

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT - QUARTERLY UPDATE

Governance and Audit Committee 24th July 2024

Report Author	Chris Blundell, Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Rob Yates, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Ward:	All

Executive Summary:

This report provides the Governance & Audit Committee with a quarterly review of corporate risks.

Recommendation(s):

To approve the review of corporate risks and discuss annexed risks.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

The way in which the council manages risks has a financial impact on the cost of insurance and self-insurance. The council maintains reserves including a risk reserve, the size of which is commensurate with the financial impact of current and future risks. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

It is the role and responsibility of the Section 151 Office to have active involvement in all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered.

Legal

Whilst the corporate risk register includes consideration of legal matters in as far as they relate to risks to the council, there are no legal implications for the recommendation required by this report.

Risk Management

As detailed in the body of this report.

Corporate

Governance & Audit Committee approved the revised Risk Management Strategy on 27 July 2022, which includes a requirement to provide regular corporate risk updates to G&A Committee.

Equalities Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no equity and equalities implications arising directly from this report, but the council needs to retain a strong focus and understanding on issues of diversity amongst the local community and ensure service delivery matches these.

It is important to be aware of the council's responsibility under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and show evidence that due consideration has been given to the equalities impact that may be brought upon communities by the decisions made by council

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- To keep our district safe and clean
- To deliver the housing we need
- To protect our environment
- To create a thriving place
- To work efficiently for you

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council monitors and manages its Corporate Risks through the Corporate Risk Register. The contents of the report highlight the high-priority corporate risks and show the arrangements in place to ensure these risks are monitored and managed appropriately. The Council is dedicated to a proactive methodology on Risk Management and interdepartmental cooperation on Risk Strategy to drive an improved and synergetic risk model and landscape and also to demonstrate the risk journey to gather understanding and engagement around all things risk.
- 1.2. This report represents the position as at the end of May and as such is a snapshot of where the risk sits at that point and also the mitigation put in place.

2. Background and Current Progress

- 2.1. The strategy defines corporate risks as *'those which could impact across the whole council'*. Operational risks are identified from the 'bottom up', through service planning for the year ahead and through continuous review during the year. Operational risks may be escalated and considered Corporate level risks, depending on the evaluation of the risk and through engagement with Senior Management and the Corporate Management Team.
- 2.2. The strategy prescribes that these risks should be assessed by the Corporate Management Team (CMT), by Cllr Rob Yates Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and the Member Risk Management Champion and then reported to the Governance and Audit Committee (G&A) on a regular basis.
- 2.3. The Risk Management Strategy 2022 was approved at the G&A committee on the 27 July 2022. Consequently, the council has now transitioned to operating under the new risk management strategy and our associated new way of monitoring, evaluating and reporting risk. Substantial progress has been made during this risk reporting cycle, with all of the service areas responding, representing a significant improvement on the previous reporting cycles prior to the new strategy being launched. Ongoing training is also offered and delivered to all service areas, sometimes on an individual basis or on a team meeting basis - this is so that we can keep the Risk Management Strategy relevant and current for all the service areas. As we have such a diverse portfolio this is incredibly important in order to give this committee a full oversight of the risks that we face.
- 2.4. As such, it is now possible to report our Corporate Risks to the committee in accordance with our updated Risk Management Strategy, This is most notably demonstrated in Annex 1, with the presentation of risks through the lens of Current / Emerging / Future risks from all service areas and their scoring which aligns to the risk matrix. Please note Annex 1 is presented to the committee in Mar and Sept so more to follow at these future meetings - also we have now discussed Insurance Training for members of the committee which I believe will be booked in for the P4 meeting
- 2.5. Work has been undertaken in subsequent reporting to the committee to apply this framework to the High Scoring Corporate Risks shown at section 4 and also the addition of tracking of risk scores which we are currently reviewing and also looking to drill down on this report for the committee the risk journey from cradle to grave if you will.

3. Risk, Risk Management and Responsibilities

3.1. **What is risk** - Risk is defined as the uncertainty of outcome, whether positive opportunity or negative threat, of actions and events.

3.2. **Risk Management -**

Risk can be a threat (downside) or an opportunity (upside)

3.3. **Responsibilities**

A local authority's purpose is generally concerned with the delivery of service or with the delivery of a beneficial outcome in the public interest. The delivery of these objectives is surrounded by uncertainty which both poses threats to success and offers opportunity for increasing success.

