Risk Management Strategy

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Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Revision / Reason for Change
V2.1	06/06/23	Marie Mason	Membership of CGSG updated and some terminology changed. Risk Matrix Model changed.
V3.0	24/06/26	Marie Mason	Comprehensive 3 yearly review

Document Approvals - This document requires the following approvals:

Group	Approval Reference	Date
Accounts & Audit Ctte		
Council		

Document Distribution - This document will be distributed to:

Corporate Leadership Team; Risk Owners; Councillors Will also be made available to all staff via the Intranet.

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

This document is an update to the Council's Risk Management Strategy and sets out:

- what is risk management
- why we need a risk management strategy
- the philosophy of our risk management
- the risk management process
- roles and responsibilities
- monitoring and reporting
- the Council's appetite to risk

The objectives of the strategy are to:

- further develop risk management and raise its profile across the Council
- integrate risk management into the culture of the organisation
- embed risk management through the ownership and management of risk as part of all decision-making processes including annual service business planning and corporate plans.
- manage risk in accordance with best practice
- establish clear roles and responsibilities

This strategy outlines how the Council is taking on its responsibility to manage both risks and opportunities using a structured and focused approach.

Changes and amendments to this strategy are delegated to a Council officer (currently the Corporate Client & Performance Manager) and, where necessary, reported via the Accounts and Audit Committee making recommendations for approval to Council.

2. What is risk management?

Risk Management, amongst other definitions, can be defined as:

"The management of integrated or holistic business risk in a manner consistent with the virtues of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In essence it is about making the most of opportunities (making the right decisions) and about achieving objectives once those decisions are made. The latter is achieved through controlling, transferring and living with risks." ***ZMMS/SOLACE, Chance or choice? July 2000.***

"Risk management refers to a coordinated set of activities and methods that is used to direct an organisation and to control the many risks that can affect its ability to achieve objectives. According to the Introduction to ISO 31000 2009, the term risk management also refers to the architecture that is used to manage risk. This architecture includes risk management principles, a risk management framework, and a risk management process." ISO 31000, 2009

The important phrase from both the above is in relation to "achieving objectives". In its most simple format risk management is therefore about controlling those things that may stop an organisation from achieving its objectives.

Risk management is a strategic tool which forms part of our overall corporate governance arrangements for the Council and is an essential part of effective and efficient management and planning.

This strategy expands upon the existing operational focus of the organisation (in managing claims and costs on the Council) to encompass all business risks (strategic corporate issues and departmental) into a robust and consistent process to ensure that the Council can make the most of its opportunities and make the right decisions based on complete information.

3. Why do we need a Risk Management Strategy?

Risk management will strengthen the ability of the Council to achieve its key corporate priorities, enhance the value of services provided in order to make the area a place where people want to live and work and where they are able to enjoy a high quality of life.

Risk management is also an integral requirement of project management, business case development and ensuring the effective use of limited resources (including people, premises and money). As such it is an important element in demonstrating continuous improvement and securing value for money.

Finally, risk management is also an essential part of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework on Corporate Governance and requires the Council to make a public assurance statement annually on, amongst other areas, the Council's risk management strategy, process and framework.

4. What is our philosophy?

The Council will seek to further embed risk management into its culture, processes and structure to ensure that opportunities are maximised. The Council will seek to encourage members and staff to identify, understand and manage risks, and learn how to accept the right risks. Adoption of this strategy should support the Council's core values and be reflected in its organisational behaviour. Our policy statement is available in Appendix 1. In Appendix 2 the Council has defined its appetite for risk from which it is able to grade the various levels of risk in relation to potential impact and likelihood.

5. What is the Risk Management Process?

Implementing the strategy involves identifying, analysing, managing and monitoring risks.

The identification of risks is derived from both a 'top down' (corporate) and a 'bottom up' (departmental service) process of risk assessment and analysis resulting in coverage of the whole Council. The process then prioritises the risks resulting in a focus on the key risks and priorities. The risks are then managed through the development of appropriate actions and fed into overall service plans and the Council Plan.

Relevant performance indicators (PI's) for each action / service plan are identified and then monitored through a performance management framework ensuring that the focus remains on achieving the Council's key priorities.

Business planning

The information resulting from the process acts as one of the key pieces of information that will be incorporated into the development of service plans and the Council Plan. Risk management will become an essential element in establishing policy, developing plans and enhancing operational management.

Value for Money

Effective risk management should also help with Value for Money considerations. It can help to narrow down the options for future service delivery and can also be used as a mechanism for identifying areas of service improvement.

