

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference:

Date of meeting: 17 March 2022

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 17 February 2022, where all risks were reviewed and challenged and was subsequently presented to the Corporate Governance Group (which is Chaired by the Chief Executive) 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 January 2022 Audit and Governance Committee, with a brief commentary supporting each risk. There have been no changes to the risk scores since January 2022.

No	Risk	Residual risk rating (i.e. after controls)		Commentary
		Jan 2022	Mar 2022	
1	Local Plan	B1	B1	The Council is still waiting for the Inspector's report outlining their final recommendations (expected end of February 2022), following which the Main Modifications can be made and the Plan formally adopted by the Council.
2	Increase in demand for financial and housing assistance (previously Welfare Reform)	C2	C2	The financial strain that Covid-19 and the cost of living impacts (e.g. increase in National Insurance, inflation and fuel poverty) has placed on individuals and families is being kept under review.
3	Financial Resilience	C1	C1	Cabinet approved 2022/23 budget and the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan. Balanced budget now set for 2022/23 without the need to call on general reserves although inflation risks and potential slippage in the timetable for drawdown of Qualis loans are being monitored.
4	Economic Development	C2	C2	The revised action plan has been developed to take account of Covid 19 and 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 is regularly monitored. Messages from the Strategic IG Group are presented to the Information Asset Owners Group for Service Managers to disseminate to their teams.
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. Business disaster recovery testing was successfully completed.
7	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. An eLearning module provided by the National Cyber Security Centre has been rolled out across the Council
8	Delays in issuing Planning Permissions	C2	C2	Planning permissions are being released although taking longer than initially anticipated. Some applications are going back through Planning Committee. A reputational risk remains.
9	Climate emergency	B2	B2	There is continued development of the action plan based on comments and feedback from the consultation. A report of the findings will go to Overview and Scrutiny in at the end of March 2022 following this a revised plan will go to Cabinet in April.

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.