3.4. **What is risk management** - Risk Management was defined by the Audit Commission as:

*'Risk Management is the process by which risks are **identified, evaluated and controlled**. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements'*

(Audit Commission)

The Government's [Orange Book](#) on risk management also states that:

Risk management shall be an essential part of governance and leadership, and fundamental to how the organisation is directed, managed and controlled at all levels.

*Each public sector organisation should establish governance arrangements appropriate to its business, scale and culture
(Source Orange Book - Gov.co.uk)*

3.5. **Risk Evaluation**

3.6. Risks have to be assessed in respect of the combination of the likelihood of something happening, and the impact which arises if it does actually happen. Risk management includes identifying and assessing risks and then responding to them. Risk is unavoidable, and every organisation needs to take action to manage risk in a way which it can justify to a level which is tolerable. The amount of risk which is judged to be tolerable and justifiable is the "risk appetite".

3.7. The likelihood of a risk occurring is evaluated against the following criteria:

3.8. The possible impact on the council should the risk occur is then assessed across a range of categories. The risk score is determined by the highest scoring possible outcome against any of the risk headings please see below

Risk Matrix Scoring Mechanism

Likelihood

Rating	Score	Likelihood
Very Likely	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 85% chance of occurrence • Regular occurrence • Circumstances frequently encountered
Likely	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 65% chance of occurrence • Likely to occur within next 12 months • Circumstances have been encountered
Unlikely	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31%-65% chance of occurrence • Likely to happen within next 2 years • Circumstances occasionally encountered
Rare	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 30% chance of occurrence • Circumstances rarely encountered or never encountered before

Impact

Headings	Reputation	Strategic	Wellbeing	Service Delivery	Finance	Compliance
4 Severe	Council receives nationally adverse publicity perceived as failing in a significant area of responsibility	Failure to deliver council priorities / services / major corporate project	Significant staff dissatisfaction / long term absence / increased staff turnover including key personnel	Loss of service for a significant period	Financial loss or overspend greater than £500k	Breach of law leading to some sanction Litigation almost certain with some / minimal defence
3 Significant	Significant adverse local publicity	Possible impact on the delivery of council priorities	Declining staff satisfaction / loss of staff due to absence or turnover	Reduction in service performance / service disruption for 1 – 2 days	Financial loss or overspend between over £250k	Breach of regulation or responsibility or internal standard Litigation possible
2 Moderate	Minor impact on staff morale/public attitudes	Minor / adverse impact on Council priorities	Possible short-term staff dissatisfaction / likely impact on absence and turnover	Poor service / service disruption up to one day	Financial loss or overspend between £50k - £250k	Breach of internal procedure or policy Complaints likely
1 Minor	Unlikely to cause adverse publicity	No significant impact on the delivery of Council priorities	Loss of staff morale but unlikely to result in absence or turnover of staff	No significant difficulty providing a service or delivery of a project	Financial loss or overspend under £50k	Minor breach of policy or internal procedure Complaints Unlikely

3.9. The overall risk scores are then arrived at by multiplying the “likelihood” score by the “impact” score, where the maximum score for each is four, so the maximum total score is sixteen.

Likelihood	Very Likely (4)	Moderate (4)	High (8)	Extreme (12)	Extreme (16)
	Likely (3)	Low (3)	Moderate (6)	High (9)	Extreme (12)
	Unlikely (2)	Very low (2)	Low (4)	Moderate (6)	High (8)
	Rare (1)	Very low (1)	Very low (2)	Low (3)	Moderate (4)
		Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Significant (3)	Severe (4)
	Impact				

3.10. **Roles and responsibilities** - The primary member oversight on risk is provided by the Governance and Audit Committee. Cabinet also has a member Risk Champion (the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Performance and Risk) who promotes risk management and its benefits throughout the council.

3.11. At staff level, the high-level corporate risk register is regularly considered by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). G&A Committee considers changes to the corporate risk register, the reasons for the changes and the actions being taken to mitigate the likelihood and impact of those risks. A view is also taken regarding the extent to which the risks should be tolerated.

3.12. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Position Statement on Audit Committees (2018) sets out the key principles for audit committees operating in local government.