Project management / decision making

The risk management methodology can also be adopted for individual projects and can be used to strengthen all decision-making processes. The authority has previously developed its own project management methodology including training and further information can be found here.

Risk Management Process – further defined

Consideration of risk should not be a stand-alone process and should reflect uncertainties in the planning and delivery processes which could seriously affect outcomes, for example: resources, funding strategies, partnerships, or suppliers.

The Council will adopt the following risk management process:

The Risk Management Cycle

The risk management process is outlined below:

1 Risk Identification

This is the most important part of the process. If risks are not identified, they will not be managed. It is the responsibility of us all to identify risks. Any significant service risks should be escalated to the Client & Performance Team for initial review with the Council's Senior Information Risk Owner (Director of Resources). It is the responsibility of Corporate Leadership Team to determine inclusion of risks on the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

Identify risks by reference to, amongst other things, the Council Plan, business planning, objectives, priorities and service & project objectives.

There are three elements to the risk scenario:

- The threat / opportunity describes the situation (that may be perceived) that exposes the Council to a risk.
- The trigger / cause is an event or change in situation that has a negative / positive result.
- The consequences are the events that follow in the wake of the risk occurring.

Projects, and the potential risks arising, should be considered from a number of different perspectives, including (but not limited to):

- Contractual
- Financial
- Reputational
- Environmental
- Strategic
- Organisational (people/systems)
- Health & safety
- Regulatory
- Legislative
- Political
- External and economic factors – e.g. interest rates/inflation
- Moral/Social Obligations

2 Risk Analysis / Evaluation

Areas of potential risk need to be systematically and accurately assessed. The process requires an assessment of the:

- Probability/likelihood of a risk event occurring
- Sensitivity analysis. How likely is it that the decision taken is incorrect? What would it take in terms of change to lead to a loss-making position/risk arising?
- Potential severity/impact of the consequences should such an event occur.
- Possible resource and other implications.
- Priority of the risk for action in relation to the Council's risk tolerance and appetite (see Appendix 2).

Once threats and opportunities have been identified their potential risk scores need to be evaluated as follows:

- Original Risk Score - This is the risk score without any controls or mitigations

- Current Risk Score – This is the risk score today taking into account the effect of mitigations that are currently in place and active
- Target Risk Score – What we expect the risk score to be once all additional actions have been completed

3 Risk Control

Prioritisation for attention is according to the existing control environment, risk tolerance/appetite, target risk assessment, and the availability of resources.

Risk cannot always be eliminated completely. Risk management is the process of taking action to minimise the likelihood of the risk event occurring and/or reducing the impact and severity of the consequences, should it occur or maximising the opportunities.

The Council will determine the course of action necessary to reduce the risk further preferably to within the Council's risk appetite. Such action will be treatment, transfer, tolerate or terminate. All possible actions need to be considered and evaluated, including the costs and implications of exit strategies.

The Council will ensure that it maintains an optimum balance between internal and external insurance within a framework of prudent financial management. Insurance can be seen as a risk management tool via a form of risk transfer whereby unavoidable risks can be managed by converting some of the risk into an annual fee, the value of which is known. The Council's Insurance Statement is available at Appendix 3.

The Council will assign clear responsibility for managing the risk to an appropriate "risk owner" who is able to influence and take necessary actions. In addition, the actions developed to address risks should be **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic & Timely), where possible and appropriate. Contingency arrangements will be developed that are appropriate to the threat identified.

The required actions will be entered into and monitored via the Strategic Risk Register.

4 Risk Monitoring & Review

There must be monitoring and review of:

- The implementation of the agreed control action.
- The effectiveness of the action in controlling the risk.
- How the risk evolves / changes in response to changes in the operating environment, changing business conditions, operational changes etc.
- Where an incident occurs post-incident reviews must be undertaken into the causes/impact and identify lessons learnt.

As part of the review the risks will be re-evaluated and the cycle will continue as demonstrated in the diagram above.

Further information on monitoring can be found in Section 7 below.

6. What are the different roles and responsibilities?

The following describes the roles and responsibilities that members and officers will play in introducing, embedding and owning the risk management process**:**

Councillors

Elected members are responsible for governing the delivery of services to the local community. Members have a responsibility to understand the strategic risks that their Council faces and will be made aware of how these risks are being managed through the annual strategic and service business planning process. They will also be kept informed on the management of those risks through the regular performance management framework. They should not seek to avoid or delegate this overall responsibility, as it is key to their stewardship responsibilities.

