

Climate Change – Adaptation Risk

As of November, a new risk covering Climate Change Adaptation has been added to the Council's Corporate Risk management system as a Service Risk. The system enables the council to record, monitor and report corporate performance indicators, improvement actions, and risks.

The risk covers the idea that adaptation to climate change will remain an ongoing and consistent consideration as the climate continues to change. While the short-term failure to adapt services to the changing climate may have a low impact on the organisation, the failure to adapt over the long term brings bigger potential impacts to the organisation which need to be acted on.

The current assessment of the risk is 5 – Medium, Medium. This means the Likelihood is Medium and the impact is Medium on the risk management framework.

4	7	9
2	5	8
1	3	6

The risk identifies opportunities and consequences to Council services. These include;

Opportunities:

- Operations and services that are resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Added value of planned adaptations compared with the potential cost of inaction or having to implement immediate emergency responses.
- Leading by example to local businesses/organisations, so that the district as a whole is better prepared.

Consequences with increased likelihood of:

- Business premises being out of action e.g., due to flooding.
- Failing to fully deliver services/projects.
- Breaching statutory duties.
- Unbudgeted spend on immediate emergency actions to respond to an increase in disruptive and concurrent incidents, to ensure continued service delivery.
- Unmanageable demands on services/employees.

Work Completed in relation to the risk includes:

- Established a Climate Officer Group.
- Creation of a Climate Risk Log identifying possible service consequences and controls (current and potential controls).

Ongoing Work:

- Consideration of climate change impacts built into corporate resilience arrangements/templates.
- Consideration of the resources required to respond to a potentially increasing number of emergency events, recognising any response (and recovery) is likely to have an impact across the Council and require the involvement of numerous services and staff (links to corporate Resilience Planning and the existing Risk Register entry relating to a failure to respond effectively to an emergency.)
- Environmental Implications considered for each committee report/key decision.
- Development of a new Sustainability Strategy to establish agreed objectives and actions.