3.13. The statement sets out the key responsibilities of the committee to include:

*‘consider the **effectiveness** of the authority’s **risk management arrangements** and the control environment, reviewing the risk profile of the organisation and*

assurances that action is being taken on risk-related issues, including partnerships and collaborations with other organisations'

3.14. The report seeks to aid the committee to discharge these responsibilities

4. Corporate risk register

4.1. A summary of the highest scoring corporate risks on the register is set out in the table and the following narrative below, together with the comparative scores noted by the Governance & Audit Committee on 27th September 2023

4.2. The scores are arrived at by multiplying the “likelihood” score by the “impact” score, where the maximum score for each is four, so the maximum total score is sixteen.

Description	March 24 Score	July 2024 Score	Change
Cyber Attack	16	16	No
Limited Resources	12	12	No
Economic Environment	16	16	No
Homelessness	16	16	No
Berth 4/5	12	9	Yes
Environmental Act 2021	16	16	No
Net Zero Strategy	16	16	No
Groundwater Assessments		16	New
Manston Airport		12	New

4.3. Each corporate risk is the responsibility of a member of CMT and they manage risk mitigation plans with the aim of reducing the likelihood and/or impact of each risk to a manageable level. As time moves on, the external environment changes and this can have an impact on the effectiveness of mitigating actions as well as on the likelihood and impact of a risk: hence the need to maintain vigilance in respect of mitigation plans as well as new and changing risks.

4.4. It is more difficult to take action to reduce the impact of a risk occurring, than it is to take action to reduce its likelihood. Hence in some cases, the scores after mitigation will remain relatively high.

Highest-scoring risks

4.5. **Cyber Attack (Impact 4, Likelihood 4) Future risk**

Reputation, Service Delivery, Strategic and Financial risk score 4

The threat of cyber attack across the local government sector, and indeed at a global level, continues to be high. The incident impacting Thanet and a number of other local councils in January 2024 is an example of that threat.

Since cyber security moved back in-house to the council in April 2024, a significant amount of focus has been placed on working to mitigate the potential threat and ensuring our IT systems are as robust as possible. This can be evidenced in the EKAP follow up audit on cyber security and with the reduction of the overall risk score this quarter.

The ICT and Digital team is reviewing all applications in use across the authority. Many outdated systems and servers have now been decommissioned, and where legacy systems remain in place priority projects are underway to upgrade or replace these systems.

A significant step forward has been the onboarding of a new Managed Detection and Response (MDR) platform. This provides an extra layer of security to our online environment, monitoring activity across the network and all of the endpoints; servers and staff devices (chromebooks and laptops). The MDR platform includes 24/7 threat hunting, fully managed protection, detection and response service along with full scale incident response. With this package the council also has a breach protection warranty. This covers the council should a breach incident occur that results in the irretrievable loss of data.

Officers have been liaising with risk management partners through the council's insurers and are exploring risk management solutions with them.

Additionally, the Head of ICT and SISO has been accepted to be part of the national Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) pilot on behalf of Thanet District Council and is one of only 20 councils across the country to be included. The CAF has been created by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and is aimed at helping councils to achieve and demonstrate an appropriate level of cyber resilience in relation to certain functions that are at risk of disruption as a result of a serious cyber incident. During the pilot the Head of ICT and SISO will be working through all the objectives to assist the authority with meeting them and to provide an action plan on ways we can improve our security posture.

All ICT and Digital policies have now been reviewed. The former 14 separate ICT and Digital policies, which were drafted as part of the former tripartite East Kent arrangements, required updating and have now been condensed into four new overarching policies:

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Cyber Security & Cyber Attack Policy
- Digital Security Policy
- Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) Compliance Policy

The policies adhere to best practice using the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) which has been developed by the NCSC National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and reflect all the recommendations requested within the Cyber security audit.

After consideration at the inaugural Cyber Security Cabinet Advisory Group meeting on 15 July, the policies will be reviewed at a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 30 July for final approval and adoption, following which they will be rolled out to all staff and Councillors. The policies will be reviewed every six months reflecting the priority status and risk.

