

Epping Forest District Council

Risk Management Strategy

Definition

For the purpose of this strategy, risk is defined as something that may have an impact on the achievement of the Council's objectives and affect service delivery to the community.

Objective

The aims of risk management for the Council are to:

- Use risk management to promote innovation as well as to help secure existing objectives.
- Achieve a systematic, holistic and consistent approach to identifying and analysing risks which will be an integral part of all key management processes, rather than a separate initiative and will be developed using the simplest possible means.
- Embed risk management as an integral part of service, strategic and project planning and decision making.
- Establish an effective and explicit system of risk identification, analysis and control.
- Embed the process within our established business planning process.

Achieving these aims will:

- Contribute to sustainable improvements in services and the achievement of best value.
- Ensure the delivery and continuity of our services.
- Reduce the number and cost of claims arising and improve our ability to defend them.

Organisation

The Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee will consider the Council's risk management strategy on an annual basis and recommend it to Cabinet for adoption. The Audit and Governance Committee will monitor and review the effectiveness of the risk management measures put in place. The Director of Finance and ICT has strategic responsibility for risk management and the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder fulfils the role of Lead Member for risk management.

To assist:

- The Risk Management Group will advise and support in the context of risks likely to have a significant impact on the achievement of the Council's objectives. The representatives on the Risk Management Group from each directorate will champion the risk management process within their directorate.

- Primary responsibility for identifying and managing significant operational and strategic risks arising from their directorate activities lies with the Directors, who should ensure that their teams carry out and record risk assessments where appropriate as a routine part of business planning and management activities.
- Any significant changes in risks and or assessments are to be notified by the relevant champion of that service to the Risk Management Group.
- Directors should notify the Director of Finance and ICT of any significant changes in service provision in order to enable them to ensure that appropriate and adequate insurance is in place.
- The Director of Finance and ICT is responsible, in conjunction with the Council's Insurers, for:
 - Minimising the overall cost of inevitable claims which do arise;
 - Supporting the risk management programme by supplying any advice and data both statistical and anecdotal, to Directors;
 - Supporting the business continuity programme by supplying any advice and data both statistical and anecdotal, to Directors;
 - Facilitating Risk Management training for Directors and Champions;
 - Circulation and review of the Risk Management Strategy;
 - The Chief Internal Auditor is responsible for monitoring the implementation and the effectiveness of the risk management strategy and for monitoring compliance with controls introduced by directorates, as part of the ongoing audit programme. Internal Audit will communicate the management implications during the course of Audits and report to Directors as necessary.

Arrangements

- The Risk Management Group will report annually to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee to update the Risk Management Strategy. The Audit and Governance Committee will consider the effectiveness of risk management measures annually.
- Service plans will include operational risks and action plans. The Risk Management Group and the Corporate Governance Group will monitor and review strategic level risk management actions.
- Risk management training will be provided to Members, Directors, Champions and other senior managers, with the aim of ensuring that they have the appropriate skills necessary to identify, evaluate and control risks associated with the services they provide. Training will be provided through the Corporate Training Programme.
- This strategy will be clearly communicated to members and staff and will be subject to review on an annual basis by the Risk Management Group.