

Item No	Referred from:	Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
6E	Date:	8 January 2025
	Title of item:	Report on Risk Management Governance (Mid-Year Update)
To be considered alongside agenda item:		Agenda Item 15

The report considered by Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting held on 8 January 2025 can be viewed here: [Agenda for Finance, Audit and Risk Committee on Wednesday, 8th January, 2025, 7.30 pm | North Herts Council](#)

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Finance, Audit and Risk Committee commented on the changes to the Risk Management Framework and recommended to Cabinet that they approve the changes.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL:

- (1) The responsibility for ensuring the management of risks is that of Cabinet.
- (2) This Committee has responsibility to monitor the effective development and operation of Risk Management.

Audio recording – 1 hour 06 minutes 33 seconds

The Service Director – Resources presented the report entitled ‘Report on Risk Management Governance (Mid-Year Update)’ and advised that:

- This report was provided twice a year to ensure that the Committee had oversight of risk management with the Council.
- Risk monitoring of projects had been moved to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously and this Committee was asked to look at how risk management was operating.
- In line with the Audit Report recommendations, the Executive Summary provided the specific areas where risk had moved and the key highlights.
- This report provided some commentary on the highest risk areas, with detail of work completed and ongoing work. Future reports would track where ongoing work has been completed and the impact this has had on the overall risk score.
- Some risks, despite ongoing work, would get stuck at a rating due to external factors. The report provides additional detail on the background which would demonstrate that actions are being taken, despite this not impacting the overall risk score.
- Until a project was complete the risk generally remained high but would usually drop off once complete.
- The Council had three, overarching risks which have causes that fall outside of the control of the Council and would remain high, and these areas were cyber-attacks, finances and resourcing.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Independent Member John Cannon
- Councillor Sean Nolan

In response to questions, the Service Director – Resources advised that:

- All information included in the report came from the risk register. This provided a summary of the risks, provide assurance that risk reviews were taking place and that both new and archived risks were being managed.
- The Council could improve on identifying and recoding emerging risks, where they tended to be added on a reactionary basis, and these could be added earlier on.
- Emergency planning sat slightly outside of risk, as there was always a risk of an emergency, such as flooding, but it was not possible to predict or plan where and what this may be. However, there was ongoing planning to ensure the Council is prepared for any emergency situation.
- This report focussed only on corporate risks, and the terminology in the report should reflect that. All risks, including non-corporate risks, were included on Ideagen which was available to Members.
- Risk e-learning was available to all Officers, which a specific focus on Service Managers who are more likely to deal with projects with higher risk. Sessions were provided to the Senior Management Group on a semi-regular basis.
- The Council had a good Risk Officer in place who could provide support and training to Officers across the authority.

As part of the debate, Councillor Ruth Brown welcomed that risk e-learning was mandatory for managers and the training provided to Members ahead of this meeting was helpful. The report and matrices provided were clear and useful.

Councillor Dominic Griffiths proposed and Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Finance, Audit and Risk Committee noted and provided recommendations to Cabinet on this mid-year Risk Management governance update.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Finance, Audit and Risk Committee commented on the changes to the Risk Management Framework and recommended to Cabinet that they approve the changes.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL:

- (1) The responsibility for ensuring the management of risks is that of Cabinet.
- (2) This Committee has responsibility to monitor the effective development and operation of Risk Management.

N.B. Following the conclusion of this item, there was a short break in proceedings and the Committee reconvened at 20.57.