

CORPORATE RISK REGISTER (MAY 2022)

LIKELIHOOD	A Very High				
	B High			2 9	1 3
	C Medium			4 5 6 7 8	
	D Low / Very Low				
		4 Insignificant	3 Minor	2 Moderate	1 Major
	IMPACT				

Risk no.	Risk score	Description
1	B1	Local Plan
2	B2	Increase in demand for financial and housing assistance
3	B1	Financial resilience
4	C2	Economic Development
5	C2	Data/Information
6	C2	Business Continuity
7	C2	Cybersecurity
8	C2	Delays in issuing planning permission
9	B2	Climate emergency

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Risk No 1 Local Plan	<p>Vulnerability: Deadline of December 2023 for all authorities to have up-to-date Local Plans in place. Delays in the adoption of the Local Plan (LP) and failure to meet the Housing Delivery Test will delay the implementation of the Local Plan Strategy and lead to the presumption in favour of sustainable development being applied.</p> <p>Consequence: Delays in granting consent for planned new homes, affordable housing and jobs because of delays in implementing the spatial approach including strategic housing and employment sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable to ad hoc planning applications and appeal decisions • Loss of associated New Homes Bonus, Business Rates tax base growth and S106 monies to support key infrastructure projects. • Reputational damaged • An annual housing requirement of 953 homes per year (2020/21) far in excess of the Local Plan annual average of 518 dwellings per year. 	Local Plan Submission Version 2017 agreed by Council Dec 2017 and published. Following the Judicial Review (JR) the plan was submitted for examination which took place between Feb & June 2019. The Inspector identified 39 Actions for the Council to complete in August 2019. The Council's response to these actions resulted in proposed amendments to the Plan (Main Modifications) in July 2021. The comments on these MM's are considered by the Inspector who will make her recommendations in due course.	VERY HIGH	MAJOR	A1	<p>1) MMs consultation ended on 23rd September 2021 and summary of responses sent to The Inspector.</p> <p>2) Consultants in place to support Habitats Regulations Assessment, Sustainability Assessment statements required alongside the Local Plan adoption.</p> <p>3) Considering detailed transport models and enhancement plans with stakeholders to demonstrate the effectiveness of policies.</p> <p>4) Financial contributions towards mitigation and enhancements required by Interim Air Pollution MS and Green Infrastructure Mitigation Strategy already being secured.</p> <p>5) Implementation Team established to accelerate delivery of strategic site allocations</p> <p>5) Regular reports at officer and Member level through the Cooperation for Sustainable Development Group.</p>	HIGH	MAJOR	B1	<p>1) Regular updates provided and posted on the Council's website. Latest posted 6 May 2022 informing of new Inspector to complete the examination and further updates to be announced.</p> <p>2) Once the Inspector has considered the responses, including the evidence presented throughout the duration of the Examination, he will determine whether the Local Plan is 'sound' and produce a written report outlining his final recommendations. Following receipt of the Inspector's report, the Plan can be formally adopted by the Council if it makes the MMs recommended. Inspector Report anticipated as soon as possible.</p> <p>3). Scrutiny Function undertaken by Stronger Place Select Committee.</p>	Service Director – Planning Services	Regular programme meetings (but at least monthly)

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Risk No 2 Increase in demand for financial and housing assistance	<p>Vulnerability:</p> <p>Rising cost of living could significantly impact residents' ability to meet housing costs leading to increase in demand for homelessness assistance. Tenants' inability to pay rent resulting from rising cost of living could impact HRA revenue having negative consequences for HRA investment and the 30-year business plan.</p> <p>Ukrainian refugee schemes could result in increased demand for homelessness assistance directly affecting the general fund by increasing numbers in and cost of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Increasing demand for homelessness assistance also poses significant risk in terms of staffing resources which meet current need, but which do not have any capacity for increased demand.</p>	<p>Emerging fuel poverty crisis and general, significant, rise in living costs (May 2022).</p> <p>Consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants no longer able to afford current/new tenancies. • Residents no longer able to afford mortgages • Increase in evictions and homelessness • Increased costs of temporary accommodation • Unable to secure similar level of income due to payment defaults • Increase in rent and Council Tax arrears • Public dissatisfaction • Criticism of the Council for not mitigating the effects for residents. • Rise in mental health impacts • Rise in safeguarding issues 	HIGH	MAJOR	B1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Virtual customer portal signposting access to a range of help, advice and support services 2.Breathing Space 3.Hub approach to service delivery centred at Civic Office with plans to ensure targeted holistic provision of services across the district. 4.Dedicated private sector lettings resource to increase prevention of homelessness, reduce demand for Temporary Accommodation and instances where a full rehousing duty would otherwise be owed 5.RSI funding secured enabling enhanced targeted response to single homelessness including creation of a mental health navigator embed within the homelessness team (should hear about 22/23 funding soon & this will yield further mitigating actions) 6.Domestic Abuse (DA) Navigator and specialist DA safeguarding officer provide expert support and lead through DAHA accreditation ensuring a whole housing approach to DA 7.Additional £57K funding secured for DA work 8.Monthly tracking for early identification of spikes in demand 9.£117K additional homelessness prevention grant to assist with homelessness prevention specifically for private renters affected by Covid-19 10. Successful Changing Futures grant £72K for Job Coach programme that will assist 60 clients over 2 years into sustainable employment starting 22/23 11. Distribution of £5m in Council Tax Energy Payments 	HIGH	MODERATE	B2	<p>Revs and Benefits staff attendance at the Waltham Abbey Hub.</p> <p>Hold some evening surgeries for people who find themselves struggling.</p>	Service Director - Customer Services and Community and Wellbeing	Monthly

