

Policy & Finance Committee

Date: 23 January 2023

Title: Annual Risk Register & Action Plan for 2023-24

Purpose of the Report:

To provide an update in respect of Council risks.

Contact Officer:

Sarah Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk & all Heads of Service

Corporate Objective/s	Annual assessment of risks in accordance with internal control procedures	
Implications:		
Financial		
Human Resources		
Operational/Service delivery	Yes	To assess risk to Council operations and put measures in place to mitigate
Procedural/Legal	Yes	Internal control procedures
Risk/Health and Safety	Yes	Some risks on the Register relate to health & safety e.g. skatepark.
Environmental Aims		

1 RECOMMENDATION/S

Should the Committee be minded, the proposals are:

1.1 To note the report.

1.2 To recommend to Council approval of the Risk Register and Action Plan for 2023-2024, to be signed by the Town Mayor and the Responsible Financial Officer.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 As the Committee is aware, there is an ongoing, annual requirement for the Council to review its Risk Register. Following Committee review, the Risk Register and Action Plan requires approval by Council.

- 2.2 The Town Council has used for many years the specific software LCRS (Local Council Risk System). The system is pre-loaded with more than 390 risks and 1100 controls across a spectrum of services areas, for local councils to select those which apply to them and assess the potential risk for each element. New risks can also be added as they arise.
- 2.3 Each January, a revised Action Plan for the following year is presented to Committee and Council for its consideration.
- 2.4 An update on the Action Plan is provided to Committee half-way through each municipal year. For the last year, an update report was provided in September 2022.
- 2.5 The 2022-23 Action Plan contained risks and action plans for several areas of council operations. Several actions have been completed and those relating to the Covid-19 pandemic have now been removed as deemed no longer of risk to the council.

3. UPDATE

- 3.1 The Town Clerk and Heads of Service have recently revisited the entire Risk Register document to ensure it is accurate, up to date and fit for purpose. Each specific area of risk has been re-evaluated. Where practicable, action items have been addressed during the re-assessment period.
- 3.2 The LCRS software is specific to the parish council sector and is pre-populated with associated risks. Last year the risk of pandemic was added to a number of service areas and this remains in place.
- 3.3 The evaluation process requires that risks are scored for both potential likelihood and potential impact, with anything scoring highly necessitating the creation of an Action Plan (**attached as Appendix A** along with full Risk register for 2023-2024 as **Appendix B**).
- 3.4 Items appearing on the proposed 2023-24 Action Plan are not new but are ongoing from previous iterations of the risk register. The five areas of focus are:
 - risk relating to uncertainty over future management of land and open space to the east of the town
 - risk relating to loss of key staff
 - revision of byelaws (due to committee in March 2023 but will continue into 2023-24)
 - skatepark – committee has agreed that tenders be sought for remedial works to extend the life of the facility

- 3.5 The action plan summarises a proposed course of action for each area, who is responsible and a proposed deadline date. Where an action is likely to be ongoing throughout the year, the date has been entered as 31/12/2023.
- 3.6 The Risk Register is a living document which will continue to be updated and revised throughout the year, as appropriate, by Heads of Service. Any new risks identified as a result of new assets, services or functions will be added as required. A mid-year update will come to committee in July/September 2023.
- 3.7 Alternative software options were identified during the 2022 software review and it is anticipated that this can be investigated further within the next year.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. Responsible officers have reviewed the Risk Register to ensure it is up to date and fit for purpose.
- 4.2. The Committee is asked to consider recommending approval of the 2023-2024 Risk Register and Action Plan to Council.

End.