

Risk Management Strategy

Adopted by Full Council: 05 April 2023

Most recent review with minor amends: 22 April 2026

Date for next review: April 2027

Mickleton Parish Council (MPC) is committed to identifying and managing risks, using the following procedures, and to ensuring that risks are maintained at an acceptable level. Any action that is felt necessary will be taken up by MPC.

The management of risk takes into consideration known and perceived threats.

This document outlines various activities which MPC must manage.

Risks are identified and strategies have been developed to help to manage or mitigate risk.

In addition to this document, other day-to-day risk assessments are drawn up by councillors, with assistance from the clerk, in regard to working groups: such as the litter pickers and arrangement for annual events, such as the Christmas carol service.

RISK AREA	RISK IDENTIFIED	RISK LEVEL	MANAGEMENT OF RISK	ACTION REQUIRED
FINANCE				
Risk of incorrect invoicing	Financial loss due to settlement of double or false invoices	L	Invoices are addressed to MPC and received by the clerk Payments for invoices for approval	
Risk of incorrect payments	Financial loss due to payment made for incorrect amount or PAYE	L	Payments are made by internet/mobile banking – business accounts are confirmed by the bank or an alert is raised if there is no account match	
Risk of late payments	Late payment could incur a financial penalty	L	Payments are authorised each month and minuted for transparency Financial regulations delegate power to the clerk to avoid late payments if an earlier payment is required	
Incorrect salaries paid	Staff over or underpaid	L	Salaries are agreed as per the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) pay scales and employment contract Payment is recorded out of house via PATA payroll	

			Timesheets are presented to two councillors (including the chairman)	
Incorrect national insurance and PAYE	HMRC over or underpaid	M	National insurance and PAYE is recorded out of house via PATA payroll Clerk/RFO sets up HMRC BACS payments monthly which are approved at each meeting	
Expenses incorrectly claimed	Members over or underpaid – financial loss to MPC	L	Expenses are kept to a minimum as clerk/RFO is authorised to use a MPC debit card as per financial regulations. Any expense payments are usually made via this option Receipts received by the clerk are listed at each parish council meeting and approved for payment	
Theft or dishonesty, including cash and cheques	Financial loss	L	Fidelity guarantee cover £250,000 No petty cash Cash is collected at carol service/fundraising and counted by two councillors. It is taken to the bank by the clerk as soon as possible Cheques are signed by two authorised signatories	Signatories to be checked each year
Payment of grants	Lack of cash flow		From 2023 grants are awarded at a full council meeting and minuted This will appear as a s137 spend in the budget sheet and accounting software Records are kept to ensure the S137 limit is not exceeded	
VAT return is incorrect	Loss of income, HMRC challenge	L	Claims are made electronically via HMRC's 126 form	

			<p>An acknowledgement is received and kept on record electronically and hard copy</p> <p>VAT reports are produced using Easy PC Accounts software</p> <p>Financial regulations are adhered to</p> <p>Internal/external audit covers VAT too</p>	
Untimely receipt of precept/grants	Lack of cash flow	M	<p>Precept is received from Cotswold District Council (CDC) via BACS at two points in the year and checked by the clerk/RFO. Receipt of funds are presented to council and minuted</p> <p>\$106 monies have been received in the past and held in a separate account</p> <p>CIL funds have been ringfenced and CDC also keeps a record of CIL monies</p>	
Loss of cheques	Financial loss	L	<p>Payment by cheque is kept to a minimum</p> <p>Cheques are paid in via mobile banking by the clerk, but the original cheque is kept until payment is cleared by the bank</p>	
Loss of income from unpaid invoices	Financial loss	L	<p>Minimal invoices made, in relation to cemetery and any group MUGA hire</p>	
Risk of inaccurate or incomplete financial records	Potential financial loss, internal auditor would give 'requires improvement' report	L	<p>Accounts are reconciled monthly and reconciliations are presented to full council</p> <p>In addition, quarterly internal control checks are carried out by a councillor and noted at the next meeting</p>	
Risk of bank making errors, not identified	Monthly financial report will not reconcile	L	<p>If reports do not reconcile, this will be flagged by the Scribe Accounts software</p>	
Annual return is not submitted within time limits	Could end up with qualified accounts	L	<p>Annual return is completed and submitted to the external auditor</p>	

