Audit and Governance Committee

25 September 2025

Title	Strategic Risk Register – September 2025
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author (name & job title)	Robin Pringle, Corporate Health, Safety and Risk Management Lead
Lead Councillor (name & title)	Councillor Ellie Emberson, Lead Councillor for Corporate Services and Resources
Corporate priority	Our Foundations
Recommendations	Audit and Governance Committee are asked to consider the Councils Strategic Risk Register as of September 2025 (Appendix 1)

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report outlines the September 2025 update of the Strategic Risk Register. The Register is presented to the Council's Audit & Governance Committee every six months. The previous report was presented to the Council's Audit and Governance Committee in January 2025.

1.2 The following documents are appended:
- Appendix 1 - The Council's Strategic (Corporate) Risk Register

2. Policy Context

2.1 The Risk Management Policy and Procedure was presented to Audit & Governance Committee in July 2022 and was updated in October 2024, and it is available on the Intranet.

2.2 Risk management is a key part of corporate governance. Good risk management will help identify and deal with key strategic risks facing the Council in the pursuit of its goals and is a key part of good management, not simply a compliance exercise. Risk management and internal controls are important and integral parts of a performance management system and are crucial to the achievement of outcomes. They consist of an ongoing process designed to identify and address significant risks involved in achieving the Council's outcomes.

2.3 RBC are operating a comprehensive risk management system, to provide greater governance and reassurances to our insurers and Members.
This is achieved by improving:
- The policy commitments and roles and responsibilities,
- Defining a clear operating procedure,
- The frequency of risk reporting, and
- Working closely with our insurers and risk consultants to embed the new system.

2.4 The Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Directorate Management Teams (DMT's) are required to continually review their existing risks, determine if they are still relevant and fit for purpose and determine whether there are new risks that need incorporating into the

Risk Registers. DMT's are also asked to determine if any risks should be escalated to the Strategic Risk Register.

2.5   The Strategic Risk Register provides a concise, focused, high-level overview of strategic risks that can be easily communicated to all staff, councilors, and stakeholders (e.g., Council's Insurers). It should always be supplemented by directorate, service and project risk registers.

3   The Proposal

3.1   The Strategic Risk Register covers the actions completed by the Council between July - September 2025 and the future risk ratings for the Council for October – December 2025. Timing of reports to Audit & Governance Committee means the report is produced slightly before the end of the quarter.

3.2   The Strategic Risk Register was reviewed by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) on the 2nd September 2024.

3.3   The Strategic Risk Register (Appendix 1) for agreement, consists of 12 risks – the same as the previous report.

The risks that continue from the previous quarter are:
1. Risk of loss from cyber-attack.
2. Lack of local special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) placement provision to meet current and future levels of demand. Insufficient provision impacts on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block (HNB) deficit.
3. Unable to deliver a balanced budget as a result of demand pressures and achieving income targets.
4. Failure to deliver zero carbon commitments (Climate mitigation)
5. Failure to safeguard vulnerable adults.
6. Failure to safeguard vulnerable children.
7. Failure to retain and recruit staff.
8. Failure to adapt to the impacts of climate change (Climate adaptation)
9. Information Governance - Failure to protect personal data.
10. Failure to fulfil our obligations under the PREVENT Duty
11. Failure to mitigate risks or manage issues, associated with health & safety, appropriately
12. Risk to adherence to Care Act Statutory duties as residents are waiting in Adult Social Care

3.4   **Risks that have been escalated, from Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) and Directorate registers, to the Strategic Register**

- **BFfC**
  - No risks escalated.
- **Directorate of Resources**
  - No risks escalated
- '**Directorate of Adult Care and Health Services**
  - No risks escalated
- **Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services**
  - No risks escalated

3.5 **Risks for de-escalation from the Strategic Risk Register to BFfC or Directorate registers**

- **BFfC**
  - No risks de-escalated
- **Directorate of Resources**
  - No risks de-escalated
- **Directorate of Adult Care and Health Services**
  - No risks de-escalated.
- **Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services**
  - No risks de-escalated.

