

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 Cabinet are asked to recommend Council adopt the Strategic Risk Register.

2. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Strategic Risk Register (Appendix 1), now included within this report contains the significant risks, as identified by senior and executive council officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holders, in the Council achieving the priorities set out in the 'Community Matters Corporate Plan 2020-24'.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Risk management aims to identify the risks that may impact on the Council achieving its objectives. Its purpose is to evaluate, design and implement effective measures to reduce both the likelihood and potential impact of these risks occurring.
- 3.2 The Council has a statutory responsibility to have in place arrangements for managing risks under the Accounts and Audit Regulations; which require a sound system of internal control, facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and includes arrangements for the management of risk. As such it features strongly in the Council's Local Code of Practice for Corporate Governance and is one of the primary assurance strands in the Annual Governance Statement, which places significant reliance on a robust risk management framework.

4. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

- 4.1 The Strategic Risk Register (Appendix 1) captures the most significant cross cutting risks to the delivery of the current Corporate Plan and the proposed actions to mitigate these risks.
- 4.2 These risks have been identified with senior and executive council officers working alongside the Portfolio Holders to ensure a joined-up approach in capturing and documenting these risks.
- 4.3 The strategic risk register encompasses a total of eight risks of significance, including one further addition incorporated since the last update. The revised register, which can be found in the appendix 1, outlines a detailed narrative of the actions necessary to manage residual risk adequately. Importantly, while some actions are ongoing, others have specific endpoints.

5. AUDIT COMMITTEE COMMENTS

- 5.1 At its meeting on 31 July 2023, the Audit Committee reviewed and noted the Strategic Risk Register, as part of its six-monthly review process and commented on Strategic Risk 5 and 7.

- 5.2 Strategic Risk 5; 'Ensuring robust security measures to protect the Council's digital data and ICT assets from external threats', the Committee raised general queries relating to arrangements for overall network security and the data centre back up, answers to which were being given.
- 5.3 Strategic Risk 7; 'Delivering Council Services Through Adverse Environmental Conditions', and the action detailed as E 'Set up links to town and parish councils as they would be involved in implementing actions through adverse conditions.' it was explained that additional Emergency Planning staffing resource had recently been obtained, and officers undertook to provide details on progress when the next risk register update was given to the Committee.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report, although strong risk management and a solid understanding of risk helps to support robust financial management.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct environmental or equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

8. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no data protection implications arising from this report.

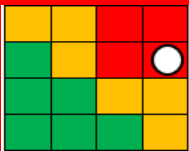
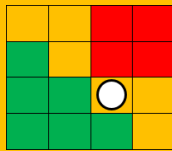
9. LEADER'S COMMENTS

- 9.1 As Leader, I value the work undertaken by Portfolio-holders and EMT to revise the strategic risk register and understand more fully how these significant risks may impact the Council and our communities going forward, and what risk management work is underway. Also the input of Audit Committee to this important governance process. Due to the nature of these risks they cannot often be reduced through addressing likelihood or impact to 'green', but I am reassured that the right actions are underway and look forward to the next iteration which will outline lead accountability for delivery.

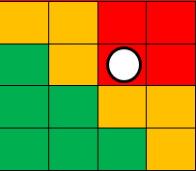
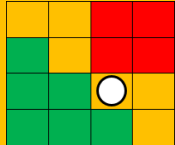
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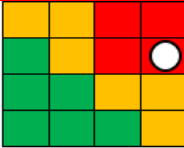
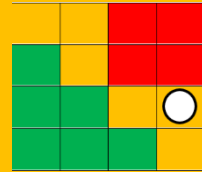
1. Supporting Communities

