

RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK – PART 2 – POLICY (What you must do)

This policy applies to:	
Members	Yes
Officers	Yes
Managers	Yes

Officers / Managers - You Must:

- Consider Risk Management as an integral part of your job.
- Read and follow the guidelines in the Risk Management Framework documents.
- Identify and record any threats relating to service delivery in your own area.

Risk Owners – You Must:

- Record new risks on Ideagen Risk Management.
- Review existing risks in line with the Framework requirements.
- Ensure actions are updated and completed.
- Ensure risks are proposed for archiving/deletion when no longer required.
- Update Business Continuity Plans where relevant.

Members – You Must:

- Support and promote an effective Risk Management culture.
- Constructively review and scrutinise the risks involved in delivering the Council's objectives.
- Ensure the Risk Management objectives are aligned with the objectives and strategies of the Council.

Policy author and further advice from: Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager.

Contents:

1. Definitions
2. Purpose of Policy
3. Identification and Assessment of Risk
4. Monitoring and Reviewing Risks
5. Promotion and Scrutiny of the Risk Management Process
6. Linked Policies and Procedures
7. Communication and Training

1. Definitions

Risk - Something that may have an impact on the achievement of our objectives. This could be an opportunity as well as a threat.

Risk Management - The “systematic application of principles, approach and processes to the identification, assessment and monitoring of risks.”

Risk Owner – Responsible Officer to whom a risk is assigned. Provides assurance that the risks for which they are the Risk Owner are being effectively managed, allocating appropriate resources and importance to the process, confirming the existence and effectiveness of existing actions and ensuring further actions are implemented.

2. Purpose of Policy

2.1 Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly to new pressures and opportunities. Managers need to consider Risk Management as an integral part of their job, and the Leadership Team (LT) and Cabinet must keep the Corporate Risks faced by North Herts Council under regular strategic review.

2.2 Part 1 of the Risk Management Framework (the Framework) – the Policy Statement - sets out the seven principles underpinning how we will undertake Risk Management at North Herts Council.

2.3 Part 2 – the Policy, aims to ensure that Risk Management is undertaken in a consistent and effective manner through the Council, with risks that are well documented, reported and understood. It highlights responsibilities and roles within the process.

2.4 North Herts Council is committed to the proactive identification and management of key external and internal risks, which may affect the delivery of our objectives. This will allow us to be a “Risk Aware” Council, who understands that risks may increase as services evolve and we undertake more commercial activities. The Framework is designed to ensure consistent management of risk and provides more detailed guidance for users. The Framework will be regularly updated to ensure we are in line with regulatory and best practice requirements.

3. Identification and Assessment of Risk

3.1 It is the responsibility of all Managers and Officers to identify and document key risks within their service areas, which may affect the achievement of the Council’s objectives. This should be done as part of the Service Planning process and updates to the Council Delivery Plan, but also continuously throughout the year.

3.2 When risks have been identified, they must be recorded and assessed using the Council’s Risk Management software, Ideagen Risk Management.

3.3 All risks should be assessed in line with the requirements of the Framework, assigning an initial Risk Score, and taking into account any existing controls which may be in place.

3.4 Each risk must be assigned to a Risk Owner, who takes responsibility for the risk. This should be someone who has the authority to ensure that required actions are carried out.

3.5 A set of mitigating controls or actions must be identified, with timescales for completion. All actions should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely). The risk should be assessed for a second time, taking the effect of the actions into account. This will become the Target Risk Score and will form the basis of the ongoing risk monitoring. If the Target Risk Score is still unacceptable then it will be necessary to consider further mitigation actions.

3.6 Whilst assessing and managing the risk, Officers should also consider and act on any opportunities which may present themselves. Further guidance on how to consider opportunities is provided within the Framework Part 4 - Toolkit.

3.7 Officers must ensure that the Business Continuity Plan for the Service area is updated with any new risks, including how they can be mitigated to allow any key functions to continue operating.