The council has implemented a new platform called Knowbe4 which is an AI powered training platform for cyber and information security. This platform will provide risk scores for all staff and will also be a tool to roll out policies across the council. The advantage will be monitoring in real time if anyone hasn't read or accepted the relevant policies, enabling line managers to target completion requests.. This would contribute to the individual having a higher risk score, which in turn would impact the overall organisation risk score. Onboarding is currently ongoing and is expected to be fully in place by the end of August.

Ransomware remains one of the largest risks facing the authority. As such protecting council data has been a priority with a new Backup Schedule & Testing Protocol in place. This includes a backup schedule and testing plan and schedule which will validate backups in the need for any recovery operation.

The previous Corporate Information governance Group (CIGG) has been disbanded following the ICT and Security teams and functions coming back in-house to the council. As such, a new Thanet specific group has been set up internally. The new Security Information Forum (SIF) meets on a monthly basis and has been in place since April 2024. Membership of this group includes all the necessary roles from across the organisation, including the Senior Information Security Officer (SISO), the Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO), the Data Protection Officer (DPO), Insurance & Risk, Digital and ICT leads. This also includes the deputy function holders.

The council's security information officer and SISO continue to monitor vulnerabilities and these are reported on regularly to the wider ICT and Digital team and also to the SIF. Compliance tickets are raised and monitored to ensure that out of date devices and software are dealt with.

The IT Health Check (ITHC) is currently being planned and will be completed by an external company. As part of this exercise, devices, external firewalls and external websites will be tested. Following the health check an action plan will be pulled together to complete the remediations required. This is anticipated to be completed by the end of August at the latest, subject to supplier availability.

Corporate Risk Lead Officer: Head of ICT & SISO (EKS)

4.6. Limited Resources (Impact 4, Likelihood 3) Current/Emerging/Future

Strategic, Financial Risk Score 4

The high score for Limited Resources reflects the fact that it is one of the few risks that could result in the council losing control of its own destiny.

As in prior years this means that the Council is restricted to setting a meaningful budget for only one year and although scenarios can be put forward through the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), a budget position can not be guaranteed due to the various factors outside of the Council's control.

To mitigate this risk the Council undertakes a rigorous approach to budget setting, exploring a wide range of opportunities to minimise spending pressures and maximise our income streams. For the 2024/25 budget setting process this again included a Star Chamber process, where Service Directors are required to articulate and justify their budgetary requirements to a panel comprising the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Chief Executive and s151 Officer. This process has informed the shape and substance of next year's budget adjustments.

Due to the changing nature and composition of Local Government funding, authorities are becoming increasingly reliant on locally raised sources of funding such as Council Tax and Fees and Charges. Therefore, to mitigate the risk of 'Limited Financial Resources' and enhance our long-term financial sustainability and resilience, it is the view of the section 151 officer that it is essential to optimise these local raised income streams, whilst also considering the affordability constraints of our residents and service users.

In addition, the council has a range of budgetary controls in place to manage spending pressures in-year, including regular reporting of spending forecasts to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet.

Corporate Risk Lead Officer: Director of Corporate Services & s151 Officer

4.7. **Economic Environment (Impact 4, Likelihood 4) Current/Emerging/Future**

Service Delivery, Strategic and Financial risk score 4

Inflationary pressures in the UK economy have begun to ease, with the 12 months to May Consumer Price Index (CPI) falling to the Bank of England's 2.0% target, after a prolonged period of exceeding it.

Despite the easing of the current rate of CPI, prices are still rising albeit at a lower rate and the cumulative impact of a prolonged period of high inflation has still impacted across the council's various different budget headings.

This is particularly prevalent in the construction industry and is impacting upon the cost profile of a number of our capital projects. To mitigate this pressure, the council will need to consider project value engineering to ensure they are delivered within budget, or alternatively rationalising the number of deliverable projects in order to avoid the potential for significant overspends. For this reason, the risk remains scored at the highest level, despite the overall easing of economic conditions.

The cost of living crisis also continues to be a significant issue for both the Council and all Thanet residents. It is likely to force more households to be homeless (see Homelessness risk below), force more into fuel poverty and have a direct impact on jobs in leisure/retail with households having less disposable income. To mitigate these pressures, the council continues to provide financial support and advice to residents where it can, for example via the administration of government funding (e.g. Household Support Fund, Council Tax Energy Rebate) or the provision of tools and information regarding [benefit entitlement](#) on our website and information channels.

