OPEN

Audit and Governance Committee

04 December 2025

Risk Management Update

Report of: Kevin O'Keefe, Interim Director of Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Report Reference No: AG/29/25-26

Ward(s) Affected: All wards

Purpose of Report

1 To provide the Audit and Governance Committee with a summary of risk management activities during 2025/26 to date and details of the current risk profiles.

2 The Audit and Governance Committee provides independent assurance to the Council on the adequacy of the risk management framework, and this report supports the Committee with this assurance

Executive Summary

3 This report provides an update on risk management activity in 2025/26 to date, including details of the Strategic Risk Register. A Strategic Risk Register update report has recently been provided to the Corporate Policy Committee (27 November), and this is included is Appendix A (Covering Report) and Appendix B (Full details of the strategic risk register as at the end of Quarter 2 2025/26.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit and Governance Committee is recommended to:

1. Note this report as a summary of risk management activities during the year 2025/26 to date
2. Identify any further assurance required by the Committee in relation to the management of risks including on the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

Background

Operational Risk Management

4 The organisation began using the Risk Action Control app during 2024/25 to capture risks at the individual service level, those risks all being owned by the Head of Service. Integration and engagement has improved across the first year, increasing again into 2025/26, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of risks recorded by directorate

	Number of Risks		
Directorate	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/26 to date**
Adults	25	80	78
Chief Executive's Office	56	53	55
Childrens	0	2	36
Place	99	98	114
Resources	56	55	54
Total	**236**	**288**	**377**

Table 2: Average net rating of risks by directorate

	Average Net Rating		
Directorate	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/26 to date**
Adults	7	4	5
Chief Executive's Office	6	6	6
Childrens	-	8	5
Place	10	8	8
Resources	5	5	5
Total	**7**	**6**	**6**

5 Using the application gives the organisation greater visibility of risk by using a centralised tool. In the last quarter, colleagues from the risk management function and internal audit have worked closely with colleagues in Childrens Services through a series of dedicated workshops designed to discuss and capture the operational risk environment for this directorate. The workshops have been well supported by the directorate, and service colleagues are now working to document their identified risks, controls and actions into the app.

6 Once uploaded, the risk register can be re-assessed and re-appraised by the risk owner and approver within the update cycles. This content

can then be discussed within the directorate management teams, and be used to escalate into the strategic risk register

7 The Risk Action Control app has been designed so that there is a workflow of roles from an initial updater (Risk Assessor) through to the Risk Owner, (Risk Approver). The reporting window begins at the end of each financial quarter, and the application currently sends out notification emails, first to the assessor and then to the approvers over six-week period after that quarter end. The table below shows the completion rates for assessments and approvals from the current year in comparison to the previous year ends.

8 Completion rates by the assessor and approver, by directorate are set out in Table 3 and Table 4 below. Achieving a 100% rate is unrealistic given staff being absent and staffing changes, but rates will be monitored to ensure that rates continue to reflect engagement across the organisation and to direct additional support into areas as needed.

Table 3: Assessment Completion Rates

	Assessments		
Directorate	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/6 to date**
Adults	96%	36%	32%
Chief Executive’s Office	89%	77%	85%
Childrens	-	0%	28%
Place	49%	72%	56%
Resources	84%	69%	57%
Total	**72%**	**62%**	**53%**

Table 4: Approval Completion Rates

	Approvals		
Directorate	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/6 to date**
Adults	92%	33%	31%
Chief Executive’s Office	88%	42%	84%
Childrens	-	0%	22%
Place	45%	70%	55%
Resources	73%	49%	46%
Total	**67%**	**50%**	**49%**

Detailed briefings and training

9 Committee members will have received an invitation to a detailed briefing on receiving a detailed briefing for SR12 (Information Security

and Cyber Threat) and will shortly be receiving details of a briefing on SR16 (Failure to Deliver Leader and Cabinet model of decision making). If further detailed sessions on aspects of the Strategic Risk Register would be useful for the Committee, these will be organised.

10 Risk and assurance training for councillors has been included in the Member Training and Development Plan. Dates for Teams based sessions in December and January will be circulated by Democratic Services colleagues.

Consultation and Engagement

11 Each risk included in on the Strategic Risk Register is "owned" by a member of the Council's Corporate Leadership Team. At each quarter, the risk detail is updated through managers in their areas of responsibility, and the updated register is reviewed collectively by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Reasons for Recommendations

12 Risk management is central to facilitating good governance and the achievement of corporate objectives. As a publicly accountable body, the Council must demonstrate effective identification and management of the risks that threaten the achievement of its corporate objectives and the effectiveness of its operations

Other Options Considered

13 No alternative options considered; this is an assurance update report to support the Committee in meeting its responsibilities under its Terms of Reference.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal/Governance

14 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Risks may highlight failures to be legal compliance or related issues and events.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

15 There are no direct impacts on the budget or the life of the MTFS from the recommendations of this report. The costs of risk mitigation activity is managed by individual risk owners and will come out of their agreed budgets. The Council failing to achieve its MTFS has been identified as a strategic risk.

Human Resources

16 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report.

Risk Management

17 This report relates provides the Corporate Policy Committee with an update on the Strategic Risk Register.

Impact on other Committees

18 The content of this report should be used to support decision making by other service committees, ensuring that decisions taken support the effective management of strategic and operational risk facing the Council.

Policy

19 Cheshire East Council adopted a Risk Management Framework approved by Cabinet in June 2020. The framework directs risk management activity as part of wider governance processes. Specific policy implications and the effectiveness of their implementation is considered within the assessment of risks as required.

Commitment 1: Unlocking prosperity for all	**Commitment 2: Improving health and wellbeing**	**Commitment 3: An effective and enabling council**

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

20 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report

Other Implications

21 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report.

Consultation

Name of Consultee	**Post held**	**Date sent**	**Date returned**
Statutory Officer (or deputy):			
Ashley Hughes	S151 Officer	25/11/25	26/11/25
Kevin O’Keefe	Interim Monitoring Officer	25/11/25	25/11/25
Legal and Finance			
Steve Reading	Finance Manager (Place and Corporate)	25/11/25	25/11/25
Hilary Irving	Interim Head of Legal services	25/11/25	To follow

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Josie Griffiths, Paul Kelly Head of Audit Risk and Assurance, josie.griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk, paul.kelly@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A – Strategic Risk Update (Covering Report, Corporate Policy Committee 27/11/2025) Appendix B – Strategic Risk Update (Full Details, Corporate Policy Committee 27/11/2025)
Background Papers:	None.