Councillors are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of internal control based on information provided by the Chief Executive, Director of Place, Director of Resources / Chief Finance Officer, Assistant Directors / Heads of Service (the Corporate Leadership Team) and Internal Audit.

For each significant risk identified Councillors will:

- review the Councils track record on risk management and internal control;
- consider the risk profile for the coming year and consider if current internal control arrangements are likely to be effective.

In making decisions Councillors will consider the following aspects:-

a) Control Environment.
    - Council objectives and priorities; and financial and non-financial targets;
    - Organisational structure, calibre and capacity of the Corporate Leadership Team culture, approach and resources with respect to the management of risk;
    - Delegation of authority, public reporting and Member/Corporate Leadership Team scrutiny.
b) On-going evaluation and identification of significant risks, prioritisation and allocation of resources to address areas of high exposure;
c) Information and communication: quality and timeliness of information re significant risks and the time it takes for control to be recognised or new risk identified;

d) Monitoring and corrective action: ability of the organisation to learn from issues and its commitment and responsiveness with which corrective actions are implemented.

The **Accounts and Audit Committee** responsibilities are set out in detail in the Council Constitution, this broadly covers the following:

- monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's risk management and internal control arrangements across the Council.
- receiving and reviewing monitoring reports as required from the Corporate Governance Steering Group regarding risk management.
- making recommendations to the Council which improve the effectiveness of the Council's risk management and internal control arrangements.

The **Corporate Governance Steering Group** membership consists of the following:
Director of Resources / Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)
Head of Legal / Monitoring Officer / Data Protection Officer (Chair)
Head of Finance / Internal Audit Manager
Chair of Risk Management Working Group
Strategic Risk & Performance Management Lead
Information Governance Officer

The Group is pivotal in the promotion and the continued embedding of risk and information management within the Council. The successful outcome of this will foster a culture and behaviours that results in effective risk and information management being practised throughout the organisation as part of day-to-day activity, performance management and the sharing of best practice and experience between services.

The Group's responsibilities include:

- Supporting, advising and promoting risk management and information governance (including GDPR) throughout the Council through the development and adoption of policies and procedures approved by Councillors.
- Actively identifying and assessing strategic risks on a regular basis (at least quarterly) for the reporting to and consideration of Councillors.
- To support and champion the work of the Council's Risk Management Working Group together with senior management.
- Monitor the actions on a regular basis.
- To take overall responsibility for the administration of the risk, audit and information management process.
- Develop, implement and review the framework and policies for managing risk, audit and information governance.
- Identify and promote best practice.
- Communicate the benefits of effective risk, audit and information management to all members of the organisation.
- Facilitate training and guidance as appropriate, such as refresher training for A&A, identification and treatment training for risk owners, provide guidance on assessing

risks and writing risk statements, cyber and information security training (inc GDPR), etc.

