

General Risk Assessment for Swaffham Prior Parish Council
September 2023

Document configuration and management control.

Version	Description	Originated	Reviewed	Approved
Version 1	Adoption	20/7/2023		14/09/23
Version 2	Addition	November 2023		9/11/2023

General Risk Assessment for Swaffham Prior Parish Council.

‘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. It is vital to recognise that risk management is not simply about health and safety, but applies to all aspects of Swaffham Prior Parish Council’s work.

This document has been created to enable Swaffham Prior Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken measures to control them. Swaffham Prior Parish Council is aware that although some risks can never be eliminated fully, it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focussed approach to managing risk which:

- identifies the key risks facing the council;
- identifies what the risk may be;
- identifies the level of risk;
- evaluates the management and control of the risk and records findings and;
- reviews, assesses and revises procedures if required.

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Assets.

No.	Item	Hazard	Those in danger	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1-10	Risk Rate	Measures/comments	Result
A1	Swaffham Prior playground.	Play equipment Vandalism Cost of replacement	Injury to people using the play equipment	8	4	32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly inspection carried out by ROSPA and findings reported to the Council for action at the next monthly meeting. • Monthly inspection actioned by the Clerk. • Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A2	Fencing at playground and signage	Vandalism Repair cost Cost of replacement	Injury to members of the public	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual inspection by councillors or clerk? • Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A4	Bus shelter	Impact damage Vandalism Cost of replacement	Injury to members of the public. Loss of shelter.	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair cost covered in reserves • Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A5	Land Girls Memorial	Cost of replacement Damage to memorial Vandalism	Loss of heritage	1	4	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A6	Noticeboard outside village hall	Vandalism Impact damage Cost of replacement	Injury to members of the public. Loss of information source	4	1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dated insurance including Public Liability • Regular check by clerk 	A
A7	Noticeboard at bus stop	Vandalism Impact damage Cost of replacement	Injury to members of the public. Loss of information source	4	1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dated insurance including Public Liability • Regular check by clerk 	A

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A8	Grit bins	Vandalism Impact damage Repair costs Cost of replacements	Injury to members of the public. Loss of resource.	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A9	Rubbish bins and dog waste bins	Vandalism Impact damage Repair costs Cost of replacements	Injury to members of the public. Loss of resource.	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A10	10 benches	Vandalism Impact damage Cost of replacement	Injury to members of the public. Loss of resource	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dated insurance including Public Liability Make contingency provision in Parish Council Reserves 	A
A11	Streetlights	Vandalism Impact damage Cost of replacement	Injury to members of the public. Loss of resource	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dated insurance including Public Liability Make contingency provision in Parish Council Reserves 	A
A12	Village Sign	Vandalism Impact damage Repair costs Cost of replacements	Injury to members of the public. Loss of heritage	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A13	Laptop/printer/ fire proof cabinet	Cost of replacement Repair costs Accidental damage	Clerk Councillors Parishioners Loss of information/records	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dated insurance including Public Liability Storage of some documentation at Cambridge Archives Back-up of electronic documents. 	A
A14	Pound and Keep	Damage to building and/or pound wall. Vandalism	Injury to members of the public Loss of heritage	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular checks by clerk/councillors. 	A

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		Repair costs					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check by qualified builders when necessary • Dated insurance including Public Liability 	
A15	Millenium Map	Vandalism Impact damage Repair costs Cost of replacements	Injury to members of the public. Loss of information source.	4	1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dated insurance including Public Liability 	A
A16	Telephone box/defibrillator	Vandalism Repair/replacement costs. Failure of parts Misuse	Injury to members of the public. Defibrillator unavailable when needed.	8	4	32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly checks by a councillor • Padlock to prevent unauthorised access 	A
A17	Speed indicating devices	Vandalism Repair costs	Loss of resource/information	4	1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kept in garage when not in use. • Dated insurance including public liability 	A

Cemetery

No.	Item	Hazards	Those in danger	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1-10	Risk Rate	Measure/ comments	Result
C1	Driving – lawn mowers, hearses or mechanised digging equipment	Traffic accidents	Injury to operatives/consistent with this type of incident or members of the public	4	1	4	Only authorised vehicles allowed in the cemetery (i.e. Contractors or Funeral Directors). Contractors or Funeral Directors will be liable for their own risk assessment to protect their employees and members of the public	A
C2	Excavations/ground	Falling/tripping	Injury to employees of	4	2	8	The Parish Council ensures the use	A

