minuted at full Parish Council meetings.	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes / agenda / notices / statutory documents	(a) Accuracy and legality (b) Business conduct	L	• Minutes and agenda are produced in 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 the Council meetings is managed by the Chair. • Notifications of meetings are displayed within the required timescales.	Existing procedures adequate
Members interests	(a) Conflict of interests (b) Register of Members interests	M	• Declaring of members interests at each meeting is a standing agenda item. • Register of Members Interests forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing procedures adequate