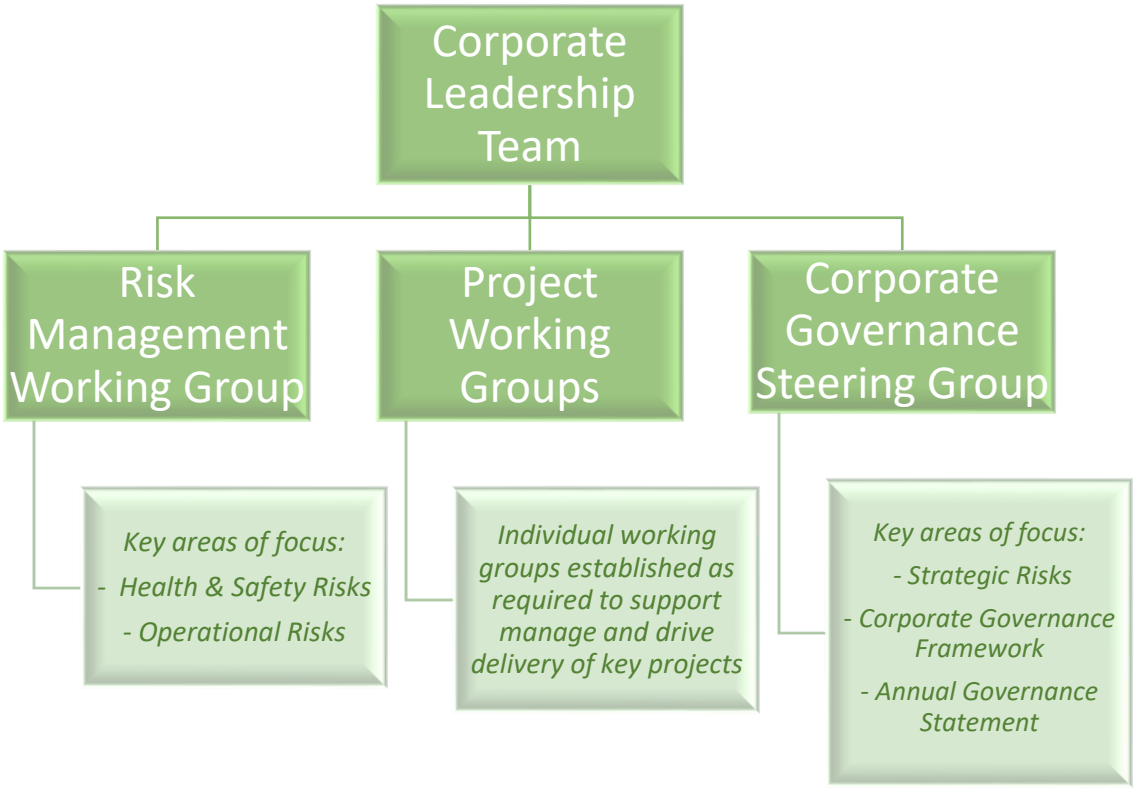
- To provide a forum for reporting progress on risk management and information governance.
- Incorporating the risk management process into service planning processes.
- Encouraging staff to be open and honest in identifying risks or missed opportunities.
- Ensuring that the risk management process is part of all major projects and change management initiatives.
- To receive and consider reports into breaches of confidentiality and security and, where appropriate, undertake or recommend remedial action.
- To provide a focal point for the resolution and/or discussion of Information Governance issues.
- To review and develop the Council's Freedom of Information publication scheme and review performance / compliance.
- To receive and consider updates / reports by the Council's internal and external auditors.
- To review progress against the delivery of internal audit recommendations and follow-up where required with relevant services / lead officers.
- To review and consider updates / reports relating to the Council's financial governance arrangements, including external audit and procurement.
- To review and consider updates / reports relating to the Council's insurance arrangements.
- Setting the agenda for the Accounts & Audit Committee.

Risk Management Working Group

This Group is currently chaired by the Council's Assistant Director – Operational Services with representation from service departments and the Council's insurer. The group provides a forum for the consideration and discussion of risk management, sharing of best practice and the making of recommendations or highlighting areas for development.

The Group will have defined terms of reference. The Group meets quarterly and the Minutes of each meeting are reported to the Corporate Leadership Team. Any significant changes to risks requiring escalation will be identified here and issues identified by this group will be escalated to the Corporate Governance Steering Group.

The Corporate Governance Steering Group and Risk Management Working Group work side by side in their differing roles (strategic risk and operational risk) and report into Corporate Leadership Team. There will also be specific Project Working Groups established as required where project risks will be reviewed and monitored and progress also reported to Corporate Leadership Team. This is where specific risks are discussed and escalated / de-escalated / removed / added as required. The diagram below demonstrates this:



Chief Officers / Directors / Heads of Service
Directors, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service need to continually be aware of and understand their role in the risk management process and why they should be concerned with risk to achieve their objectives. They need to know how to evaluate risks and when to accept the right risks to pursue an opportunity.

All major strategic risk matters will be incorporated into annual service plans to ensure ownership and management. Each Assistant Director / Head of Service will report on a periodic basis to their respective Director and Councillors where deemed necessary.

Staff
Staff at all levels should be aware of the Council's approach to risk and the arrangements within services for decisions on risk to be taken at the appropriate level (balanced against them being freed up to act and without activity becoming bogged down and overly bureaucratic).

Partners
The Council works with a range of partners in the delivery of services. Examples include the arrangements with PEARL joint venture entities, Brookhouse Ltd, Liberata UK Ltd and

Pendle Leisure Trust Ltd. Under these arrangements it is important to ensure there is a common understanding of the approach to risk and of the impact of decisions on risk for each other.

Role of Internal Audit
Internal audit's role is to independently review and challenge established processes, challenging risk identification and evaluation and providing assurance to management and Councillors on the effectiveness of controls. They will input to the annual assessment of the Council's risk management and internal control mechanisms as part of the review of corporate governance arrangements. They will use risk information to develop risk based internal audit programmes.

