

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In line with established best practice, North West Leicestershire District Council has reviewed its principles of risk management which were approved in September 2009. The Council has adopted the principles of risk management in order to meet the following objectives:

- to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees and the people it serves;
- to protect its property, assets and other resources;
- to protect the services it provides;
- to maintain its reputation and good standing in the wider community.
- to deliver its overall objectives and priorities

2. RISK MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

2.1 Risk Management is co-ordinated corporately by the Health and Safety Officer based in the Council's Human Resources Team and through the Risk Management Group (RMG) chaired by the Head of Finance. Each of the Council's Services has a representative on the RMG. Progress on Corporate Risk Management will be reported to elected Members through performance reports to the Cabinet. The Corporate Portfolio Holder is the Cabinet Member with overall responsibility for risk management.

2.2 Risk management will be embedded in the culture of the authority through:

- the continued adoption of the Council's risk management policy statement;
- a nominated officer lead, currently the Head of Finance;
- the Risk Management Group with representation from each Service Area;
- an established uniform procedure for the identification, analysis, management and monitoring of risk; and -
- regular monitoring and reporting through the corporate performance management system

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 The Council will strive to maintain its diverse range of services to the community and visitors to the North West Leicestershire area. It will protect and preserve its ability to continue to provide these services by ensuring that its assets, both tangible and intangible, are protected against loss and damage. The Council is committed to a programme of risk management to ensure its ambitions for the community can be fulfilled through:

"The identification, analysis, management and financial control of those risks which can most impact on the Council's ability to pursue its approved delivery plan".

3.2 The Council is committed to using risk management to maintain and improve the quality of its own services as well as any contribution by partnerships through its community leadership role. The Risk Management Strategy has the following aims and objectives:

- to further embed risk management into the culture of the Council;
- to promote the recognition of risk within the Council's defined corporate aims and objectives;
- continue to raise risk awareness within the Council and its partners;
- to manage risk in accordance with best practice;
- to comply with legislation and guidance;
- to improve safety and increase safety awareness;
- to protect Council property, services and reputation;
- to reduce disruption to services by having effective contingency or recovery plans in place to deal with incidents when they occur;
- to minimise injury, damage, loss and inconvenience to residents, staff and service users arising from or connected with the delivery of Council services;
- to review robust frameworks and procedures for the identification, analysis, assessment and management of risk, and the reporting and recording of events, based on best practice;
- to maximise value for money.

3.3 Each year, through the Risk Management Group, the Council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) will review the Risk Management Policy Statement and its risk management processes to ensure their continued relevance to the Council. The annual review will also assess performance against the aims and objectives set out above. CLT will be accountable to Members for the effective management of risk within the Council. This will be achieved through the quarterly reporting of corporate risks to Cabinet and reports to the Audit and Governance Committee.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

4.1 The overall objective of the Council's risk management strategy is to ensure that risks to the Council's objectives, services, employees, partnerships and contractors are identified, recorded, amended, prioritised and then addressed by being treated, tolerated, transferred or terminated. The strategy incorporates:

a. Identification / consideration of risks

- Identifies corporate and operational risks, assesses the risks for likelihood and impact, identifies mitigating controls and allocates responsibility for the mitigating controls.
- Requires the consideration of risk within all service plans and reviews and the regular review of existing risks as identified in the risk register.
- Requires, reports supporting strategic policy decisions and project initiation documents, to include a risk assessment.

b. Development / Delivery

- Allocates responsibility for embedding risk management to a senior officer and Member, to jointly champion.
- Embeds risk management into; strategic planning, financial planning, policy making and review, and performance management.

- Requires that an update report arising from the work of the Risk Management Group is presented to Corporate Leadership Team for discussion and information.
- Develops arrangements to monitor and measure performance of risk management activities against the Council's strategic aims and priorities.
- Considers risks in relation to significant partnerships, which requires assurances to be obtained about the management of those risks.

c. Member Involvement / Responsibility

- Requires approval of the Risk Management Strategy by Cabinet.
- Requires regular reporting to Cabinet and the Audit and Governance Committee on the management of risks together with recommendation of appropriate actions.

d. Training / Awareness

- Provides relevant training to appropriate staff to enable them to take responsibility for managing risks within their environment.
- Requires the maintenance of documented procedures for the control of risk and the provision of suitable information, training and supervision.
- Develops appropriate toolkits, procedures and guidelines.
- Considers positive risks (opportunities) and negative risks (threats).
- Provides risk management awareness training for staff and Members.