4. Monitoring and Reviewing Risks

4.1 Once identified and recorded, risks must be proactively managed by the Risk Owner. It is important that the Risk Register is dynamic – new risks added as they arise, and risks removed when they have been managed down to an appropriate level. It is the Council's Policy to focus its resources on monitoring risks which, because of their likelihood or impact, make them priorities. These are risks which score 4 or above on the Risk Matrix.

4.2 Risk Owners must review their risks in line with the requirements of the Framework. Reminders will be issued automatically from Ideagen Risk Management when reviews of risks are due.

4.3 Actions must be updated once completed, and the risk assessed to see whether the Target Risk Score has been achieved. Further actions should be added if required.

4.4 When deemed appropriate, the Risk Owner should propose the archiving of any low-level risks scoring 3 or below that are no longer relevant and any risks which they consider to have been managed down to "Business as Usual". They must also review the Business Continuity Plan for the Service and update it with any changes that may be required following the archiving/closure of the risk.

5. Promotion and Scrutiny of the Risk Management Process

5.1 The Leadership Team (LT) and Cabinet will support a culture of well measured risk taking throughout the Council's business, by embedding Risk Management in our corporate business processes including strategic planning, corporate business planning, policy making and review, performance management, and key partnerships.

5.2 All Managers and Members must consider risk as an integral part of business planning, service delivery, key decision-making processes, and project and partnership governance.

5.3 Business Continuity Plans must be maintained for each service area, identifying the key functions in a service, what the risks are and how they can be mitigated to allow key functions to continue.

5.4 All committee reports must contain a Risk Implications section. In addition to the standard wording that is included in the committee report template, the report writer should summarise the risks that the decision maker needs to consider to make a fully informed decision. Although overall responsibility for Risk Management lies with LT and Cabinet, it is an integral part of each Managers role and report writers must always identify the risks linked to the decision they are recommending.

5.5 Members must constructively review and scrutinise the risks to ensure they have been adequately considered, to enable delivery of the Council's objectives.

5.6 All new and proposed archiving/closure of Service Risks must be reviewed by the Risk and Performance Management Group (RPMG) and LT prior to the changes to Ideagen Risk Management being accepted.

5.7 Any changes to Corporate Risks (those included in the Council Delivery Plan) must be reviewed by RPMG, LT and Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being approved by Cabinet. Changes to the Risk Management Framework must be reviewed by RPMG, LT and Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FARC) before being approved by Cabinet. Changes to Service Risks should be discussed with the relevant Director.

5.8 Members of RPMG and Finance, Audit and Risk Committee are responsible for ensuring the Risk Management process is aligned to the Council's objectives, challenging the process where appropriate and making recommendations to Cabinet.

6. Linked Policies and Procedures

6.1 Everyone is required to adhere to all Council policies, procedures and processes. The Risk Management Framework consists of four parts and all Officers, Managers and Members should ensure they have a good understanding of their risk responsibilities.

Risk Management Framework – Part 1 – Policy Statement (The Key Principles)

Risk Management Framework – Part 2 – Policy (What you must do)

Risk Management Framework – Part 3 – Strategy (How we will do it)

Risk Management Framework – Part 4 – Toolkit (Operational guidance)

7. Communication and Training

7.1 The Council is committed to making training available to everyone. We will increase understanding and expertise in Risk Management through targeted training and the sharing of good practice and lessons learned. Training is available via e-learning on GROW Zone, with further training available from the Controls, Risk and Performance Team on request. Some of this training may be deemed mandatory. Managers should identify and arrange any training that their staff require. All Officers should also request training on any areas that they are uncertain about.

7.2 A Toolkit is provided as part of the Risk Management Framework, which provides practical guidance on the use of Ideagen Risk Management and all the associated tasks to be undertaken. The Toolkit is available on the intranet (The Hub).

Mandatory Risk Management training for managers is available on GROW Zone (link to the system below):

[North Hertfordshire District Council](#)

Risk Management page on the Intranet:

[Risk Management](#)