

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference:

**Date of meeting: 22 November
2021**

Portfolio: Leader of the Council

Subject: Risk Management

Responsible Officer: Andrew Small (01992 564278)

Democratic Services: Laura Kirman (01992 564243)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To review the current risk register and consider whether there are any new or emerging risks that are not on the current Corporate Risk register that should be referred to the officer Risk Management Group**

Executive Summary:

This report gives the Audit and Governance Committee the opportunity to comment on and suggest new risks for inclusion on the Corporate risk register or changes to the scoring of existing risks.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To enhance the Council's risk management framework.

Other Options for Action:

None. Formal responsibility for making recommendations to Cabinet on risk management issues lies with the Audit and Governance Committee. Members may suggest new risks for inclusion or changes to the scoring of existing risks.

Report:

Corporate Risk Register

- The corporate risk register was reviewed by the Council's Officer Risk Management Group at their meeting of 19 October 2021 where all risks were reviewed and challenged and was subsequently presented to the Corporate Governance Group for further review and challenge. The narrative for each risk has been reviewed and, where appropriate, updated to reflect the current situation (appendix 1).
- The table below outlines the direction of travel for each risk since it was updated for the July 2021 Audit and Governance Committee, with a brief commentary supporting each risk. The Economic Development risk has been reduced to C2 to reflect the range of actions in place to mitigate the risk, including the development of a completely new

action plan which contains several options for the recovery of local high streets. Risk 9 (Delays in issuing Planning Permissions) has been downgraded to C2 to reflect the reduction in the financial aspect of this risk, although there remains a residual reputational risk.

- Accommodation project risk has been removed from the risk register as the project has completed.

No	Risk	Residual risk rating (i.e. after controls)		Commentary
		July 2021	Nov 2021	
1	Local Plan	B1	B1	The consultation has ended, and comments submitted to the Inspector. The Local Plan can then be formally adopted by the Council following receipt of the Inspector's report and making the Main Modifications (MMs) recommended.
2	Increase in demand for financial and housing assistance (previously Welfare Reform)	C2	C2	The financial strain that Covid-19 has placed on individuals and families, which may lead to an increased demand for financial and housing assistance, is being kept under review. The end of furlough and removal of £20 Universal Credit has not filtered through the system yet so unsure of the impact.
3	Financial Resilience	C1	C1	The medium/long term financial impacts of Covid 19 are being managed through the updated Medium Term Financial Plan. Potential for cashable efficiency savings for 2022/23 are now being vigorously pursued with full Leadership Team support.
4	Economic Development	B1	C2	A completely new action plan has been developed to take account of Covid 19 which includes a range of options for the recovery of local high streets.
5	Data/information	C2	C2	The Information Governance (IG) workplan continues to be implemented and monitored. Messages from the IG Group have been presented to the Information Asset Owners Group for Service Managers to disseminate to their teams. Data protection and cybersecurity training is being rolled out.

6	Business continuity	C2	C2	Improvement of current business continuity (BC) management arrangements is in progress and a review and update of BC plans is being coordinated. Testing has been carried out on several elements of the disaster recovery solution.
7	Housing capital finance	C2	C2	The position is being monitored by the House Building Cabinet Committee. The first iteration of the HRA Business Plan is in place and the development team are working with Finance to enable clear visibility around capital funding.
8	Cyber security	C2	C2	This risk continues to be actively managed through monitoring and installing system updates and patches. Latest windows major upgrade is underway and on track. All data back-up is now directly to the cloud. The roll out of training and eLearning described under risk 5 (data/information) will support the people element of this risk.
9	Delays in issuing Planning Permissions	C1	C2	Planning permissions are being released although some are taking longer than initially anticipated. Some applications are going back through Planning Committee and completion of several legal agreements by developers is also causing delays. The financial risk has reduced but a reputational risk remains.
10	Climate emergency	B2	B2	Consultation on the draft Climate Change Action Plan is now underway. The start of the consultation was purposely delayed by Cabinet so as not to run at the same time as the Local Plan MM's. A Member's Briefing has been held.
11	Accommodation project	C2	n/a	As the project has finished and a completion report presented to Cabinet, this risk has been removed from the risk register.

4. Members are asked to consider the attached updated Corporate Risk Register (Appendix 1) and whether the risks listed are scored appropriately and whether there are any additional risks that should be included. Appendix 2 sets out Council's risk assessment

matrix and is used to determine individual risk scorings.

Resource Implications:

Within the report

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Corporate Risk Register is an important part of the Council's overall governance arrangements and that is why this Committee considers it on a regular basis.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None

Consultation Undertaken:

The Risk Management Group and Leadership Team were involved in the process.

Background Papers:

CIPFA audit committees – practical guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018 edition

Risk Management:

If the Corporate Risk Register was not regularly reviewed and updated a risk that threatened the achievement of corporate objectives might either not be managed or be managed inappropriately. In addition, new or emerging risks are not considering which could threaten achievement of the Council's corporate objectives.

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided as appendix 3 to the report.