Corporate Risk Lead Officer: Director of Corporate Services & s151 Officer

4.8. **Homelessness (Impact 4, Likelihood 4) Highest scoring mechanism is financial risk at 4 Current**

Service Delivery, Strategic and Financial risk score 4

During 2022, the Council experienced an increased requirement to provide temporary accommodation (TA) for homeless households, and this trend has continued during 2023 and into 2024. Factors that have influenced this include:

- Increasing costs in the private rented sector, leading to more households struggling with their rent costs, whilst at the same time increases in Local Housing allowance rates have failed to keep pace with increases in rents.
- Landlords leaving the market for sale or short-term letting alternatives.
- Increased demand for private renting in the district, leading to a reduction in the number of private sector lets that are affordable to households on low incomes, impacting on the ability of the council to effectively prevent homelessness.

The cost of living crisis has compounding these pressures. Local housing allowances (LHA) have fallen significantly behind average private sector rents as a result of rent inflation, and although LHA was increased in April 2024, the rates are still not keeping up with increases in private sector rents. Cases that were previously delayed as a result of the eviction ban are now progressing through the courts, resulting in additional service and financial pressures.

These pressures have made it much more difficult for the council to prevent homelessness and find suitable, affordable solutions for people facing homelessness in the private rented sector. This has resulted in an increased number of households living in temporary accommodation.

The pressures led to a budget overspend in 2022/23 of around £1.2m and the decision to include budget growth of £800k in the 2023/24 budget. The 2023/24 out-turn for temporary accommodation costs showed an overspend of approximately £1.1m.

The Housing Options Team has developed a detailed action plan to mitigate and manage the risk of further increases in the costs of temporary accommodation, and to start to reduce these costs over time. The team meets fortnightly to monitor progress. This mitigation plan includes:

- A review of financial incentives available to landlords to encourage them to provide accommodation to households that might otherwise require temporary accommodation funded by the council. The council is able to provide financial support with rent-in-advance and deposits and payments to incentivise landlords to offer tenancies, with larger payments available for longer tenancies. This approach is proving to be very successful, with around two thirds of all cases where the council has a homelessness prevention duty ending in a positive outcome. In the year to March 2024 61% of cases were successfully supported into a new home during the council's prevention duty stage – this is higher than the South East regional average of 50%, national average of 45%.

- The team is now fully staffed, including a number of additional roles to help manage the increasing service demands. In particular, we have recruited a new role of Homelessness Relief Officer, whose job is to support all households currently in TA to identify potential move-on options.
- New arrangements have been introduced for the collection of temporary accommodation charges, in line with the procedures already in place for rent collection from TDC's own tenants. We have seen reductions in unpaid charges as a result. These reviews also ensure that everyone eligible for Housing Benefit has completed the applications and has benefit in payment, which is paid directly into their rent account. This new approach has improved rent collection performance; In December 2023 TA rent arrears stood at £146k, they have now reduced to £102k, which represents 3.7% of the total charges.
- Following the successful delivery of the council's first TA project at Foy House in Margate, we have acquired a second building in Truro Road Ramsgate, providing 7 self contained flats. We are currently applying for planning permission for the change of use from a hotel, and will let all of the flats as soon as consent is granted. Work is underway to identify opportunities to utilise the funding that is in the approved general fund capital programme for further TA projects, including commissioning external financial advice on how best to model the revenue implications of new projects.
- Since the council committed to an accelerated housing delivery programme of at least 400 new affordable rented homes in July 2023, we have made a significant start in delivering the programme. We already have an approved pipeline of 206 homes, of which 37 have been delivered and let. This includes 49 homes on our own land, where we have recently let a construction contract for construction work to start on site this summer. We continue to investigate opportunities for the remainder of the programme and have started work on proposals that could deliver as many as 300 further homes. Our agreed use of local lettings plans for these new homes ensure that at least half of them are let to households leaving temporary accommodation.

On 31 October, officers attended an emergency homelessness summit, convened by the District Council Network along with another 157 other councils, all facing pressures on their homelessness services. The issue is of national significance. Following the summit the council was a joint signatory to an open letter to the government seeking urgent support. Key asks included:

- Increases in local housing allowances and discretionary housing payments budget,
- Additional resources for homelessness prevention services, and
- Long term investment in more social housing.