7. How will the monitoring and reporting of risk management happen?

A framework of monitoring and reporting is established which provides for the:

- Review of the risk management strategy and policy statement every three years (which aligns with the Council's current strategic and financial planning cycle) by the Corporate Governance Steering Group, Corporate Leadership Team and Accounts and Audit Committee, which will then be reported to Executive for approval and adoption.
- Quarterly review of the Strategic Risk Register by the Corporate Governance Steering Group.
- Monitoring the effective management of risks including regular reporting on service and corporate performance indicators to Members (quarterly via the Accounts & Audit Committee).
- Annual review of the overall process and effectiveness of risk management and internal control reported via the Annual Governance Statement.
- Regular monitoring and reporting on finance, risk and performance across all services as part of the Performance Management Framework.
- Consideration by Councillors as part of the reporting and decision-making process, whereby risk management considerations are reported in respect of service, policy and project developments.

8. Conclusion

The adoption of a sound risk management approach will achieve many benefits for the Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Council is continuously improving and will contribute to effective corporate governance.

The challenge is to implement a comprehensive risk management process without significantly increasing workloads. This has been achieved in part by making risk management part of existing processes and reviews rather than treating it as a separate function.

Appendix 1

Pendle Borough Council – Risk Management Policy Statement

The Council is committed to identifying and managing risks affecting the organisation.

The Council recognises that it is not always possible to completely eliminate risk and that a level of risk may always exist. However, the Council recognises its responsibility to manage risks effectively and supports a structure and focussed approach to managing them by approval of this Risk Management Policy.

By doing this it aims to:

1. Better achieve its corporate objectives and priorities.
2. Manage its resources effectively.
3. Improve the quality of its business decisions.
4. Anticipate and respond to change (e.g.: political, social, environmental, legislative, technical and their associated risks) in a proactive and systematic way.
5. Prevent loss or injury to Staff, Councillors, members of the public and other visitors.
6. Provide greater protection of its assets and guard against impropriety or poor value for money.
7. Enhance corporate governance.
8. Reduce complaints against the Council.
9. Protect the reputation of the Council and enhance community confidence.
10. Reduce the cost of insurance, incidence of claim and improve the Council's ability to defend claims.

To achieve these aims the Council will:

1. Raise awareness of the need for effective risk management, by all those connected with service delivery, through advice and training; and provide opportunities for shared learning.
2. Maintain risk management systems and processes which reflect best practice.
3. Determine the Councils appetite or tolerance to risk.
4. Allocate resources to identified priority areas.
5. Establish clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines for risk management within the Council.
6. Incorporate risk management into the business planning process and embed risk management within the culture of the organisation.
7. Incorporate risk management into reviews of services.
8. Incorporate risk management into all substantive service developments and projects.
9. Monitor risk management arrangements on an on-going basis and take appropriate measures.

Appendix 2

Pendle Borough Council – Risk Management Strategy

Defining the Council's Appetite to Risk, level of Impact and Likelihood

The Council and Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for setting the risk appetite of the Authority – i.e. the level of risk that is deemed to be acceptable. The level of acceptable risk can vary across different categories of risk.

The Council's appetite for risk will be reviewed at least every three years as part of the review and update of the Risk Management Strategy. However, should circumstances dictate, it will be reviewed on an ad-hoc basis as necessary.

The risk appetite will be defined and measured by its approach to impact and likelihood surrounding each risk as described further below.

The Council's appetite to risk could be classified or described, amongst other as:

Classification	Description
Averse	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty is a key Organisational objective
Minimalist	Preference for ultra-safe business delivery options that have a low degree of inherent risk and only have a potential for limited reward.
Cautious	Preference for safe delivery options that have a low degree of residual risk and may only have limited potential for reward.
Open	Willing to consider all potential delivery options and choose the one that is most likely to result in successful delivery while also providing an acceptable level of reward (and value for money etc.).
Hungry	Eager to be innovative and to choose options offering potentially higher business rewards, despite greater inherent risk

It is proposed that the Council adopts an **"Open"** appetite across the majority of the Council's activities.