3.6 There are now 8 red risk cards.
  1. Risk of loss from cyber-attack.
  2. Lack of local special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) placement provision to meet current and future levels of demand. Insufficient provision impacts on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block (HNB) deficit.
  3. Unable to deliver a balanced budget as a result of demand pressures and achieving income targets.
  4. Failure to deliver zero carbon commitments (Climate mitigation)
  5. Failure to adapt to the impacts of climate change (Climate adaptation)
  6. Failure to safeguard vulnerable children.
  7. Failure to mitigate risks or manage issues, associated with health & safety, appropriately.
  8. Risk to adherence to Care Act Statutory duties as residents are waiting in Adult Social Care. The increase in risk score in Q1 2025/26 was due to the demand and resources required remaining an ongoing issue: Demand continues to outstrip capacity with the service seeing as many as 20 referrals per day. The service is undertaking a deep dive to review the internal processes and referral pathways.

3.7 There are now 4 amber cards.
  1. Failure to safeguard vulnerable adults.
  2. Failure to retain and recruit staff.
  3. Information Governance - Failure to protect personal data.
  4. Failure to fulfil our obligations under the PREVENT Duty

3.8 Guidance is provided in relation to the scoring of risks to enable as much consistency as possible; it remains a subjective process. The primary aim of the Strategic Risk Register is to identify those key vulnerabilities that Corporate Management Team consider need to be closely monitored in the forthcoming months and, in some instances, years ahead. In many cases this will be because the risk is relatively new and, whilst being effectively managed, the associated control framework is yet to be fully defined and embedded. In such circumstances it follows that not only will the potential impact be large, but the risk of likelihood of occurrence could also be increased.

3.9 In order to focus senior management and Member attention on areas of greatest risk, the Register should include only the key current risks that have not been mitigated down to the acceptable risk level. Where risks have been rated as green for 2 or more consecutive quarters they are removed from the Register. These can be re-instated should the risk increase again.

3.10 Service Plan Risk Registers are currently being rolled out. This will allow Service Managers to record risks associated with their Service Plans. To support this, the 2025 Service Plan documentation reflects the requirement to record risks on the Risk Management SharePoint site.

3.11 Brighter Futures for Children are now utilising RBC's Risk Management software package to record their Directorate and Service Plan risks, in preparation for their merger back into the Council.

3.12 In order to support the embedding of risk management principles across the Council, 208 Managers have now completed the 'Risk Management for Managers' training course and twice monthly courses are planned for 2025 and 2026. The target is 300 managers. These will be provided by the Councils Senior Risk and Health and Safety Adviser.

3.13 A Risk Management Training session has been planned for the 22nd October 2025 for newly elected members. This will complement the 3 Risk Management Training sessions delivered to Councillors in 2023. All training sessions provide Members with the guidance on how to review and challenge reports when received (as part of good governance).

3.14   The risk management intranet page and SharePoint site has been updated to include numerous guidance notes to support managers complete their duties.

4.   Contribution to Strategic Aims

4.1   Regular review of the Policy, and Strategic Risk Register, is an integral part of effective risk management arrangements and corporate governance. Each risk is linked to a Corporate Plan theme.

4.2   The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

4.3   These themes are underpinned by "Our Foundations" explaining the ways we work at the Council:

- People first
- Digital transformation
- Building self-reliance
- Getting the best value
- Collaborating with others

4.4   Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website. These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

5   Environmental and Climate Implications

5.1   There are no specific environmental and climate implications arising from the decision. The Strategic Risk Register includes two risks related to climate implications and the actions to mitigate these risks are included in Appendix One.

6   Community Engagement

6.1   The consultation duty is not applicable to the Risk Management Policy & Procedure.

7   Equality Implications

7.1   An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not relevant to this report.

8   Other Relevant Considerations

8.1   There are no other considerations relevant for this report.

9   Legal Implications

9.1   There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

10   Financial Implications

10.1   There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

11   Timetable for Implementation

11.1   Each individual risk card identifies its own implementation timetable.

12   Background Papers

12.1   There are no background papers.

Appendices

1. Strategic Risk Register as at 12th September 2025.