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	works	injuries to back, sprains, strains, musculoskeletal injuries, cuts and bruises	Funeral Directors				of experienced Funeral Directors and grave diggers Funeral Directors and grave diggers will be liable for their own Health & Safety measures	
C3	Grave digging	Infectious disease control	Infection of employees of Funeral Directors	8	1	8	The Parish Council ensures the use of reliable and competent Contractors Funeral Directors will be liable for their own Health & Safety measures	A
C4	Memorial Inspection	Checking memorials for stability and repair.	Cuts, bruises, crush injuries Injury to members of the public, contractors or funeral directors employees	8	2	16	Memorial Inspections to be carried out by individuals that have successfully completed the ICCM 'Management of Memorials' workshop. Untrained individuals are not permitted to carry out testing. Memorials that are unstable will be made safe and the family notified in order that they can arrange refixing.	A
C5	Grave and row markers	Tripping causing bruises, sprains, musculoskeletal injuries	Injury to members of the public, contractors or funeral directors employees	4	4	16	Grass cut on a regular basis to ensure that all kerbs are visible Regular inspection by Parish Council	A
C6	Uneven and/or slippery surfaces	Slips, trips, and falls.	Injury to members of the public and contractors	4	4	16	Ensure all footpaths are kept clear of trip and slip hazards such as branches, and dead leaves. Relevelling of burial ground to be carried out periodically. Safety notice about the hazards displayed on noticeboard at entrance	A

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C7	Cemetery Gates	Falling over stays, trapping fingers in hinges	Injury to members of the public, contractors or funeral directors' employees	2	4	8	Clerk's regular inspection of the gate to check it is in good working order and stays are solid	A
C8	Grass Cutting	Grass cutting in cemeteries using ride on mowers, strimmers and other tools.	Injury to operator; burns, cuts, bruises, damage to hearing and eyes, including broken bones, dust inhalation, and being hit by projectiles.	6	2	12	Contractors to have their own Risk Assessment in place as well as public liability insurance of at least £5m. Contractors to use equipment fit for purpose and ensure it is well maintained and used to manufacturer's specification. Contractors to wear PPE and ensure area is clear of litter, stones, and debris before commencing any cutting/strimming. Risk Assessment and Policy to be reviewed annually. Always have a copy of the contractor's insurance certificate and risk assessment on file.	A
C9	Weedkilling	Chemical burns/breathing problems	Injury to contractors and members of the public	6	2	12	The Parish Council ensures they employ reliable and competent contractors Contractors will be liable for their own COSHH assessment	A
C10	Tree or Branches Falling	Working on trees with machinery, ladders and hoists including felling, pruning, and lopping.	Injury to contractors and members of the public.	8	2	16	All trees are maintained and inspected by a qualified tree surgeon. An arboriculturist carries out a regular tree survey to check for defects, to ensure the safety and health of the trees. Dated insurance including Public Liability	A

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C11	Disregard for the burial ground and its contents	Disrespect of the burial ground	Dogs being exercised off their leads. Anti-social behaviour resulting in bottles, cans, and other litter. Drug related activities and associated litter. Gravestones being vandalised.	2	1	2	Notices have been installed informing all visitors of the rules. Regular review of the burial ground to ensure rules are being followed. Work closely with the local PCSOs to ensure the area is visited regularly and problems dealt with swiftly	A
C12	Lone Working	Accidents, aggression, or intimidation from others. Illness.	Psychological and physical injuries.	4	4	16	All contractors and the clerk are advised to carry a charged mobile phone with them. The clerk to notify another member of council that they are to work alone in the cemetery and to contact the Police if they experience unwanted or aggressive behaviour from members of the public.	A