Definitions of Impact

Evaluation	Description	Level
Insignificant	• Insignificant disruption of internal business – no loss of customer service. • Insignificant disruption to business of key partner but no loss of service delivery. • No injuries or Health and Safety implications • No reputation damage. • No or insignificant environmental damage. • No or insignificant impact on staffing or the organisational structure • No regulatory or legislative impact • No social impact • No significant impact on Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 3 months) • Low financial or contractual loss <£50,000 (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term) • Any other relevant considerations	1
Minor	• Some disruption on internal business only – no loss of customer service. • Minor disruption to business of key partner but no loss of service delivery. • Minor injury (first aid treatment) or Health and Safety implications / breaches • Minimal reputation damage (minimal coverage in local press) • Minor damage to local environment • Minor impact on staffing or the organisational structure • Minor regulatory or legislative impact • Minor social impact • Minor disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 6 months) • Medium financial / contractual loss >=£50,000 but <£100,000, (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term) • Any other relevant considerations	2
Moderate	• Noticeable disruption to PBC – would affect customers (loss of service for no more than 48 hours). • Noticeable disruption to key business partner resulting in loss of service delivery of no more than 48 hours. • Violence or threat of serious injury (medical treatment required). • Moderate injury (first aid treatment) or Health and Safety implications / breaches • Moderate reputational damage • Coverage in national tabloid press and/or extensive front page coverage in local press or TV. • Moderate damage to local environment • Moderate impact on staffing or the organisational structure • Moderate regulatory or legislative impact • Moderate social impact • Moderate disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 12 months) • High financial / contractual loss >=£100,000 but <£250,000 (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term).	3

Major	• Major disruption to PBC – serious damage to authority's ability to service customers (loss of service between 2 and 7 days). • Major disruption to key business partner resulting in a loss of service delivery lasting between 2 and 7 days. • Major reputational damage • Coverage in national broadsheet press and/or low-level national TV reporting. • Extensive/multiple injuries or major (emergency aid treatment) or Health and Safety implications / breaches • Major damage to local environment. • Major impact on staffing or the organisational structure • Major regulatory or legislative impact • Major social impact • Major disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 18 months) • Major financial / contractual loss >=£250,000 but <£1,000,000 (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term) • Council is unable to deliver some of its corporate priorities • Any other relevant considerations	4
Catastrophic	• PBC unlikely to survive or loss of service delivery for more than 7 days. • Business failure of key partner or loss of service delivery of over 7 days. • Loss of life or Catastrophic Health and Safety implications / breaches • Significant reputational damage • Extensive coverage in national press and broadsheet editorial and/or national TV item. • Significant local, national or international environment damage. • Catastrophic impact on staffing or the organisational structure • Catastrophic regulatory or legislative impact • Catastrophic social impact • Significant disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay > 24 months) • Huge financial / contractual loss >=£1,000,000 (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term). • The Council is unable to deliver all or the majority of its Corporate Priorities • Any other relevant considerations	5

Definitions of Likelihood

Evaluation	Indicators	Level
Almost certain	Expected to occur in most circumstances or more than an 80% chance of occurrence.	5
Likely	Potential of occurring several times in 3 years or has occurred recently. Between 55% and 80% chance of occurrence.	4
Moderate	Could occur more than once in 3 years. Could be difficult to control due to external influence. History of occurrence or near miss. Less than a 55% chance of occurrence.	3
Unlikely	Unlikely, but may occur over a 3 year period. Less than 15% chance of occurrence.	2
Remote	Has not occurred. May occur in exceptional circumstances. Less than 5% chance of occurrence.	1

Risk Model

Likelihood							
	Almost certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15
	Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Remote	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			Impact				

Risk Level	Action / Control Required
	Catastrophic / major impact with almost certain to likely likelihood, requiring immediate control measures by Council. This level of risk is outside the Council's tolerance limits and therefore requires immediate action to mitigate the risk
	Major / moderate impact with unlikely to almost certain likelihood requiring appropriate proactive management and control measures. This level of risk represents the Council's maximum tolerance limits.
	Moderate / minor impact with highly remote to almost certain likelihood requiring appropriate management and control measures. This level of risk is below the Council's tolerance limits

Appendix 3

Pendle Borough Council Insurance Statement – July 2026

The Council is committed to ensuring that it maintains an optimum balance between internal and external insurance within a framework of prudent financial management.

In determining the balance between internal and external insurance the Council will seek to:

- Insure risks internally where it is financially prudent and advantageous to do so
- Purchase external insurance or arrange cover through an alternative risk transfer arrangement
    - where required by statute
    - to cover catastrophic events
    - limit the financial exposure of the Council to the cumulative effect of multiple small losses
    - where there is a requirement to insure e.g. under the terms of a contract or lease, and the third party insists that external insurance be purchased
- Ensure that the internal funding is adequate to meet the claims that it will be required to pay
- Maintain an adequate insurance reserve
- Maintain an actuarially assessed insurance provision

Approach to Risk Financing and Insurance

Insurance is a financial mechanism through which an individual or organisation can transfer an unknown potential liability into the certainty of a smaller but fixed annual cost. By combining a large number of exposures into a group, the insurer can predict the probability of loss relating to uncertain events with a reasonable degree of accuracy for the group as a whole. Combining large numbers of potential exposures allows for an insurance based on a balance of risk of loss over the whole group so that the cost of the premiums can be spread across the organisation.