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Risk No 3 Financial Resilience	<p>Covid-19 (Legacy) The impact of Covid-19 (including long-lasting, or permanent legacy issues) has added to a recent downward trajectory in available reserves, as income is struggling to keep pace with expenditure</p> <p>Qualis Income Securing planned income returns from LATCO initiative is vital to maintaining financial self-sufficiency and minimising expenditure reductions</p> <p>Economic Turbulence Recent volatility in the worldwide economy, including sharply rising inflation and increasing interest rates poses a substantial threat to the Council's adopted Medium-Term Financial Plan; this threatens general expenditure costs (especially on pay and major contracts) and interest costs incurred on Qualis 'on-lending, as well as major capital projects (impacted by the increasing cost of building materials especially)</p> <p>Efficiency Savings The medium-term financial outlook means that setting a balanced budget for 2023/24 will be a challenging process, with the realisation of cashable efficiencies an overwhelming priority; and</p> <p>Financial Control Tighter financial control is essential in the more challenging financial environment that lies ahead.</p>	<p>Balanced budget now set for 2022/23 (approved by full Council in February 2022). In addition, the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2022 to 2027 was adopted alongside the budget.</p> <p>The adopted MTFP is forecasting a cumulative budget deficit of £4.2 million by 31st March 2017. However, economic circumstances and forecasts have recently changed rapidly, especially following the Russian Invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, with the inflationary assumptions especially that were included in the MTFP – with the benefit of hindsight – now looking over-optimistic.</p> <p>Slippage on the timetabled income and benefits from Qualis continues to be a risk. Although net income expectations from Qualis were purposely reined in as part of developing the 2022/23 budget, the rapidly rising interest rates during the spring/summer of 2022 were not anticipated.</p> <p>CIPFA Financial Management Code effective from 1 April 2021: further improvement required to achieve full compliance.</p>	VERY HIGH	MAJOR	A1	<p>Covid-19 Immediate pressure receded gradually in 2021/22. Medium/Long Term financial impacts being managed through updated MTFP (@ February 2022).</p> <p>Qualis Council's interests directly overseen and managed by Section 151 Officer with tailored support from specialist professional advisors</p> <p>Economic Turbulence Inflationary impacts (including interest rate increases) being closely monitored and assessed by Section 151 Officer. Mitigating actions being developed and implemented by Senior Management with higher value expenditure areas (such as pay, contracts and construction projects) being targeted.</p> <p>Efficiency Savings Potential for cashable efficiency savings for 2022/23 now being vigorously pursued with full Leadership Team support.</p> <p>Financial Control Process improvements continuing to be rolled out by Deputy S151. Corporate Finance function now (since summer 2022) fully resourced, with added focus now on internal financial control procedure and increasing leadership of improvements in wider financial support services.</p>	HIGH	MAJOR	B1	<p>Complete transformation of Corporate Finance functions, utilising the benefits of a fully resourced Finance Team.</p> <p>Further develop wider leadership role of Corporate Finance Team, ensuring that improvements are achieved in financial process across the Council.</p> <p>Urgently implement mitigating strategies with the aim of controlling net expenditure within budget in 2022/23 and developing a balanced budget for 2023/24. Key areas to focus on include pay (e.g. vacancy control), contracts (e.g. Waste Management and Leisure) and major capital projects (e.g. Epping Leisure Centre, HRA housebuilding).</p> <p>Ensure cashable efficiencies are given the highest priority for the remainder of 2022/23 and in preparing the 2023/24 budget.</p> <p>In the medium-term, continue cultural change process and address current deficit in efficiency and effectiveness.</p>	Strategic Director & 151 Officer	Monthly