The government has given additional financial support to local authorities in previous years and any additional funding announced for the current year, will help to manage the pressure on this service area.

Overall the mitigation plan currently in place has helped to stabilise the number of households in temporary accommodation over the past 3 months at around 300 households.

Corporate Risk Lead Officer: Corporate Director of Place

4.9. **Berth 4/5 (Impact 3, Likelihood 3): Current/Emerging/Future**

Reputation, Service Delivery and Financial risk score 3

The project was delayed whilst an environmental impact assessment was developed to inform planning and marine licensing consents. The original berth was taken out of service in November 2020 due to its deteriorated condition.

A Cabinet decision was made in July 2021 to increase budget provision for the project. The EIA was completed in January 2022. The Planning Prior Approval and Marine Licence were both granted in May 2022.

The berth installation works commenced in June 2022 and reached substantial completion at the end of September 2022. Electrical supply and service lighting installation work was completed at the beginning of August 2023.

The berth is ready for service subject to the installation of an aggregates conveyor by Brett Aggregates. It is anticipated that works by Brett Aggregates to install the conveyor on the berth will commence mid July 2024 with completion in September 2024.

The change in project programme following the notification that an Environmental Impact Assessment was required resulted in a financial risk to the council due to the extended berth outage and associated contractual costs. The final cost of the work element of the scheme has not yet been determined but the majority of scheme costs have now been confirmed. An overspend against the approved budget with an estimated value between £250-500k is likely to occur. Whilst any overspend is unwelcome, the increased certainty on the overall scheme value has the effect of reducing the impact element of the risk score from 4 (severe) to 3 (significant). This will therefore reduce the overall risk score for this project from 12 to 9. The Berth 4/5 project will therefore be removed from the 'Highest-scoring Risks' section of future quarterly risk management update reports.

When the final value of the scheme has been determined a project outcome report, including a financial breakdown will be prepared for Cabinet for information.

Corporate Risk Lead Officer: Director of Environment

4.10. **Environmental Act (Impact 4, Likelihood 4) Current/Emerging/Future**

Reputation, Service Delivery, Strategic and Financial risk score 4

The Environment Act became law on 9 November 2021. This includes fundamental changes in responsibility for waste and recycling, which will have implications for the way we deliver statutory household waste collections.

As a member of the Kent Resource Partnership, TDC responded to Government consultations in 2021 on consistency of household collections, the Extended Producer Responsibility and a Deposit Return Scheme. Changes affecting household waste as a result of the new act were anticipated to start to take effect from this year but in July DEFRA announced that the extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme has been deferred until October 2025. Whilst the act includes provision for new burdens funding and support to local authorities for the proposed changes, the implications for our vehicle fleet and resourcing including income from recycling and waste diverted from landfill are not yet clear. These provisions are likely to be predicated upon efficiencies of service delivery and provision of recycling services. Failure to meet these expectations could result in up to a 20% deduction in EPR payments that the council could expect to receive. DEFRA's consultation response to collection reforms (now titled "Simpler Recycling") has only recently been published. Further work will be needed in collaboration with other Kent local authorities via the Kent Resource Partnership to see what effect the changes will have on current waste and recycling collection and transfer arrangements.

Update June 2024 - Further information was shared by DEFRA in May 2024 on the government's [simpler recycling reforms](#). Local authorities will be required to collect the same recyclable materials from all households by 31 March 2026. The Head of Cleansing is taking an active role in industry workshops and events on the forthcoming changes and continues to monitor announcements from DEFRA on this subject. The financial impact of these changes to the council as a Waste Collection Authority is still not clear and as such the risk score currently remains high.

Corporate Risk Lead Officer: Director of Environment

Corporate Risk Owner: Head of Cleansing

Climate change and Net Zero Strategy (Impact 4 Likelihood 4) Current/Emerging/Future

Service Delivery, Strategic and Financial risk score 4

The risk profile for climate change continues to be high. The potential impacts cover the council right across the risk spectrum; including financially, reputationally, in terms of service provision and the wellbeing of our staff and residents.

The organisation has responded to these risks and challenges by declaring a climate emergency in 2019 and subsequently developing a Net Zero strategy, which was approved by the Cabinet on Thursday 2 March 2023.