The Council follows the approach of self-funding some insurable losses by setting the excess levels at an appropriate level and using commercial insurance where there are compulsory requirements or where it has been deemed that it is more appropriate to do so, particularly to provide a cap to its financial liabilities in respect of third party liability claims. Excess levels are set during each tender process and, exceptionally, at annual renewal by looking at the relative cost of premiums and projected excess costs for each excess level.

The Council's insurance arrangements are therefore a mixture of self-insurance and commercially purchased insurance, with decisions on the balance between the two based on an assessment of relative cost and risk.

Insurance cover

The Council obtains insurance for the following risk areas:

Property

- Material Damage
- Works In Progress
- Business Interruption
- All Risks

Casualty

- Public Liability
- Officials Indemnity
- Employers' Liability
- Libel & Slander
- Professional Negligence & Indemnity

Motor

Additional Covers

- Fidelity Guarantee
- Land Charges
- Personal Accident
- Public Health Act
- Business Travel
- Computers
- Hirers Liability
- Terrorism
- Property Owners

Obtaining Insurance

The main aim when procuring an external insurance policy is to obtain the broadest cover at the most economically advantageous terms available.

For those risks that the Council has decided to insure against, insurance policies have been purchased in accordance with the Council's procurement guidance.

The Council selects insurers for the Council and its Group using a competitive tender process.

Zurich Municipal Insurance (ZM)

ZM are the principle provider of insurance to the public sector. The company is a direct provider and will not quote through the client's brokers. Were the Council to use a

broker process, ZM's approach would complicate the tender process but as they are such a significant provider to the sector, the Council would not want to exclude them. Managing the tender process in-house therefore allows easy inclusion of ZM.

The Council's officers evaluate ZM's quotations alongside the submissions from other insurers.

Insurance Period

The Council renews its insurance annually with the insurance period running from 1st April to 31st March each year.

Procurement

Insurance or other forms of alternative risk transfer will be procured in accordance with the external regulatory requirements applying at the time and the Council's Financial Regulations. The procurement process will be handled in-house by the Financial Accounting Team and the Procurement Team. The Council's existing arrangements were tendered to commence on 1st April 2025.

Financial Management

Premiums and Excesses

Premiums and excesses are charged to holding accounts and then are allocated each financial year across service areas based on a combination of the basis of insurance (i.e. building values for property premiums) and the claims history for the service area.

Insurance Fund

The Council's Insurance Fund is a combination of an Insurance Reserve and an Insurance Provision. The value held in these is determined through an actuarial review of the Council's current claims and claims history which is renewed every few years.

The Council's Insurance Provision has been established to make a financial allowance for the aggregate level of the assessed cost of unsettled current claims. Each claim that has been notified by the Council has a settlement value which has been assessed by the Council's insurer. It is this value that is used to calculate the level to be held in the provision, adjusted as deemed appropriate by the actuary.

The Council's Insurance Reserve provides a financial allowance for the assessed cost of claims for which, based on the Council's claims history, the incident relating to the claim has occurred but where the Council has not yet received notification of the claim. The value to be placed in the reserve is assessed by an actuary who provides a risk based assessment of the potential financial impact.

Compliance with Accounting Standards

These arrangements meet the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code) prepared by CIPFA /LASAAC. The definition, within the Code of a Provision is:

A provision shall be recognised when:

- An authority has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event
- It is possible that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits or service potential will be required to settle the obligation, and
- A reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

An Insurance Reserve is “an earmarked reserve, accounted for separately, but remaining legally part of the General Fund, consisting of “sums held to meet potential and contingent liabilities”.

Claims Handling

Day to day claims are handled via the Legal Section who will work with Insurers. The Risk Management Working Group identifies any emerging risks within the Authority and wider local government sector or beyond.

Any key issues are fed back into the Corporate Governance Steering Group

The Director of Resources and Financial Services Manager review the Council’s insurance needs by identifying risk exposures and analysing and classifying risks to provide optimum coverage, costs and claims settlements.

Council Departments

The Council Departments notify the Legal Section of potential claims and assist with providing information pertinent to the incident, such as training records, inspection records, cleaning regimes.

Any assistance with insurance related queries or additional insurance cover required by the Council Departments and Group Companies are all requested via the Legal Section.

Insurers

Property and motor vehicle cover is provided by Protector Limited, claims handing is direct with Protector, and excess is removed from claims before repayment to the council.

Zurich Municipal provide cover for Public Liability, employers liability and Professional indemnity.