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Risk No 4 Economic Development	<p>Vulnerability: Economic development and employment are very important to the Council particularly in the post Covid-19 economic climate. The Council needs to be able to stimulate opportunities for economic development and employment (especially youth employment and those seeking local career progression) in the District in line with the Local Plan. It is recognised that the current economic shocks increase uncertainty but do however also provide opportunities through increased home working and local manufacture and trade.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to secure sufficient employment opportunities Local area and people lose out Insufficient inward investment Impact on economic vitality of area Loss of business rate revenue Increased economic cost to the council 	<p>Risk that Council loses out to other authorities in terms of attracting business, employment and other Place opportunities. All of which would financially impact on the Council (e.g. loss in business rates, and residents/visitor spending power. E.g. leisure centres.</p> <p>Cost of living crisis can impact on disposable income with knock-on effects on the local economy/businesses.</p> <p>Unemployment has tracked back down to below national and regional levels but is still higher than pre pandemic levels.</p> <p>Good use has been made by the Council of government and County Covid-19 funding including business grants. (Bulk of Government schemes ended, legacy schemes still in operation).</p> <p>Demand for industrial and retail assets in the district remains high.</p> <p>Digital transformation continues to reshape much of the local economy and employment and income generation opportunities. This has implications for future skills provision and inward investment.</p>	VERY HIGH	MAJOR	A1	<p>Economic Development Plan (Nurturing Growth) in place and flexed to take account of Covid-19 and post pandemic issues.</p> <p>With the impact of Covid-19 a completely new action plan has been developed which considers a range of options for recovery of local high streets as this is now seen as the priority for Economic Development.</p> <p>Cabinet in July 2021 approved six town centre action plans to help support and improve economic viability of town centres across the district. Significant work has already been undertaken to deliver these. Vacancy rates in high streets have not dramatically increased but demand remains strong.</p> <p>A new inward investment site (Invest Epping Forest) has been produced and is awaiting launch. Loyal Free has been purchased and is being rolled out. Huq has been purchased and is in operation monitoring footfall.</p> <p>The Council has launched its Kickstart programme and development hub to help improve employment and skills. NWA Business Zone and possibly freepport development linked with other employment sites.</p> <p>Engendering and supporting work from home and work local approaches through the support/creation of work hubs reducing the need to travel and commute and having environmental as well as economic benefits.</p>	MEDIUM	MODERATE	C2	<p>Ensure full delivery of inward investment site and loyal free. Support development at North Weald for maximum return in jobs and investment.</p> <p>Prepare for successful business plan to allocate shared prosperity funding (£1 million) to support key priority areas. Business plans to be submitted by end of July 2022 following consultation.</p> <p>Continue to develop DIZ, market digital economy, target public and private sector funding for enhanced infrastructure.</p> <p>Continue to develop and secure opportunities from the visitor economy to support high streets and local businesses. Upgrade and re-launch Visit Epping Forest website by the end of June 2022.</p> <p>Rescale town centre initiatives following withdrawal of resource.</p> <p>Review economic impact of RideLondon 2022.</p>	Chief Operating Officer via Economic Development and Planning	Monthly

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Risk No 5 Data / Information	<p>Vulnerability: The authority handles a large amount of personal and business data. Either through hacking or carelessness, security of the data could be compromised.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach of the 2018 Data Protection Act (DPA) and the General Data Protection Regulations leading to significant fines or/and intervention by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Increased costs and legal implications Reputation damaged and loss of public confidence 	<p>Risk of data held by the Council ends up in inappropriate hands. System loss. Generally effective to date, with no significant lapses since the introduction of the 2018 DPA.</p> <p>The work programme for the Information Governance Group, who oversees this risk, is comprehensive but has limited resource to progress the work.</p>	HIGH	MAJOR	B1	<p>Significant work was undertaken by the Council to ensure it was compliant in time for the introduction of the GDPR in May 2018. This included review of policy and procedures, staff and Member training and awareness, completing an information asset register/register of processing activities and reviewing security of data arrangements.</p> <p>The Council continues to have a designated Data Protection Officer in post and a system of data breach and subject access request monitoring in place.</p> <p>A recent audit on data retention and disposals has been completed which identified a number of actions.</p> <p>A Senior Information Risk Owner has been identified and an Information Governance Group (IGG) has been formed. In addition, an Information Asset Owner Group has been set up.</p> <p>The Information Governance Group has put together a draft work programme and other actions will be reviewed and monitored through this Information Governance Group. A review of the work programme took place by IGG in their meeting</p> <p>A Retention and Disposals Policy was launched Feb 2021.</p>	MEDIUM	MODERATE	C2	<p>Continue working with the Information Asset Owner Group to embed understanding of the importance of information governance across the authority.</p> <p>The IGG Work Programme is being prioritised and is subject to ongoing review by SIRO and Chief Auditor.</p> <p>Information Governance policy review to be undertaken by. policy sub-group chaired by the SIRO.</p> <p>FOI infographic and eLearning- Use Litmos and plan for launch in February 2022</p> <p>Executive Team Information Governance training to take place in 2022.</p> <p>The IAOG reminded of their responsibilities of implementing the Retention & Disposal Policy. Audit to discuss Policy with service areas to ensure periods are appropriate.</p> <p>Work has begun to redesign the Council's 'Open Data' webpage and populating with information required by the Code. Webpage to be finalised and launched by 30 June 2022.</p> <p>Work will soon begin to cleanse the Council's Z drive and review the Retention and Disposal Policy. End date for this project is 30 November 2022.</p>	Service Director- Corporate Services (SIRO)	Quarterly