			<p>Annual return circulated to councillors and approved at a full MPC meeting</p> <p>Clerk/RFO is aware of the annual return deadlines</p>	
Inadequate budget	Budget does not balance at year end	L	<p>From March 2022 MPC has used accounting software, Easy PC accounts, instead of a handwritten ledger, and spend/budget reports are sent to councillors as per financial regulations</p> <p>Scribe Accounts has been used since January 2026, with previous records imported from March 2022</p> <p>A draft budget was presented to full council in November and is now on the website</p> <p>At the meeting to set the 2026–2027 precept a full action plan and budget sheet was presented to councillors for approval</p> <p>Precept sum is requested from CDC following December's meeting and within the timeframe requested</p> <p>This action by the clerk/RFO is minuted in January's meeting</p>	
Precept does not deliver budget	Budget does not balance at year end	L	<p>Council tax base figure is received from CDC and the clerk prepares the budget based on this figure, forecasting income and expenditure in relation to new and existing projects</p>	
Precept rules change – capped, restricting delivery of required services	Either services reduced or impact on reserves	M	<p>Identify the services that are at potential risk and set aside a contingency plan: footpaths, public rights of way</p> <p>MPC to develop relationships with CDC and GCC to keep pathways of communication</p>	

			open	
Cemetery income does not achieve budget	Impact on reserves, run out of burial space ahead of plan	L	Clerk has been cautious with cemetery income projection	New cemetery
Necessary expenditure on MUGA exceeds budget	Budget does not balance at year end MPC reserves depleted below recommended level	M	Ensure budget is increased as equipment ages Review RoSPA advice annually Hold annual MUGA open day	Publicise MUGA Councillors to consider new initiatives/revenue streams/fundraising
Financial regulations are not aligned with current legislation or do not deliver best value	MPC acts illegally or does not deliver best value	M	Financial regulations are reviewed annually and the clerk/RFO ensures they are the most up-to-date version Clerk adheres to procurement section 5 of the financial regulations. In some cases three quotes are sought All expenditure to be approved at a full council meeting	Review date April 2027
MPC takes on more services with no supporting funding	Either increased precept or impact on reserves	M		Council undertakes full costing analysis over multiple years Engage with public – is the service wanted Look for alternative service partners
Lack of community awareness		M	MPC to continue to update website and publicise events Annual meeting of parish (assembly)	Hold open surgery
Lack of regular review of fees and services	Financial Loss	L	Mowing contract is reviewed every 2 or 3 years – most recent review 2025 up until March 2028 Cemetery fees were reviewed in 2025 and are reviewed annually	Continue to carry out regular reviews

Monitoring of performance	Financial Loss	L	Councillors receive budget reports each quarter	
GOVERNANCE				
MPC acts illegally/does not comply with current regulations	MPC suffers loss or reputation or legal challenge	M	GALC advice CiLCA-trained clerk (also FILCA and PIALC qualified) MPC gained Local Council Award Scheme Bronze award in April 2026 Councillor training Policies in place	Clerk CiLCA qualified since September 2023
MPC does not comply with standing orders	MPC suffers loss or reputation or legal challenge	M	Standing orders reviewed annually	Review April 2027
MPC does not make decisions in the best interests of its residents	MPC suffers loss of reputation	M	Decisions made at a full council meeting	Need more councillors
Members act illegally or do not comply with current regulations	MPC and member(s) concerned suffer(s) loss of reputation	L	Councillors are aware of standing orders, financial regulations and code of conduct	
MPC does not have a full complement of councillors	MPC does not offer a democratic voice	M/H	Advertising for vacancies by co-option Using website and social media to show current achievements/future plans	Continue to publicise
Lack of awareness of the roles of MPC, councillors and the clerk	Councillors and clerk to attend training	L/M	Clerk circulates training	
Declaration of interests (DOI)	An issue is debated without declaring an interest	L/M	Councillors to submit DOI within 28 days of office to CDC and information is on CDC website and linked from MPC website DOI is a separate item on each agenda	Councillors must submit documentation to CDC Councillors have a responsibility to inform the clerk of any changes
Risk assessment review	Circumstantial changes	M	Review annually	

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES				
Assets are not adequately covered by insurance	Financial loss	L	An asset lists is held in hard copy and computer file and covered by insurance and reviewed each year by MPC	Clerk to check with MPC to ensure all assets are covered MPC review annually
Liabilities are not adequately covered by insurance	Financial loss	M	Insurance in place	
MPC does not meet insurance or legal buildings requirements	Financial loss, legal challenge	L	Cover reviewed by RFO annually and any recommendations to updates are made to MPC, which will confirm and record in the minutes that cover is still fit for purpose	
Damage injury to third parties due to lack of maintenance of MPC's assets	Financial loss, loss of reputation	M	Insurance in place £10,000,000 Councillors check Junior Playing Field (JPF)/MUGA on a weekly basis and provide written reports to be actioned by the clerk/RFO Councillors check closed churchyard and cemetery on a fortnightly basis and provide written reports to be actioned by the clerk/RFO Councillors general check of grounds in relation to mowing schedule RoSPA test on JPF/MUGA annually in April/May Trees inspected every three years or when damage is reported	Works carried out 2025
Ad hoc provision of amenities/facilities for	Public liability	L	Third-party groups which hire MUGA facilities are required to have appropriate insurance/DBS checks and risk assessment	