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 = High 12</p> 	<p>Communities are likely to be negatively impacted due to the current rate of inflation driven (in part) by a high utility price, and the knock-on implication this is having to the cost of food, whilst in the context of a sustained inflated fuel price. This will create additional pressures on local businesses and job security.</p> <p>Communities are impacted through a shortage of housing including affordable housing Supply being delivered within the District.</p> <p>The Council needs to do more to support communities with enhanced digital channels for transacting and communicating with the Council.</p> <p>There will also be some challenges around the delivery of the Freeport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Targeted funding streams and support for voluntary and community sectors B. Engagement in discussions of fundamental activities such as Solent Freeport and County Deals C. Close working partnerships with key stakeholders such as the Community Safety Partnership and the Skills Advisory Group D. Effectively review and apply the Council's Local Plan, including active monitoring of the implementation, while proactively working with developers to provide enabling infrastructure and continuously reviewing the Local Plan. E. Roll-out Digital Strategy prioritising customer needs. F. Corporate Plan 2020-2024 and the development of the next Corporate Plan in 2023 G. Collaborative working with key partners through the Cost of Living Steering Group to implement a Poverty Action Plan H. Establishment of a referral system to aid vulnerable residents I. Regular engagement with the voluntary sector J. Participation on the board and its sub-committees of Solent Freeport Consortium Limited, ensuring collaborative working and shared goal achievement to advance the economic, social and environmental well-being of the District K. The Council's Housing Revenue Account is actively seeking opportunities to bring forward additional affordable homes within the District, under Council ownership. 	<p>Likelihood 2 x Impact 3 = Medium 6</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Allocate resource to support Corporate Plan priorities B. Continue to work in partnership for example with the Solent Freeport and with other public sector partners to explore new and existing opportunities to deliver to residents and businesses C. Understanding the results from the resident survey and taking stock of these learning points to ensure they feed into the Corporate Plan 2025-2028 D. Continued support to the Cost of Living Steering Group is provided, bringing a multi-agency approach to tackling issues affecting the most vulnerable in the community, working alongside the Local Partnership Campaign Manager to explore and promote further support to household. E. Continuing to explore all housing enabling avenues across planning and housing.

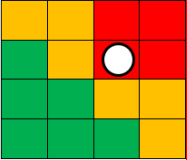
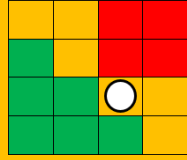
2. Achieving future financial resilience

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 3 x Impact 3 = High 9</p> 	<p>The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan is affected by numerous external economic factors, such as the high bank base rate and the current rate of inflation (cost of living). These factors place significant pressure on expenditure and impact the ability to generate income, noting the longer-term implications of recovering from economic challenges.</p> <p>Other factors, more specific to the Council include pay award, levelling up, the fair funding review, the impact of a business rate reset and increased salary costs resulting from a need to align pay with the wider market.</p> <p>The Council may also need to do more to support communities due to the potential for closure of local businesses and job losses as a result of the cost of living crisis.</p> <p>Given financial constrains affecting the Local Government sector as a whole, Local Authority Partners, may look to the District Council to support their own respective financial sustainability over the Medium term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Regular review of the Council's MTFP including reserve levels and future changes to funding B. Annual budget setting for revenue and capital including funding C. Utilisation of external financial support that provides support for funding modelling D. Regular budget monitoring reports and updates to senior officers and Members E. Currently in the process of creating a Transformation Strategy that contains ample measures to support the successful implementation of the plan. This strategy encompasses numerous actions that will aid effective delivery of the transformation plan F. Development of savings plans and invest to save initiatives G. Treasury Management Strategy to ensure the Council is acting within the prudential indicators H. Maintain appropriate level of financial reserves as contingency arrangements to provide resilience over the medium term I. Development of capital plans in accordance with Capital Strategy with full financial appraisal and revenue implications J. Working with County Council, Towns and Parishes to maximise opportunities for joint working 	<p>Likelihood 2 x Impact 3 = Medium 6</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Continue to keep abreast of developments in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pay award - Fair Funding - National Business Rate Policy - Levelling Up - County Deals B. Maintain momentum and presence within the delivery of the Solent Freeport C. Development of the Transformation Programme to deliver enhanced services and financial efficiencies to support the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan D. Keep up discussions with upper and lower tier authority partners to ensure effective and efficient service delivery to residents

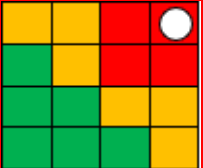
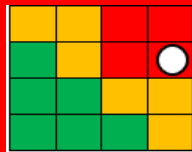
3. Ensuring efficient and effective internal control, governance and compliance