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Risk No 6 Business Continuity	<p>Vulnerability: The Council is required to develop and implement robust Business Continuity Plans in line with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act. Following the re-organisation and negative outcomes from Internal Audit's review plans need to be updated and changes in responsibilities confirmed.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services disrupted / Loss of service • Possible loss of income • Staff absence • Hardship for some of the community • Council criticised for not responding effectively • Strain on/or lack of staff resources. ▪ Increased sickness absence due to Covid19 – staff availability to work ▪ Additional capacity needed for projects ▪ ICT restructure 	<p>An Internal Audit of Business Continuity arrangements identified a number of weaknesses which were addressed through the BC project. An external consultant has been engaged to develop the strategy and provide coaching to staff to develop plans. This has largely been completed and an exercise to test was undertaken in Feb 2020.</p> <p>All departments now have their own departmental BC plans</p> <p>Corporate strategy now sits above all plans and has been tested.</p> <p>Currently, the organisation is continuing to deliver services to a high standard, working remotely, in new ways etc, however there are strains on project delivery and in some areas BAU due to staff absence, restructures, turnover.</p> <p>The current ICT DR solution is not fully tested, and therefore might not deliver the expected benefits.</p>	VERY HIGH	MAJOR	A1	<p>Improvement of current business continuity (BC) management arrangement is currently in progress.</p> <p>Our organisational response to the current covid-19 emergency demonstrates a generally effective BCP with essential services / critical functions continuing.</p> <p>Next phase is to co-ordinate the review and updating of plans on an ongoing progressive program.</p> <p>Mitigation re staff resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New recruitment process and careers page to attract new candidates. More efficient and less bureaucratic processes ▪ The category A, B, C list of staff availability has recently been reviewed ▪ ICT Portfolio Governance Group is established ▪ Flexible use of salary budget to plug short term gaps <p>Business DR testing successfully completed over 3 days.</p>	MEDIUM	MODERATE	C2	<p>Chelmsford Council has agreed to provide templates including a Business Impact Analysis tool. The outcome of which will assist EFDC to develop a work programme/service plan. Initial meeting took place with Chelmsford on 17 January 2022. A small group will be tasked to review process/next steps.</p> <p>Senior managers to keep situation under regular review. Staffing issues is a standing item on fortnightly Wider Leadership Team Meeting.</p>	Service Director – Corporate Services	Quarterly

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Risk No 7 Cyber Security	<p>Vulnerability: The Authority handles a large amount of personal and business data. Either through hacking or carelessness, security of the data could be compromised.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of system access and/or data Unable to provide Council services Increased costs Reputation damaged Ransomware payment Corporate fines 	<p>Risk of data held by the Council ends up in inappropriate hands. System loss. However, no loss of data. Systems have remained protected from cyber-attack.</p> <p>EFDC is targeted directly. Unknown vulnerabilities in systems. Misconfigured systems. EFDC staff error. Disgruntled EFDC staff.</p> <p>System Loss, Data unavailable, Data stolen, Data changed,</p>	VERY HIGH	MAJOR	A1	<p>Security Officer is continually monitoring situation and potential risks. Most systems have in built controls to prevent unauthorised access.</p> <p>Controls in systems have been strengthened in response to specific occurrences.</p> <p>IT monitoring & installing system updates & patches</p> <p>All data back up now directly to the cloud. Considering extending to grandfather back-ups</p> <p>Latest windows major upgrade underway and on track.</p> <p>An eLearning module provided by the National Cyber Security Centre has been rolled out across the Council.</p>	MEDIUM	MODERATE	C2	<p>Continued monitoring & researching security attack methodologies and best practice procedures</p> <p>This will follow a review of relevant policies, date of launch to be confirmed</p> <p>Most actions from Cyber MIM now complete, final ones being addressed.</p> <p>Mystery Phishing campaign delayed due to other priorities. Will be picked up in June/ July.</p>	Service Director – ICT & PMO, Strategy & Policy	Quarterly