events to local community groups				
Damage injury to third parties due to health and safety risks	Financial loss, injury to staff or members of public	M/H	<p>Employers liability and public liability cover – MPC review annually</p> <p>Councillors general check of grounds/cemetery</p> <p>Cemetery/churchyard: headstone safety testing carried out every 5 years and any amber warnings at least biennially</p> <p>Risk assessments are carried out for events: litter picking/Christmas carol service/MUGA open day/Sports day/national celebrations etc</p> <p>Risk assessments to be carried out in relation to clerk's workspace</p> <p>Policies in place: lone working etc</p> <p>Appropriate PPE is supplied</p> <p>Staff and volunteer training is carried out</p>	Most recent repairs in churchyard/headstones laid flat in cemetery 2025
Vehicle or equipment lease or hire		L	Hire from reputable companies, monitor by council	
Inappropriate meeting venue causes risk to members of MPC and/or public	Injury to people/loss of reputation	L	<p>Insurance in place</p> <p>MPC carries out meetings in the village hall which MPC hires for use</p>	
Professional services (architects, accountancy, design, etc)	Standing orders and financial regulations deal with the awarding of contracts	L	<p>The internal audit is carried out by an independent auditor. Council has used a county association-approved independent auditor from year end 2022–2023</p> <p>The internal auditor is appointed at a full MPC meeting</p>	
PEOPLE				
Loss of clerk	MPC is unable to fulfil its legal	L	Retention of clerk – contract agreed regarding	

	obligations, financial loss		pay and benefits (including pension) Seek assistance from GALC in advertising for a new position	
Loss of chairman	MPC is unable to fulfil its legal obligations, financial loss	L	Councillor to take on the role	
Clerk is long-term sick	MPC is unable to fulfil its legal obligations, financial loss	L	Councillor to take on the role or a locum clerk	
Chairman is long-term sick	MPC is unable to fulfil its legal obligations, financial loss	L	Councillor to take on the role	
Actions of staff bring MPC into disrepute	Financial loss, loss of reputation, legal challenge	L	MPC adheres by the code of conduct	
Current or ex-employee brings claim against MPC	Financial loss due to upheld unfair or constructive dismissal claim	L	Employer's liability of £10,000,000 is in place Clerk is a member of the SLCC MPC is a member of GALC Policies have been put in place by clerk/RFO and approved by MPC	
Temporary staff, or contracted resources do not fulfil obligations	Financial loss, loss of services	L	Not currently applicable	
SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES				
MPC not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance			NALC/GALC has a locum clerk service for staff-related issues Clerk has password folder in place Clerk works from home	Clerk to compile handover pack Membership of GALC/SLCC/NALC
Loss of electronic records through theft, fire or damage	Suppliers not paid, services not delivered, debts not recovered	L/M	Most documents are in electronic form on the parish computer which is backed up automatically on OneDrive and has an external hard-drive back-up – carried out by the clerk/RFO each quarter	

			Anti-virus software installed	
Loss of paper records through theft, fire or damage	Suppliers not paid, services not delivered, debts not recovered	M	Historical documents should be in a fire-proof box or given to Gloucestershire archives Some burial records are stored electronically	Burial records should be in a fire-proof box Burial records are being organised and using Scribe cemetery 2025
Loss of data held by MPC, in any format, that could identify individuals to a third party/data protection breach	Loss of reputation, legal challenge/financial loss	L	MPC has been registered with the Information Commissioners Office from July 2022 – membership automatically renews and is payable via direct debit The clerk/RFO is carrying out a data audit, which is ongoing Clerk has implemented GDPR policies which will be looked at to ensure they are fit for purpose following the data audit The clerk has completed Data Protection courses MPC has a publication scheme in place	Ensure training is adequate Clerk to carry out data audit
Financial or resource requirements of responding to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests has material impact	Financial cost (overtime) or lack of delivery of other services	L	Information to be made available as per the FOI Act, except confidential matters (staffing) The following policies are in place: Data protection policy Publication scheme MPC can request a fee or refuse certain requests MPC to ensure it disposes of data it no longer needs as per its document retention policy	

Financial or resource requirements of responding to data subject access request (SAR) requests has material impact	Financial cost (overtime) or lack of delivery of other services	L	Information to be made available and any overtime in relation to a SAR to be approved by MPC	
Loss of access to premises	Suppliers not paid, services not delivered, debts not recovered	L	Suppliers can be paid remotely as most invoices are sent electronically	
Minutes	Proper, timely and accurate reporting of council business in the minutes	L	Published on MPC website	
PROCUREMENT				
Poor procurement decisions	MPC makes poor financial decisions that result in financial loss or unmet requirements	L	Made at a full council meeting over £30,000	
Contractors are not insured	Third party liability	L	Clerk carries out a check to ensure appropriate levels of liability cover before any work is done by external contractors	
Supplier/contractor failure	Lack of services	M		