The Net Zero Strategy shows how the council will meet its net zero pledge and is split into:

- addressing emissions in Thanet District Council's core carbon footprint to achieve net zero by 2030;
- addressing the wider council emissions that we have partial control over by 2050 at the very latest;
- supporting Kent County Council, government, business, industry and the community to reduce emissions generated across the district by 2050 at the latest

The Net Zero Strategy shows how we will reduce emissions to 2030 and 2050 and will help to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

As global temperatures have already increased by 1.2oC, some impacts of climate change are already baked in and so we will work with KCC and DEFRA to understand these and the steps we need to take to adapt to those unavoidable impacts.

The council's Climate Change Cabinet Advisory Group is now meeting every two months reflecting the priority and focus in this area. The group is presented with regular updates on progress with climate change projects and activity. Monthly updates are to be reviewed by the Corporate Management Team to keep updated on the risks and organisational mitigation in place. New Climate Change implications are also now required within every council committee report and this section has been added to all committee template reports so that every council decision can be understood in terms of its potential impact on emissions and/or the wider climate emergency.

Preparatory work to support a funding bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund is now underway. If successful, funding secured would be used towards the replacement of the old gas boilers in Cecil Street and the Kent Innovation Centre (KIC). This project is within priority one of the net zero strategy. An announcement on the funding bid application process is anticipated over the coming months.

More detailed work is currently underway to review the whole scope of the council's Net Zero Action Plan which will be presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Advisory Group. This will provide an overview of progress with the actions to date and share the next steps.

Corporate Risk Lead Officer: Head of Strategy & Transformation

New Risks July 2024

EA inspection for Ground Water Risk Assessments that haven't been completed (Impact 4 Likelihood 4) Current risk

In November 2017, the Environment Agency published revised guidance on ground water risk assessments stating that risk assessments now need to be carried out on existing burial grounds as well as new grounds being planned. These risk assessments only have to be carried out in areas of the cemetery where multiple burials have taken place in the last 10 years. There is no evidence to suggest these risk assessments have been carried out in either Margate or Ramsgate Cemeteries, however, when these cemeteries opened, this wouldn't have been a requirement. In 2022 new legislation placed a requirement on cemeteries having a permit unless they meet certain conditions which include having the groundwater risk assessment. Failure to comply could lead to EA inspection.

Work to appoint a contractor has begun in order that surveys can be carried out on both cemeteries. This will ensure compliance with the legislative requirements.

Manston Airport DCO has been granted - Appeal dismissed (Impact 3 Likelihood 4)

Expected opening date of cargo hub operation in 2025 (pending appeal decision). Depending on the nature of imports, Regulatory Services will be required to provide Port Health Authority (Public Protection) officers based on required volumes of inspections. As part of a unilateral agreement through the DCO, the airport operators have also agreed to fund a new continuous monitoring air quality station. This too will require additional resources in the EP team to commission, maintain and calibrate. 22/05/24 UPDATE. Appeal dismissed and new airport opening date indicated as 2027.

Mitigations

Following the appeal dismissal, engage with airport operators to determine opening dates, level and nature of imports anticipated, including countries of origin. And commensurate exercise to secure staffing budget and recruit new Public Protection staff to fill the required Port Health roles as this cannot be accommodated within the current team (4 FTE). Further engagement regarding the commissioning of the new continuous AQ monitoring station and any longer term resource requirements in EP. UPDATED: 26/01/24. The Court of Appeal has rejected the appeal and it has been dismissed. RSP are indicating that development will now proceed with initial opening planned for 2027. UPDATED:22/05/24.

5. Other risks

- 5.1. G&A meeting members requested to have oversight of all risks as part of the regular reports. This would however substantially increase the size of the report and so all risks scoring 8 or more after mitigation have been included within **Annex 1**. which is presented twice a year in Sept and March

Please note Governance has now been moved to Annex 1 which will be presented at this meeting.

Contact Officer: Chris Blundell (Director of Corporate Services)

Reporting to: Colin Carmichael (Interim Chief Executive)

Annex list - None

Background Papers - None

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance: Matt Sanham (Head of Finance and Procurement)

Legal: Ingrid Brown (Head of Legal and Democracy & Monitoring Officer)