

# **Report to the Audit and Governance Committee**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Report reference:**

**Date of meeting: 22 March 2021**

**Portfolio: Leader of the Council**

**Subject: Risk Management**

**Responsible Officer: Andrew Small (01992 562478).**

**Democratic Services: Laura Kirman (01992 564243).**

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## **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

1. The corporate risk register was reviewed by the Council's Officer Risk Management Group at their meeting of 03 March 2021 where all risks were reviewed and challenged, and subsequently by the Corporate Governance Group. The narrative for each risk has been reviewed and, where appropriate, updated to reflect the current situation (appendix 1).

2. The table below outlines the direction of travel for each risk since it was updated for the January 2021 Audit and Governance Committee, with a brief commentary supporting each risk. Three of the risks have been downgraded being welfare reform, financial resilience and delays in issuing planning permissions.

No	Risk	Residual risk rating (i.e. after controls)		Commentary
		January 2021	March 2021	
1	Local Plan	<b>B1</b>	<b>B1</b>	Adoption by full Council is still anticipated summer 2021 and the Inspector confirmed in February 2021 progress was being made by both parties.
2	Welfare Reform	<b>A2</b>	<b>C2</b>	This risk has been reworked to reflect that Covid-19 has placed a huge financial strain on individuals and families and the end of the national furlough scheme could lead to a spike in unemployment and an increase in debt. However, the Council is mitigating this through the use of multi-agency community hubs to help signpost customers.
3	Financial Resilience	<b>B1</b>	<b>C1</b>	Risk downgraded as a balance budget for 2021/22 has been set and the effects of Covid-19 being actively managed.
4	Economic Development	<b>B1</b>	<b>B1</b>	Work in this area continues to be progressed. Projects are being undertaken to help the recovery and sustainability of the local economy.
5	Data/information	<b>C2</b>	<b>C2</b>	Updated to reflect the introduction of eLearning modules and a review of supporting policies.
6	Business continuity	<b>C2</b>	<b>C2</b>	The Council continues its business continuity activities as part of its recovery response to Covid-19.
7	Housing capital finance	<b>C2</b>	<b>C2</b>	A consultant has been appointed to review the Housing Review Account (HRA) and Cabinet has approved a Right To Buy Receipts policy.

No	Risk	Residual risk rating (i.e. after controls)		Commentary
		January 2021	March 2021	
8	Cyber security	C2	C2	This risk continues to be actively managed and will be supported through the roll out of eLearning described under risk 5 (data/information)
9	Delays in issuing Planning Permissions	A1	C1	Downgraded now an interim air pollution strategy has been agreed with Natural England and approved by Full Council.
10	Climate emergency	B2	B2	Work continues on the action plan with the aim to submit a draft to Cabinet for consultation approval in April 21.
11	Accommodation project	C2	C2	Good progress continues with a March target completion date, with building handover within two weeks of this.

5. Members are now 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.

**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 threatened 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 2 to the report.