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 = High 12</p> 	<p>As a local authority we need to show appropriate compliance and controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Regulations - Financial Management Code - Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard Accreditation - Production and publication of various statutory documents - Effectiveness of the Capital Change and Delivery Board - Effectiveness of the new Project Management Framework - Timeliness of External Audit completion <p>We continue to follow best practise in terms of documenting our Annual Code of Corporate Governance review, and preparation of an Annual Governance Statement, both with actions plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Annual internal audit plan developed by senior officers and members is targeted at key risks areas and responsive to new areas of risk B. External/internal audit regime C. Annual Assurance Statements compiled testing compliance with key business activities, supporting Annual Governance Statement compilation D. Range of performance indicators that monitor internal controls E. Maintenance of a range of policies that underpin the control framework – Financial Regulations, Counter Fraud Strategy, Risk Management Framework, Contract Procedure Rules coupled with staff training F. Regular reporting at Audit Committee G. Compliance with Transparency Code H. Compliance with Local Code of Corporate Governance I. Key compliance roles identified and assigned i.e., Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Data Protection Officer, H&S, Facilities Lead etc J. Compliance with information governance including the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 K. Review and update of Business Continuity Plans L. Housing and Facilities Compliance reported regularly through EMT M. Information Governance Team in place with regular reporting through EMT. N. Financial Regulations and workflows built into core financial system 	<p>Likelihood 2 x Impact 4 = Medium 8</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Continue through information governance work programme, including updated document retention and destruction schedules for all services. B. Management to undertake actions from the internal audit reports C. Ongoing engagement with external audit. D. Continue to assess the effectiveness of the new Project Management framework for projects to ensure appropriate Governance arrangements are in place for all projects. E. Financial Management Code – complete outstanding actions identified through the initial assessment. F. Enhance member and officer development by offering continuous training, development and engagement opportunities. G. Continue to ensure high levels of statutory compliance standards across services.


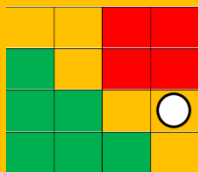
4. Creating the right culture, capacity and capability

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 3 x Impact 3 = High 9</p> 	<p>The Council needs to attract, recruit and retain the high calibre of employee that it requires to fulfil its expectations in Service delivery.</p> <p>The Leadership review has concluded and the Council now has a settled top tier leadership structure. There is however a risk around the time required to achieve organisational/cultural change.</p> <p>The pandemic demonstrated the Council's ability to adapt to changing circumstances swiftly and ensure prioritised operations continued. Accordingly, it is crucial that we continue this momentum and uphold the positive experiences and benefits that have emerged from recent changes. Moreover, steps must be taken to address and improve upon any negative experiences and challenges encountered in service delivery, thereby ensuring a more efficient and satisfactory experience for all involved.</p> <p>There are still some actions to complete as a result of the staff survey completed during 2022.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Employee Forum to encourage collaboration and engender a culture that enables change and innovation B. Learning and development programme to be developed and rolled out to provide training, tools and techniques to develop the necessary skills C. Regular 1-1's and annual PDI process D. Investigation and identification of further collaborations that will support building capacity and capability (and resilience) including both public and corporate business E. Staff Suggestion scheme F. Transformation framework in progress G. Communications plan (internal) allowing for regular staff engagement/progress updates H. Staff/union engagement I. Project management/capability J. Performance management and key performance indicators in place K. Staff/officer wellbeing and support L. Development of Workforce Strategy and enabling an agile workforce M. Corporate plan 2020-2024 N. Hybrid working increasing potential pool of staff O. More support and training on virtual working/managing staff P. Further ICT training to ensure maximum return on investment 	<p>Likelihood 2 x Impact 3 = Medium 6</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Embedding of new Council Leadership structure (including necessary backfill) B. Progress learnings from employee survey C. HR developing plans to work with third parties to deliver a consistent and structured approach to training and development D. Keep abreast of developments in pay award negotiations and be ready to respond accordingly. E. Transformation plan being formulated to include design principles for a new operating model, approach, implementation, and necessary resources. A key aspect of the design principles will be our people strategy and organisational development opportunities. A Transformation Strategy will be presented to the new administration in 2023. F. Continue to identify further opportunities that should be progressed in connection with improving service delivery G. Allocate resource to support Corporate Plan ambitions H. Continue to work in partnership with other public sector partners to explore new and existing opportunities to deliver to residents and businesses

