

East Herts Council Report

Audit and Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 22 September 2020

Report by: Bob Palmer, Head of Strategic Finance and Property

Report title: Strategic Risk Monitoring 2020/21- Quarter One

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary

RECOMMENDATION FOR AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

(a) The Strategic Risk Register be reviewed and officers advised of any further action that could be taken to manage risk.

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 Quarterly monitoring of the Strategic Risk Register has resumed in 2020/21 and this report details the controls introduced during quarter one.

2.0 Background

2.1 Performance, Audit and Governance Oversight Committee received a report on 19 May 2020 proposing the content of the Strategic Risk Register for 2020/21. The committee also reviewed the Risk Management Strategy for the year.

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 Public services are facing unprecedented challenges and the effective management of risk is needed more than ever. Our

risk-managed approach to decision making will help the council achieve objectives and deliver services more efficiently.

3.2 Given both the pandemic and the break in risk reporting, the report submitted in May 2020 included mitigating actions (controls) introduced or planned. The report reflected the position at the end of April rather than a specific time period. This report records the quarter one position.

3.3 In addition to the updated controls listed there have been minor updates to the finance risk description. The target impact score for risk 8, business economy, has been reduced from 3 to 2. No other descriptions or scores have changed. (The scoring matrix is included at the foot of the register.)

4.0 Options

4.1 Members of the Performance, Audit and Governance Committee were advised in in May that, new for 2020/21, Leadership Team would monitor the highest level service, project and corporate risks. However the Communications, Strategy and Policy team has since commenced a quarterly report on major projects. As that report also covers risk, the report proposed is not considered necessary. It had been the intention to record these lower-level risks on Pentana for Members to view which will no longer happen.

4.2 Contrary to expectations it has not yet been possible to upload strategic risks to Pentana Performance, although given the reports to this committee, use of Pentana may not be necessary in any event.

5.0 Risks

5.1 Embedding risk management produces many benefits for the Council which are documented within the Risk Management Strategy presented at May's meeting.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 Leadership Team proposed the content of the register in February 2020 and agreed the updated content in August 2020.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

Risk management can provide protection of budgets from unexpected losses. Better governance can be demonstrated and the annual audit plan is risk based.

The 'resources' item within the Strategic Risk Register deals with financial pressures and several other entries will have financial impacts.

Health and Safety

None specific but risk management processes can provide a safer environment across the District and all services for the benefit of the public, staff and our contractors.

Compliance reports are submitted by the Health and Safety Officer to Safety Committee, Leadership Team, Human Resources Committee and Executive.

Human Resources

The fourth item within the Strategic Risk Register details the risk of not having the capacity or skills to deliver services, staff recruitment and retention, succession planning etc.

Human Rights

No

Legal

One strategic risk specifically concerns legislation and several other risks touch on legal matters.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 Please see the Strategic Risk Register at Appendix 1.

Contact Member

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