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Allotment Plots

No.	Item.	Hazards	Those in danger	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1-10	Risk Rate	Measures/comments	Result
AP1	Machinery/tools	Injuries from incorrect/careless usage	Members of the public	6	2	12	Operators/users are responsible for correct usage and use of correct safety wear.	A
AP2	Security of site	Theft Vandalism	Members of the public	1	4	4	Tenants advised not to keep anything valuable on site	A
AP3	Paths	Slips, trip and/or falls.	Members of the public	4	4	16	Paths maintained. Regular inspection by PC	A
AP4	Rubbish/non-compostable waste	Slip/trip hazard. Harbouring vermin. Cuts from sharp edges	Members of the public	2	4	8	Rubbish to be disposed of by allotment tenants. Regular inspection by PC	A
AP4	Dangerous/hazard substances	Burns, irritations, allergies etc. Poison Contamination of water supply	Members of the public	4	4	16	Allotment plot holders responsible for appropriate use of substances and appropriate use of safety wear. No chemicals etc to be left out in the open. Regular PC inspection	A
AP5	Bonfires	Burns, irritation from smoke, damage to property if spreads	Members of the public	2	4	8	Allotment holder to conform to the allotment rules regarding bonfires. Regular PC inspection	A
AP6	Unoccupied plots	Trip or slip hazard if overgrown	Members of the public	2	4	8	Regular inspection by PC	A
AP7	Vermin	Spread of disease e.g. Weils disease from rats	Members of the public	6	2	12	Allotment tenants to alert PC to vermin problem. Regular inspections by PC	A

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		Bites						
AP8	Gates, hedges, fencing	Scrapes, bruises and other injuries	Members of the public	2	4	8	Maintenance of gates, fences and hedging by the PC. Regular inspection by the PC	A
AP9	Animals	Bites, stings, disease	Members of the public	4	4	16	No animals to be kept on site without PC permission.	A
AP10	Structures/polytunnels/sheds	Collapse, splinters	Members of the public	2	2	4	Structures must be well-maintained by allotment tenants Regular inspection by the PC	A
AP11	Water storage	Collapse, pests, trips	Members of the public	4	4	16	Rainwater must be stored in appropriate containers.	A
AP12	Compost	Splinters, pests	Members of the public	2	4	8	Compost bins should be checked and made safe by allotment tenants.	A

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Management

No.	Item.	Hazards	Those in danger	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1-10	Risk Rate	Measures/comments	Result
M1	Failure to attract sufficient candidates for councillor vacancies or elections.	Reduced representation of neighbourhoods. Lack of resource. Possible meeting inquorate.	Councillors	2	2	4	Actively publicise Council activities. Seek candidates amongst friends, colleagues and acquaintances. Publicise elections and vacancies on noticeboards, website, Facebook and Parish magazine.	A
M2	Failure to achieve quorum at meetings	Business not transacted. Decisions not made	Councillors Clerk	1	3	3	Issue annual meeting calendar to all councillors. Issue meeting agendas promptly. Record attendance. Contact councillors who fail to attend meetings	T
M3	Lack of public consultation by Council	Decisions not based on evidence. People disenfranchised.	Councillors	1	2	2	Ensure meetings publicised on noticeboard and website. Public participation session at meetings and on all agendas. Use Annual Parish meeting. Place articles in Parish magazine. Ensure seating available at meeting for public. Publish agendas and minutes on noticeboards and website.	T
M4	Failure to respond to electors wishing to	Complaints received.	Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk to advertise facility and respond to requests	A

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	exercise right of inspection.	Not transparent. Non-compliance.						
M5	Councillors acting alone outside meetings	Councillors outside compliance. Indemnities invalid. Personal risk.	Councillors	2	2	4	Read 'Good Councillor guide'. Avoid making commitments on behalf of council. Attend relevant training courses.	A
M6	Council decisions not implemented	Confidence undermined. Reputation risk arises. Possible losses	Clerk	1	4	4	Clerk to act on decisions as soon as practicable after a meeting	A
M7	Inaccurate, untimely, improper minutes	Poor decisions in the future. Poor evidence for decisions.	Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk to publish draft minutes not more than 10 working days after a meeting.	A
M8	Inadequate document control	Poor evidence. Poor support for councillors	Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk to establish filing and retrieval support. Clerk to enforce document version control.	A
M9	Failure to recognise and address conflict of interest.	Lack of transparency. Open to complaints of fairness or bias.	Councillors Clerk	1	2	2	Councillors to review Code of Conduct	A
M10	Incomplete/inaccurate register of councillors' interests.	Lack of transparency. Open to complaints of fairness or bias.	Councillors	1	2	2	Councillors to review Code of Conduct	A
M11	Loss of data on laptop due to system fault	Interruption to effective	Clerk	1	4	4	Regular back up to One Drive	A