e. Review

- Maintains and reviews a register of corporate business risks linking them to strategic business objectives and assigning ownership for each risk.
- Requires an annual review of the risk management process, including a report to CLT and quarterly reporting to the Audit and Governance Committee and, in the case of strategic risks, to Cabinet through the performance reporting process.
- Includes a monthly one-to-one review between managers and risk owners.

f. Business Continuity / Insurance

- Develops contingency plans in areas where there is a potential for an occurrence having a catastrophic effect on the delivery of the Council's services.
- Ensures the Council's Insurance Officer is notified of any new risks.
- Ensures adequate records are maintained and retained to support the Council's defence against disputed insurance claims.

5. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP

5.1 The Corporate Risk Management Group is made up of technical experts and corporate leads from the Council's Service Areas. Members of the Group act as "champions" for risk within their services and the Group provides a link into the CLT.

5.2 The role of the Group is to maintain a formal framework that will assist with the management of risk and business continuity, by developing the corporate lead and advising CLT on the expected outcome. The objectives of the Group are:

- to assess and advise on the reduction of prevailing risks within the Council's services, to the benefit of staff and the public;

- to discuss, agree and recommend as appropriate, on matters relating to corporate risk policy and strategy;
- to make reports and recommendations to CLT;
- to discuss operational risks insofar as they relate to matters of cross-directorate interest;
- to oversee the implementation of the Council's Risk Management Strategy, and to promote a holistic approach to its ongoing management;
- to promote good risk management practices with the aim of reducing potential liabilities;
- to consider and identify ideas/schemes for risk reduction;
- to provide a forum to discussion on risk management issues.

These will be achieved through the following:

- the use of the Council's Risk Management reporting system;
- monitoring the risk management strategy;
- reviewing the Council's strategic risk register and associated action plans, acting as a forum for examining and rating risks and making recommendations to CLT.
- developing a comprehensive performance framework for risk management, and developing and using key indicators capable of showing improvements in risk management and providing early warning of risk;
- supporting the development and review of internal standards and procedures regarding significant risk areas;
- supporting the development and implementation of relevant training, awareness and education programmes;
- supporting the development and implementation of adequate, relevant and effective reporting, communication and information dissemination systems with managers and staff;
- supporting the effective monitoring and review of near misses, untoward incidents and accidents, legal and insurance claims and verifying that appropriate management action has been taken promptly to minimise the risk of future occurrence;
- supporting the review of the risk register and action plans to ensure that appropriate management action is taken appropriately to tolerate, treat, transfer or terminate the risk;
- monitoring compliance with legal and statutory duties;
- providing progress reports to CLT and Members, drawing to their attention significant business risks.

6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 The Council will adopt uniform procedures for the identification, analysis, management and monitoring of risk. These will be embodied in a formal risk management framework, which will be subject to review by the Cabinet, following consideration by CLT.

The approved framework is set out in Appendix A to this strategy document.

7. FUNDING FOR RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The annual Service and Financial Planning process will include a review of operational risks and consider the allocation of funds for risk management initiatives as part of the annual budget process. If additional funds are required approval will be sought initially from CLT.

8. BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 Effective risk management will deliver a number of tangible and intangible benefits to Individual services and to the Council as a whole e.g.

Improved Strategic Management

- Greater ability to deliver against objectives and targets
- Increased likelihood of change initiatives being achieved effectively
- Improved reputation, hence support for regeneration

Improved Operational Managements

- Reduction in interruptions to service delivery.
- Reduction in managerial time spent dealing with the consequences of a risk event occurring
- Improved health and safety of employees and others affected by the Council's activities
- Compliance with legislation and regulations

Improved Financial Management

- Better informed financial decision-making
- Enhanced financial control
- Reduction in the financial costs associated with losses due to service interruption, litigations, etc.
- Improved containment of insurance premiums.

Improved Customer Service

- Minimal service disruption to customers and a positive external image

North West Leicestershire District Council
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North West Leicestershire District Council Risk Management Framework

(A) What is this framework?

This framework is intended to promote a set of uniform risk management procedures through which directorates will identify, analyse, monitor and manage the risks faced by the Council.