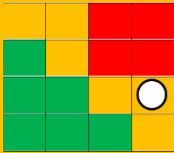
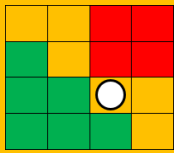
5. Ensuring robust security measures to protect the Council's digital data and ICT assets from external threats

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 = High 16</p> 	<p>This risk relates to the Council's ability to defend itself against the constantly evolving threat from cyber based attack. The Council, in common with other public bodies, should be regarded as a high-profile target given the impact and publicity a successful attack can have.</p> <p>The current insurance market for public sector cyber risks is volatile.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Up to date Disaster Recovery plan is in place B. Awareness training of officers and staff on the threats of cyber attacks C. Continued reviewing and tightening of existing IT Security Policy to ensure measures adapt to the changing threat, including awareness, familiarisation and training. D. Acceptable use of IT policy to ensure staff are using equipment safely and appropriately. E. Relationships with other agencies to ensure best practice is established 	<p>Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 = High 12</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Continued development of O365 services to improve email and anti-virus protections B. Carry out annual penetration test C. Ongoing refresher training on cyber risks for all staff D. To look at service provisions externally that can assist with cyber risks.

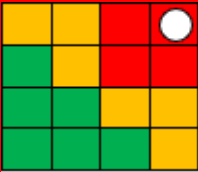
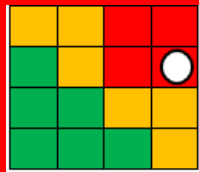
6. Ability to be agile and shift focus in response to policy and national political change

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 = High 12</p> 	<p>The significance of the current cost of living crisis and inflation, coupled with the need to repay the COVID bill may impact on government priorities and planning.</p> <p>Changes in national politics and the required general election (by Jan 2025), as well as a new NFDC administration with an altered political balance all have the potential to have an impact.</p> <p>Other legislation that will affect the council include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Levelling up white paper - The environment bill - Future planning reform - Changes the regulatory landscape to housing <p>There is a possibility of experiencing a shift in the political landscape leading up to the general election.</p>	<p>A. Continuous monitoring of political landscape to allow for early indicators of policy change</p> <p>B. Prudent financial and strategy assumptions to allow for agile responses</p> <p>C. Corporate Plan 2020-2023 reviewed and updated where appropriate as changes identified that could impact on the Council and its plans i.e., Covid-19</p> <p>D. Section 151 Officer role providing advice to the Council on current/ future financial challenges</p> <p>E. Reports to committee include explicit assessment of implications and therefore should identify/reflect current and future challenges</p> <p>F. The Executive should conduct horizon scanning to proactively anticipate and identify potential challenges and opportunities in order to influence outcomes through consultation.</p> <p>G. Membership of Local Government Association etc providing information/insights to the Council</p> <p>H. Members' roles and responsibilities including involvement in local networks, County Council, other agencies and national forums, enabling insight to be gained and shared with the Council</p> <p>I. Staff membership of professional bodies enabling own development and also providing for insights through membership of challenges that may present themselves to the Council</p> <p>J. Officer/member forums and networks</p> <p>K. Review of Coastal Strategy and Actions. Climate Change Action Plan</p>	<p>Likelihood 2 x Impact 4 = Medium 8</p> 	<p>A. Making sure the workforce is aware that training is available.</p> <p>B. Ensuring professional training availability as this impacts departments e.g., Planning and Legal</p> <p>C. Encouraging staff to undertake professional development and service-related training.</p> <p>D. Prepare and implement the national changes arising out of the new Social Housing Charter, which represents the biggest change in social housing for 40 years. Work has been ongoing for the last 2 years to prepare and implement the necessary changes including reporting to EMT, Housing & Homelessness Overview & Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet.</p>