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		administration, Possible financial loss						
M12	Lack of professional advice	Poor decisions. Cost and waste. Possible non-compliance	Clerk	2	2	4	Maintain membership of CAPALC, NALC, SLCC, ICCM. Undertaken relevant training	A
M13	Loss of services of Parish Clerk	Interruption to effective administration	Councillors Clerk	2	2	4	Deputy Clerk has access to 'How to' file on laptop. Experienced locum Parish Clerks provided through CAPALC in an emergency.	A
M14	Lack of defined objectives or strategy	Resources not directed Poor performance.	Councillors	1	2	2	Council to produce an agreed Activities Plan	A
M15	Lack of public participation in meetings	Public voice not heard. Potential lack of interest in vacancies. Lack of transparency.	Councillors	1	2	2	Ensure meetings publicised on noticeboard. Place articles in parish magazine. Include public participation in all agendas. Ensure seating available at meetings for public. Publish agendas and minutes on website and noticeboard.	A
M16	Allegations of libel or slander	Potential for litigation. Costs of investigation. Reduces confidence.	Councillors	1	3	3	Clerk to intervene at meetings. Review all press releases or newsletter articles before release. Adequate insurance cover.	A
M17	Bad publicity	Reduces	Councillors	1	3	3	Review all press releases or	A

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		confidence	Clerk				newsletter articles before release. Manage press relations.	
M18	Non-compliance with data protection	Litigation Poor reputation.	Councillors Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk to monitor.	A
M19	Failure to correctly identify local needs or wishes	Council does not represent the people. Resources not applied. Democratic deficit.	Councillors	1	3	3	Maintain close contact with local residents. Advertise parish meetings to obtain residents' feedback. Use questionnaires to identify local wishes. Publicise plans and invite comments	A

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Finance

No.	Item.	Hazards	Those in danger	Severity 1-10	Likelihood 1-10	Risk Rate	Measures/comments	Result
F1	Financial	Misappropriation of Council funds. Financial loss	Public services	1	2	2	<p>A Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) will be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council or whenever a vacancy arises. An assistant RFO may be similarly appointed.</p> <p>A councillor with special responsibility for financial matters (treasurer) will be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council or when a vacancy arises. The treasurer will act as the Council guardian of financial propriety and note as Clerk, RFO or ARFO. The treasurer will raise any reservations or problems for resolution, first with the Clerk, then with the Chair and or Council as necessary.</p> <p>All banking arrangements and changes to banking services approved by the Council and recorded in the minutes.</p> <p>Pay invoices by Internet Banking, after approval at the next Council meeting after the invoice is received.</p> <p>Internet Banking – two councillors to authorise online.</p> <p>Annual scrutiny of all financial records by Council and internal</p>	A

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							<p>auditor. Two councillors to sign each cheque, invoice and cheque stub (if cheques required for any goods/services). Cheques only signed at Council meetings. Cheques to be written and entered on the receipts and payments system within one day of the meeting authorising payment. Cash and cheques to be entered on the receipts and payment system upon receipt and banked as soon as reasonably practical. Receipts and payment system to be reconciled quarterly with the bank statements and building society accounts The Chair's honorarium will be set at the budget meeting and agreed by full council. The Clerk's out-of-pocket expenses will be set at the budget meeting and agreed by full council.</p>	
F2	Income. Ensuring that all requirements are met under custom and excise regulations	Unable to fulfil responsibilities	Public Services	1	2	2	<p>Ensure that Council understand and comply with current VAT legislation. Check all receipts are made in accordance with invoices</p>	A
F3	Failure to complete/submit Annual Return on	Poor auditors' report. Public	Treasurer/Clerk	1	3	3	<p>Treasurer/Clerk to note dates and meet statutory deadlines.</p>	A

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	time.	confidence suffers						
F4	Improper contracting procedures.	Possible losses. Poor levels of service. Possible increased costs.	Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk adequately trained. Financial Regulations and Standing Orders kept up to date and reviewed annually.	A
F5	Accidental damage to fixed assets.	Cost of repair. Loss of service until repaired	Clerk	2	2	4	Maintain insurance. Playground inspection regime established.	A
F6	Orders for work, goods and services. Monitoring of performance against agreed standards under partnership agreements.	Unable to fulfil responsibilities.	Public Services	1	2	2	Reviewed at internal audit. Council will review contracts annually. Clerk's contract of employment and salary to be reviewed annually at budget setting meeting.	A
F7	Vandalism to fixed assets	Cost of repair. Loss of service until repaired.	Clerk	3	2	6	Set up inspection regime of fixed assets. Maintain insurance. Liaison with police.	A
F8	Loss to third parties	Possible litigation. Costs/damages.	Clerk	1	3	3	Review health and safety to ensure adequate insurance. Check contractors' insurance.	A
F9	Inadequate insurance	Balance of costs to be found.	Clerk	1	4	4	Council to review at the Annual meeting of the Parish Council, the budget setting meeting or if circumstances change. The asset register to be maintained by the clerk and updated promptly, presented to the Council at the	A