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Risk No 8 Delays in issuing Planning Permission	<p>Vulnerability: Delays in issuing around 260 Planning Permission for development following objections by Natural England regarding the impact of development on air quality in Epping Forest SAC.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in granting Planning Permission in the District and house building to create new homes. • Loss of New Homes Bonus • Restricted Business Rates tax base growth • Reputation damaged 	The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) January 2019 found that the Plan would be likely to have a significant effect upon the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (the SAC) in respect of both atmospheric pollution and disturbance from recreation & urbanisation.	VERY HIGH	MAJOR	A1	Regular meetings held with key stakeholders including Natural England to update the HRA and develop a mitigation strategy. Interim mitigation strategy (SAMMS) was agreed by Council in October 2018 to mitigate the impact of recreational pressure on the Forest and Natural England have confirmed it is appropriate. The outstanding concerns in relation to the Green Infrastructure Strategy/ SANG strategy and the need for site specific projects to mitigate the impact of recreational pressure associated with growth in the South of District has been addressed in the GI Strategy approved at Cabinet on 20 April 2021. A Draft Air Pollution Strategy was agreed by Cabinet in July 2020 for further consultation with Natural England. An updated strategy has been prepared and was adopted by Council on 8 February 2021 following confirmation from Natural England that the strategy was agreed.	MEDIUM	MODERATE	C2	<p>Mitigation strategy in place for both recreational pressure and air quality issues.</p> <p>Interim air pollution mitigation strategy has been agreed with Natural England and has been adopted by the Council through a PFH report which was called in to a Full Council meeting on 8 February 2021.</p> <p>The Interim Air Pollution Strategy was agreed by full Council on 8 February 2021 and opened the potential release of 260 planning permissions. To date, 163 planning permissions have been successfully released equating to 261 dwellings. 21 applications have been withdrawn and 17 have been refused planning permission. A number are still awaiting the completion of s106 agreements to accompany the planning permission. Applications submitted after 8 February 2021 are being dealt with in a Business As Usual manner.</p>	Service Director - Planning Services	Monthly – regular updates are being provided to the inspector

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Risk No 9 Climate Emergency	<p>Vulnerability: The Council declared a climate emergency and has pledged to do everything within its power to make the Epping Forest District carbon neutral by 2030. The Council has identified a number of initial areas of focus, including: Local Plan site allocations achieving high standards of sustainability; carbon reduction of council owned properties; the promotion of sustainable transport and implementing an air quality strategy.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputational damage • Greatly increased costs from Climate Change Adaptation requirements 	<p>Failure in achieving identified carbon reduction targets and taking action to reach the carbon neutral District by 2030 pledge.</p> <p>Contracts of both the Climate Change Officer and the Sustainable Transport Officer have been made permanent. Climate Change Officer now on maternity leave.</p>	VERY HIGH	MODERATE	A2	<p>The Climate Change and Sustainable Transport Officer developed a draft action plan with the overall objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. It covers all service areas and the wider District emissions.</p> <p>The draft Climate Change Action Plan went for public consultation, finishing on 26th November 2021.</p> <p>A report of the findings from the consultation went to Overview and Scrutiny at the end of March 2022. Final version of Climate Action Plan submitted and approved by Cabinet in April 2022</p> <p>DaRT87 launched in Jan 2021 as an emergency hybrid Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), had been hit by the effects of the pandemic with continued WFH work patterns suppressing demand for tube journey links and older/concessionary pass holders remaining cautious about using public transport (confirmed in ECC and national stats).</p> <p>Cabinet in March 2022, agreed in its current form and cost to continue the service.</p>	HIGH	MODERATE	B2	<p>The move to staff working from home and covid-19 associated projects including increasing active travel as part of the Safer Places project for High Street recovery, will contribute towards a positive impact on carbon reduction.</p> <p>Climate Change Officer on maternity leave until 2023. Essex CC have formed a Climate Action Team and discussions underway to provide interim support.</p> <p>DaRT87 - further funding merited due to extreme challenges posed by Covid-19 conditions – as one third of interest had been from Harlow residents, Harlow's (and ECC's) financial support should also be sought in 22/23.</p>	Chief Operating Officer	Quarterly