

Report to the Audit and Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: AGC-017-2020/21
Date of meeting: 9 December 2020

Portfolio: Leader of the Council

Subject: Risk Management

Responsible Officer: Andrew Small (01992 564278).

Democratic Services: Laura Kirman (01992 564723).

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 November 2020 where all risks were reviewed, and subsequently by the Corporate Governance Group. The narrative for each risk has been updated to reflect the current situation. In particular:

- The risk score for risk 4 (economic development) has been reduced to reflect the implementation of the priority projects agreed by Cabinet on 19 October 2020.
- Risk 12 (staff travel plan) has been removed as it is now subsumed within risk 11 (accommodation project).
- Likewise, the Qualis risk (number 13) is integral to risk 3 (financial resilience) and is no longer a standalone risk.

2. The table below outlines the direction of travel for each risk since it was updated for the September 2020 Audit and Governance, with a brief commentary supporting each risk.

No	Risk	Residual risk rating (i.e. after controls)		Commentary
		September 2020	November 2020	
1	Local Plan	B1	B1	Still waiting for adoption of the Local Plan, which has been further delayed due to the Inspector's lack of availability. Adoption by full Council now anticipated summer 2021
2	Welfare Reform	A2	A2	Updated to reflect the use a virtual hub to help signpost customers
3	Financial Resilience	B1	B1	Narrative reflects the impact of Covid-19 and Qualis in helping to manage this risk
4	Economic Development	A1	B1	This risk has been reduced as the Council delivers the agreed priority projects for Covid-19 Economic Recovery
5	Data/information	C2	C2	Actions being progressed through the officer Information Governance Group
6	Business continuity	C2	C2	As current working arrangements bed down services will be tasked to review their business continuity in light of their response to Covid-19.
7	Housing capital finance	C2	C2	The appointment of an HRA finance expert will assist the Council in putting systems in place to mitigate this risk
8	Cyber security	C2	C2	Risk being actively managed
9	Delays in issuing Planning Permissions	A1	A1	The Council is still in discussions with Natural England but progress is being made.
10	Climate emergency	B2	B2	The Council is developing an action plan with short, medium and long term targets with the overall objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2030

11	Accommodation project	C2	C2	Project progressing well and on target, with a focus on flexible working and collaboration
12	Staff travel plan	B1	n/a	The number of staff anticipated to working from the Civic offices has significantly decreased due to staff working more flexibly. Risk now subsumed within the accommodation project (risk 11)
13	Qualis	C2	n/a	Risk now articulated within risk 3 (financial resilience). Governance related risks will form the basis of the planned 2020/21 governance audit of Qualis

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 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 2 to the report.