

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

27 July 2020

Report of the Management Team

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 RISK MANAGEMENT

An update on the risk management process and the Strategic Risk Register.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Risk Management Strategy sets out the Council's risk management objectives and details the roles and responsibilities of officers, Members and the Council's partners in the identification, evaluation and cost-effective control of risks.

1.1.2 The Council's risk management arrangements are designed to ensure that risks are reduced to an acceptable level or, where reasonable, eliminated thereby safeguarding the Council's assets, employees and customers and the delivery of services to the local community. Examples of risk include budget deficit, cyber/data loss, environmental and reputational.

1.1.3 The current Risk Management Strategy was recommended by this Committee in January and subsequently adopted by Full Council on 18 February 2020.

1.2 Risk Management Escalation Process

1.2.1 Effectively risks are assessed/scored in terms of their likelihood/impact.

1.2.2 Any risk evaluated as 'High Risk' (score of 15 or above) will be deemed by the Council to be beyond 'risk tolerance' and to have exceeded its 'risk appetite' and will be escalated immediately. Such risks should be added to the service's risk register and discussed at the earliest opportunity within the Service Management Team (SMT) to inform a decision as to whether this should be escalated to Management Team by the respective Service Director. Management Team should then consider whether the risk is significant enough for inclusion in the Strategic Risk Register and action this if relevant. A record should be maintained of risks discussed at both SMTs and Management Team and the outcome of those discussions.

1.2.3 Similarly risks identified as “Medium Risk” may be escalated to the appropriate SMT for advice and to ensure they are kept fully aware of the current risks being faced. Risks determined as “Low Risk” should be managed within the service team. It is recommended that SMTs consider periodic review or moderation processes for Service Risk Registers to ensure they are happy with the scores risks have been given and confirm whether there are ‘Medium’ or ‘Low’ risks they wish to consider further.

1.3 Strategic Risk Register

1.3.1 The Strategic Risk Register (SRR) is considered to be a ‘live’ document and is updated, as often as is required, by the Management Team. An update of the current strategic risks and how they are being managed as at the time of writing is appended at **[Annex 1]**.

1.3.2 As you would expect the Covid-19 outbreak and its ongoing impact across the Council’s service areas, businesses and the wider community has been added to the SRR. Members are asked to note both the addition and updates since the last iteration of the Register.

1.3.3 To give Members some reassurance as to the effectiveness of the regime outcomes from the risk management escalation process are reported to the meetings of this Committee unless that is there is something that needs to be brought to Members’ attention in the interim. Members have been kept updated with regard to the Covid-19 emergency via the Council’s website and reports.

1.3.4 Not surprisingly, the number of risks that have been re-categorised as RED, for the time being at least, has increased. These are now:

- 1) Financial position/budget deficit
- 2) Brexit Impact and Economic uncertainty (Impacted by Coronavirus Pandemic)
- 3) Corporate Strategy and Savings and Transformation Strategy
- 4) Waste Services (this was previously categorised as RED, so no change)

1.3.5 Given the significance of the changes as a result of the pandemic, a report on the SRR was also presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 3 June 2020. As we begin to develop plans in response to the pandemic, it is hoped that the risk level can be reviewed again.

1.4 Ongoing Risks and Risks Identified by Service Management Teams and Management Team

1.4.1 A schedule of ongoing risks and risks identified by Service Management Teams and Management Team since the last report to this Committee in January is appended at **[Annex 2]**.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 There is a Health and Safety requirement for effective risk management to be in place and the Strategy supports this requirement.
- 1.5.2 There is also a requirement in the Accounts and Audit Regulations that accounting control systems must include measures to ensure that risk is appropriately managed.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.6.1 Financial issues may arise in mitigating risk which will be managed within existing budget resources or reported to Members if this is not possible.
- 1.6.2 Effective risk management arrangements make a positive contribution to ensuring value for money is provided in the delivery of services.

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 Sound risk management arrangements aid the Council in effective strategic decision-making. The Council's approach to risk should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is up to date and operating effectively.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.8.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.9 Policy Considerations

- 1.9.1 Risk management is relevant to all areas of the Council's business.

1.10 Recommendations

- 1.10.1 Members are asked to note and acknowledge the escalation of a number of key risks to RED as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic.

Background papers:

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Nil

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