Gateshead Council

Title of Report: Corporate Risk Management 2020/21 - Quarter 4 Update

Report of: Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

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Purpose of the Report

1. This report updates the Committee on Corporate Risk Management during the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021.

Background

2. Quarterly reporting to those with the responsibility for the oversight of risk management issues complies with the principles of good corporate governance. It is also embodied in the Corporate Risk Management Policy. This was last approved by Council on 21 May 2013 and is kept under review. Whilst it has been amended to reflect changes in Senior Officer titles since that time, it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

3. The report covers progress against the Corporate Risk Management Developmental Objectives for 2020/21, as cited in the Corporate Risk Management Annual Report 2019/20, and any other risk management issues emerging within the quarter under consideration.

Strategic Risk Management

4. In November 2018, Cabinet and Council approved a revised Strategic Risk Register which had been presented to Audit and Standards Committee on 1 October 2018. The Corporate Management Team has continued to ensure strategic risks are responded to in accordance with the Risk Management Policy, with risks and controls being recorded for inclusion within the Strategic Risk Register. As part of the iterative nature of the Register, risk owners are asked to provide updates as part of the quarterly reviews, which are then reported to Committee as part of the quarterly reporting.

5. There have been no changes to the Strategic Risk Register in the fourth quarter 2020/21. The Strategic Risk Register is attached for information in Appendix 1.

Operational Risk Management

6. Operational risks identified within the Council are recorded on the operational risk register. Work is ongoing to ensure operational risk management activity within services continues to align with service objectives, including those risks specific to operational objectives.

7. Service Risk Coordinators, whose role it is to support and champion risk management activity within their Services, are working with the Corporate Risk Officer to support risk owners with evaluating existing operational risk assessments. The focus of this work is on ensuring the assessments contain the required information to inform the management response.

Business Continuity Management

8. In accordance with the Council's Risk Management and Business Continuity Policies, all services are required to continuously assess the risk of their activities being disrupted and to develop cost effective business continuity plans.

9. All Business Impact Assessments were reviewed by Services in March 2020 and again in November 2020. This was to identify threats to critical activities and potential increased demand on Council Services following a second wave of infections, along with other potential pressures such as exit from the EU and seasonal events like flu and adverse weather.

10. Business Continuity Plans were also revised accordingly to mitigate, as far as possible, any threats to the delivery of key activities with a focus on activity that could not be interrupted for more than 48 hours without critical impact. This exercise was also used to assess which activities might require additional support to strengthen resilience and estimated the officer numbers and skills that might be needed.

11. Where these could not be provided by redeployment from within the Service or Group, redeployment of officers would be sought from Services that had either been stood down due to COVID or could be reduced in the short term without significant impact.

12. Quarterly audit and risk reports are provided to Group Management Teams to highlight the activities for which services have developed continuity plans.

Corporate Risk and Resilience Group

13. The Corporate Risk and Resilience Group is currently being refocused to a Corporate Risk and Business Continuity Group to more accurately reflect the needs of the Council. Membership and terms of reference of the group will be reconsidered and the group will be coordinated by the Service Director, Commercialisation & Improvement.

14. This revised group will remain within the remit of this committee.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that the Committee note the report and consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements.

Contact: Natalie Porthouse Ext. 3723

Strategic Risk Register as at 31 March 2021

*Ranked in order of Gross Risk

Ref	Risk	Risk owner	*Gross Risk	Current risk		
				Likelihood	Impact	Score
10	Failure to comply with the housing regulatory standards applicable to Local Authorities.	Service Director – Housing Compliance	20	Likely	High	16
8	The implications of EU Exit potentially affecting the availability of Council's resources to deliver services which may impact on communities.	Brexit Lead Officer	16	Likely	Medium	12
9	The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information and systems.	CMT	16	Moderate	High	12
1	Failure to address the financial gap in the Council's budget and achieve the target within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy resulting in non-achievement of Council strategic priority of Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives.	CMT	16	Likely	Medium	12
2	Failure to manage demand and expectations could result in the Council not achieving its Thrive agenda.	CMT	16	Moderate	Medium	9
3	Failure to safeguard vulnerable children and adults	CMT	16	Unlikely	High	8
6	Failure to address workforce planning and resourcing requirements impacting on service delivery.	CMT	16	Moderate	Low	6
4	Failure to attract inward investment and deliver sustainable economic growth.	CMT	12	Moderate	Medium	9
5	Non-compliance with statutory requirements resulting in prosecution and subsequent penalties.	CMT	12	Likely	Low	8
7	Failure to provide a response during a Major incident or business interruption affecting availability of the Council's resources and impacting on ability to deliver critical services or an impact on a community.	CMT	8	Unlikely	Medium	6