

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference:

Date of meeting: 27 June 2022

Portfolio: Leader of the Council
Subject: Risk Management
Responsible Officer: Andrew Small (01992 564278)
Democratic Services: Laura Kirman (01992 564243)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

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 24 May 2022, where all risks were reviewed and challenged and was subsequently presented to the Corporate Governance Group (which is Chaired by the Section 151 Officer) for further review and challenge. 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 March 2022 Audit and Governance Committee, with a brief commentary supporting each risk.
3. The risk around the increase in demand for financial and housing assistance (risk 2) has increased to B2 due to the emerging fuel poverty crisis and general, significant, rise in living costs. Scores for all other risks remain the same.

No	Risk	Residual risk rating (i.e. after controls)		Commentary
		March 2022	June 2022	
1	Local Plan	B1	B1	The Council is still waiting for the Inspector's report outlining their final recommendations 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	B2	Emerging fuel poverty crisis and general, significant, rise in living costs has increased the likelihood of this risk materialising.
3	Financial Resilience	B1	B1	Inflationary impacts are 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.
4	Economic Development	C2	C2	A new inward investment site (Invest Epping Forest) has been produced and is awaiting launch and the Kickstart programme has been launched to help improve employment and skills. The Council will continue to develop and secure opportunities from the visitor economy to support high streets and local businesses.
5	Data/information	C2	C2	The Information Governance (IG) workplan has been prioritised. Work has begun to redesign the Council's 'Open Data' webpage and populating with information required by the Code. Work will soon begin to cleanse the Council's Z drives and review the Retention and Disposal Policy.
6	Business continuity	C2	C2	Improvement of current business continuity (BC) management arrangements is in progress. A review and update of the Corporate and service BC plans is being coordinated.

7	Cyber security	C2	C2	Continually monitoring situation and potential risks. Controls in systems have been strengthened in response to specific occurrences.
8	Delays in issuing Planning Permissions	C2	C2	Planning applications continue to be reviewed and released as appropriate.
9	Climate emergency	B2	B2	Cabinet approved the final version of the Climate Action Plan in April 2022 and agreed to continue the DaRT87 (Demand Responsive Transport service) in March 2022.

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.