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							Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and the budget setting meeting.	
F10	Failure to calculate/submit precept on time.	Inadequate resources to meet commitments. Costs of re-billing.	Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk to respond to East Cambs District Council notices. Timely agenda item for councillors to consider and approve.	A
F11	Inadequate annual precept and unsound budget.	Inadequate resources to meet commitments	Councillors	1	4	4	Clerk and councillors to build sound budget, using risk register and known commitments. The sound budget will determine the precept requested. Councillors to consider reserves policy.	A
F12	Failure to account for and recover VAT	Wasted resources	Treasurer/Clerk	1	3	3	Treasurer/Clerk to review. Internal auditor to check.	A
F13	Failure to stay within agreed budgets	Inadequate control. Potential wasted resources	Councillors	1	2	2	Clerk/treasurer to review quarterly and report to the council at the next meeting. Internal auditor to check. Reserves policy to mitigate short-term impact of loss. The budget to actual income and expenditure will be reported to and reviewed by the council monthly.	A
F14	Holding excessive or inadequate reserves	Auditor's report. Poor use of resources. Inability to meet commitments	Councillors	2	3	6	Clerk/treasurer to review as part of budgeting. Reserves policy to set percentage of the precept. Council to review size of reserves.	A
F15	Fraud by Clerk	Reputation Costs	Clerk	1	3	3	Adequate internal audit. Regular reporting to councillors.	A

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		Litigation					Control systems for managing expenditure – the Clerk cannot make purchases of individual items in excess of £100 without the prior minuted authority of the council (unless under financial regulation 3.2 or 5.4).	
F16	Fraud by councillors	Reputation Costs Litigation	Clerk	1	3	3	Adequate internal audit. Regular reporting to councillors. Control systems for managing expenditure. No expenditure will be incurred by any member of the Council without the prior approval of a properly constituted Council meeting.	A
F17	Inadequate awareness of relevant legislation	Failure to comply	Councillors Clerk	2	3	6	Maintain membership of CAPALC/NALC/SLCC/ICCM. Clerk to train/qualify.	A
F18	Failure to comply with relevant legislation	Litigation Costs Reputational damage.	Councillors Clerk	2	3	6	Maintain membership of CAPALC/NALC/SLCC/ICCM. Clerk to maintain training. Liaise with internal and external auditors.	A
F19	Failure to maintain fixed assets register	Improper control. Poor auditor's report	Clerk	1	2	2	Council to review annually. Internal audit to review	A
F20	Improper financial records	Potential for wasted resources	Clerk	1	2	2	Internal audit to review. Internal Auditor appointment to be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.	A
F21	HMRC requirements not	Costs Litigation	Clerk	1	3	3	Clerk/treasurer to make sure payments to HMRC are made in a	A

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	met						timely fashion.	
F22	Failure to comply with deadlines for accounts and returns	Poor auditor's report. Reduction in confidence	Clerk	1	2	2	Clerk/Treasurer to liaise with internal and external audit.	A

Result key: T=Trivial risk A=Adequately controlled risk N= Not adequately controlled risk U=unable to decide (more information required).

Risk assessment carried out: Jude Griffiths

Date: 20/7/2023

Signed: *J Griffiths*

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Risk Assessment Scoring Matrix.

Likelihood	Severity					
	Multiple death (10)	Single death (8)	Major injury (6)	Lost time injury (4)	Minor injury (2)	Delay (1)
Certain (10)	100	80	60	40	20	10
Very likely (8)	80	64	48	32	16	8
Likely (6)	60	48	36	24	12	6
May happen (4)	40	32	24	16	8	4
Unlikely (2)	20	16	12	8	4	2
Very unlikely (1)	10	8	6	4	2	1
Score	Priority	Action				
1-16	Low	Action is required to reduce risk, although low priority				
17-36	Medium	Action required to control. Interim measures may be necessary in the short term.				
37-100	High	Action is required urgently to control risks. Unacceptable. Immediate action required.				