7. Delivering Council Services through adverse environmental conditions

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 2 x Impact 4 = Medium 8</p> 	<p>The following may affect the delivery of Council Services from a national and local perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural disasters / local power outages - Workforce Strike Action - Global Pandemic - Terrorism - Riot/Rebellion - Flooding - Major pollutions of surface waters and groundwaters - Adverse Weather - Fire - Nuclear Powered Vessels related to pollution - Coastal Erosion - Industrial Strikes <p>The Council has appointed a dedicated resource to lead on Emergency Planning and Business Continuity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Business Continuity framework and individual service continuity plans B. Threat response plans which will include ICT Infrastructure response, alternative accommodation provisions and reallocation of staff. C. Emergency Planning Strategy and defined roles assigned D. Communication with NFDC residents on all platforms e.g., social media 	<p>Likelihood 2 x Impact 3 = Medium 6</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Annual programme of Emergency Planning training to be established. Robust training continues to be arranged and carried out for officers involved in emergency planning. Work continues in ensuring business continuity plans are in place, including for interruptions due to energy outages. B. Review and challenge of functional Service Continuity Plan and conclude Business Continuity Planning. C. Regular reporting to EMT on progress against Emergency Planning and Business Continuity action plan. D. continuity to increase capacity for service to manage this risk. E. Set up links to Town and Parish councils as they would be involved in implementing actions through adverse conditions.

8. Responding to the Climate and Nature Emergency

Inherent Risk Score	Current circumstance	Risk Control	Residual Risk Score	Action Required
<p>Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 = High 16</p> 	<p>NFDC declared a Climate Change and Nature Emergency in 2021 in response to global temperature rise and the associated impacts on natural and built environments. Declaring an emergency demonstrates NFDC’s commitment to the legally binding target set by Central Government for the UK to reach net zero carbon by 2050, however progress in achieving the agreed targets is significantly off track at national and global levels.</p> <p>As a result of climate change, the New Forest area is expected to experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot drier summers and warmer winters More frequent and extreme heatwaves, droughts flooding and coastal erosion <p>Failing to reduce emissions, improve environmental quality and adequately adapt to climate change will have impacts for NFDC residents, tenants, businesses, visitors, and the economy.</p> <p>Responding at a pace and scale comparable to the declared emergency will ensure that the environmental, social, financial and reputational risks to NFDC are minimised, and any opportunities arising from the changing climate are maximised.</p> <p>National and local actions are key to achieving environmental goals, which include grid decarbonisation, policy planning, and enabling a green economy. However, funding these initiatives is challenging and could affect residents' costs of living.</p>	<p>A. Deliver organisational and area-wide actions to reduce emissions, adapt to climate change and safeguard the natural environment, as outlined in the Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan</p> <p>B. Deliver, monitor and report on four key programmes of work: carbon reduction, climate adaptation, nature recovery and programme management</p> <p>C. Governance and oversight from Climate and Nature Steering Group and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>D. Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Report to inspire behaviour change, demonstrate corporate leadership and ensure transparency, accountability, and governance - detailing action to date, progress against targets and future actions</p> <p>E. Service risk assessments and business continuity plans to be developed</p> <p>F. Consideration of climate change and sustainability issues in the early stages of all activities, including projects, plans, strategies, and procurements</p> <p>G. Prioritisation of climate change and sustainability in the Corporate Plan, Local Plan and other key strategies</p> <p>H. Ensuring adequate resources for climate and sustainability efforts including third party financial support</p>	<p>Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 = High 12</p> 	<p>A. Successful delivery of projects within the organisational and area-wide Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan</p> <p>B. Climate and Sustainability to be identified as key priorities in the new Corporate Plan, Local Plan and other key strategies e.g., Greener Housing Strategy</p> <p>C. Development of policy framework to ensure business as usual activities of NFDC services contribute positively to climate and sustainability objectives</p> <p>D. Creation of a 5-year strategy and action plan with aligned resources and targets</p> <p>E. Inclusion of climate change risks in service level risk assessments and business continuity plans</p> <p>F. Training for officers and members, particularly O&S panel members, on climate change, nature and sustainability issues</p> <p>G. Aligning level of resourcing to meet emerging corporate priorities</p>