

Report to: **Audit Committee**

Date: **7 December 2021**

Title: **Strategic Risk Update**

Portfolio Area: **Councillor Neil Jory
Leader (Strategic Direction)**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:

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Recommendations:

That Audit Committee:

1. Consider the Strategic Risk Register as set out in Appendix A

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 In accordance with the Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy adopted by Council on 4th December 2018, this report forms the required bi-annual update to Audit Committee Members.
- 1.2 The Strategy sets out the roles and responsibilities for various Council Committees and officer groups. The Audit Committee is to "Provide independent assurance to the Council on the effectiveness of the Council's risk and opportunity management, internal control and overall assurance framework"
- 1.3 This report aims to provide the Committee with the information required in order to provide that assurance to the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 Successful Risk Management is an essential part of delivering good governance across the Council and reduces the uncertainty or achieving our ambitions (as set out in A Plan for West Devon).
- 2.2 Risk management is about adopting a planned and systematic approach to identifying, evaluating and controlling the things that will prevent us delivering on our priorities.
- 2.3 The Council has adopted a Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy requiring the Senior Leadership Team to Identify, evaluate, prioritise and control risks and opportunities.

- 2.4 In doing so it must ensure that the Council implements and manages appropriate measures to respond to identified risks.
- 2.5 The Senior Leadership Team regularly consider strategic risks and these are presented to Audit Committee on a bi-annual basis.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 In response to feedback from Members, the Strategic Risk Register format has been changed to make it clearer and easier to understand. It also provides a demonstration of the 'risk history' to enable Members to track the progress of reducing risks.
- 3.2 The Strategic Risk register does not capture all risks to the Council and its services. Each service holds their own risk registers with those risks that Heads of Service are responsible for managing.
- 3.3 During this period, one risk has been removed from the Strategic Risk Register relating to the three-weekly waste collection trial. The risk has been removed as the trial has concluded.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 The risk register is a regularly updated document that enables the Senior Leadership Team to actively manage risks.
- 4.2 Members should note the current risks and progress made in mitigating them. If deemed necessary, Audit Committee may make recommendations to Hub Committee on amendments or additions to the register.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 It is suggested that the Committee focus attention on those risks with the highest score i.e. those risks with a score of 16 and over.
- 5.2 The Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor the existing Strategic Risks, seek to identify any new risks and provide a further update to Audit Committee in six months' time.

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Audit Committee has a role in keeping under review and recommending to Council improvements in relation to effective risk management. There are no direct legal implications arising from the report although a strategic focus on risk and opportunity management is good practice. Any specific legal implications are to be considered in individual risk assessments.
Financial implications to	Y	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report, although effective

include reference to value for money		corporate risk and opportunity management can help protect the Council from budget variances.
Risk	Y	Members should note that while risk and opportunity is assessed collectively within SLT, the judgements in relation to the scores are inevitably subjective and Member challenge of the officer conclusions is therefore welcomed.
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Strategic Risks are those which could, if not managed, prevent us from delivering on our strategic priorities. Effective risk management is therefore a key element of our Performance Management Framework and process.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	N	There are no direct carbon/biodiversity impacts arising from the recommendations as this will be factored into individual risk assessments where appropriate.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		Factored in to individual risk assessments where appropriate
Safeguarding		Factored in to individual risk assessments where appropriate
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		Factored in to individual risk assessments where appropriate
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		Factored in to individual risk assessments where appropriate
Other implications		

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Strategic Risk Register November 2021

Background Papers:

Approval and clearance of report