For the purposes of the framework, risk management is defined as *“the identification, analysis, management and financial control of those risks that can impact on the Council’s ability to deliver its services and priorities.”*

Risk management is therefore concerned with better decision making, through a clear understanding of all associated risks before final decisions are made by either Members or officers. When risks are properly identified, analysed and prioritised it is possible to formulate action plans that propose management actions to reduce risk or deal adequately with the consequences of the risks should they occur. The underlying aim is to treat, terminate or transfer risk to bring them to an acceptable manageable level within the Council, monitor tolerated risk, ensuring services to the public can be maintained, and that the Council’s priorities can be fulfilled.

Risk management therefore supports the Council’s service planning process by positively identifying the key issues that could affect the delivery of the service objectives.

(B) Why does the council need to consider risk management as part of its service planning?

All organisations have to deal with risks, whatever their nature. As a general principle the Council will seek to reduce or control all risks that have the potential to:

- harm individuals;
- affect the quality of service delivery or delivery of the Council’s priorities;
- have a high potential of occurrence;
- would affect public confidence;
- would have an adverse effect on the Council’s public image;
- would have significant financial consequences.

Risk Management cannot therefore be considered in isolation, but needs to be an integral part of decision-making and service planning processes of the Council. Risk management must be fully embedded in:

- service planning,
- performance management,
- best value,
- committee reports.

(C) Assessing risk

Once risks have been identified, an assessment of their significance is required. This requires a robust and transparent scoring mechanism to be used uniformly across Council directorates.

Scoring should be a group exercise including managers and frontline employees. This is because people's perceptions vary and this can have an effect on scoring the risk. Employees who experience a risk every day can become complacent and fail to see how serious it may actually be, whilst a group will usually see the wider impact.

A decision on risk ownership is also required. The owner should be at management level and be responsible for ensuring that controls identified to manage the risk are in place and that they are effective. Delegation of responsibility for particular actions to other employees is acceptable, but overall control of risk must remain with management.

Tables 2 and 3 below set out a scoring mechanism for assessing the likelihood and the impact of exposure to risk.

Table 2 – assessing the likelihood of exposure

1 Low	Likely to occur once in every ten years or more
2 Medium	Likely to occur once in every two to three years
3 High	Likely to occur once a year
4 Very high	Likely to occur at least twice in a year

Table 3 – assessing the impact of exposure

1. Minor	Loss of a service for up to one day Objectives of individuals are not met No injuries Financial loss below £10,000 No media attention No breaches in council working practices No complaints/litigation
2. Medium	Loss of a service for up to one week Service objectives of a service unit are not met Injury to an employee or member of the public requiring medical treatment Financial loss over £10,000 Adverse regional or local media attention – televised or news paper report High potential for a complaint litigation possible Breaches of regulations/standards

<p>3. Serious</p>	<p>Loss of a service for one week or more Service objectives of the directorate are not met Non- statutory duties are not achieved Permanent injury to an employee or member of the public Financial loss over £100,000 Adverse national or regional media attention – national news paper report Litigation to be expected Breaches of law punishable by fine</p>
<p>4. Major</p>	<p>An incident so severe in its effects that a service or project will be unavailable permanently Strategic priorities are not met Statutory duties are not achieved Death of an employee or member of the public Financial loss over £1m. Adverse national media attention – national televised news report Litigation almost certain and difficult to defend Breaches of law punishable by imprisonment</p>

(D) Prioritisation of risk

Table 4 brings together in a matrix the likelihood and impact of risk.

Table 4 – a risk matrix

		Likelihood			
		1	2	3	4
Impact	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4

Based on this matrix, the Council must decide on the level of risk it is prepared to accept as part of its ongoing operations. Any risk above the agreed level should be considered unacceptable and will therefore need to be managed. The risks in the above matrix fall into three zones; red, amber and green. Table 5 sets out the Councils intended response to these risks.

Table 5 – Intended responses to risk

Red	Controls and/or mitigating actions are required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Effort should be focused on reducing the risk of any items appearing in this zone, hence moving them to the amber or green zone.
Amber	Risks will require ongoing monitoring to ensure they do not move into the red zone. Depending on the resources required to address the red risks, it may be appropriate to develop controls/mitigating actions to control these risks.
Green	Existing controls and/or mitigating actions are sufficient and may be excessive. More resource committed to reduce these risks is likely to be wasted. Consideration should be given to relaxing the level of control to release resources for mitigating higher level risks.

(E) Format of the risk register

Annex 1 to this framework provides a standard format.