Zurich Municipal also provide Risk Management guidance to assist the Council develop good risk management procedures and systems, which in turn enables the Council to identify and prioritise risks and take practical steps to manage them.

Travel and personal accident cover is provided by Mavern Public Sector

Solicitors

In the event legal assistance is required with the defence of a claim, Zurich Municipal appoint their panel solicitor to represent the Council.

Links with Risk Management

Insurance as a Tool

Insurance can be seen a risk management tool whereby unavoidable risks can be managed by converting some of the risk into an annual fee, the value of which is known. This is a form of risk transfer.

Risk Management to Reduce Costs

Conversely, good risk management processes and associated controls and checks can reduce insurance claims occurring and also, when claims are made, can be used to defend the Council against the claims.

Review

The levels of insurance excess will be considered for each annual insurance renewal, although there will normally not need to be any changes. A special focus will be on categories of insurance where the premium has varied significantly between years to see if different insurance terms are more financially acceptable.

Often a change is the effect of market conditions however and so the review rarely results in a change in insurance terms.

At each annual insurance renewal, updated values are obtained for all properties, vehicles, assets, wages, works in progress, planned projects, etc. from Heads of Service throughout the Council.

Insurance Statement Document

This document will be renewed prior to each tender process.

Appendix 4

Checklist for Risk Assessment on Projects

Background

The objective of this checklist is to enable Councillors, Management and other interested parties (e.g. Audit) to satisfy themselves that the major risks associated with a potential project have been identified and reported for consideration to the appropriate forum as part of the decision-making process.

The primary objective in any Risk Management process is the initial identification of the potential risks associated with the project. Accordingly, it is necessary to adopt a flexible approach having regard to the materiality of the project and the potential impact upon the Council (not just in financial terms) of the decision taken being incorrect.

The checklist is not exhaustive but should be considered as a framework to allow an assessment to be made of the processes gone through by officers in proposing a project for decision by Management / Councillors.

What is a Project?

A project is any undertaking, carried out individually or collaboratively and possibly involving research or design, which is carefully planned to achieve a particular aim.

For these purposes, the risk assessment checklist should be considered for projects based on proportionality and lead officer discretion. Some examples of the types of projects where the attached checklist should be completed as are follows:

- Any Capital scheme
- Implementation of savings / service reviews
- Change management initiatives

The Project Risk Assessment Checklist is completed and owned by the identified Project Lead and presented to the decision-making body in the Council, e.g. Corporate Leadership Team.

There will also be specific Project Working Groups, established as required, where project risks will be reviewed and monitored and progress reported to Corporate Leadership Team in the form of a Project Risk Register. This is where specific risks are discussed and escalated / de-escalated / removed / added as required.

Pendle Borough Council

Project Risk Assessment Checklist

Project Name	
Project Lead	
Date	

Section 1 – Project Definition & Clarity

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments
Is there a clear and complete description of the project scope, objectives, and outcomes?		
Are all material assumptions and unknowns identified?		
Has similar work been undertaken internally or externally, and lessons learned captured?		
Are success criteria and measurable benefits clearly defined?		

Section 2: Strategic Fit & Value for Money

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments

Does the project align with corporate priorities and strategic objectives?		
Is there a clear business case including financial and non-financial benefits?		
Has the total financial impact (capital and revenue) been assessed?		
Has sensitivity analysis been undertaken on key assumptions (costs, income, risks)?		
What is the impact if the project underperforms or fails?		
Do anticipated benefits justify the identified risks?		

Section 3: Governance, Legal & Compliance

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments
Does the Council have the legal powers (vires) to deliver the project?		
Have procurement processes been followed in line with regulations?		
Are contracts, warranties, indemnities, and guarantees in place and appropriate?		
Are there any regulatory, legislative, or policy compliance requirements?		

Are governance arrangements (approval routes, reporting, decision-making) defined?		

Section 4: Delivery Capability & Resourcing

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments
Are sufficient skilled resources available for delivery (now and future)?		
Is the project duration realistic and manageable within existing capacity?		
Are roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities clearly assigned?		
Are systems, processes, and infrastructure adequate to support delivery?		

Section 5: Stakeholders, Partnerships & Dependencies

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments
Are all key stakeholders identified and engaged?		
Are there external partners, and are roles/responsibilities clearly defined?		
Have partner risks (financial, delivery, reputational) been assessed?		

Is the project dependent on external factors (funding, policy, economic conditions)?		
Is external monitoring, reporting, or regulation required?		

Section 6: Risk Identification & Management

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments
Has a comprehensive risk assessment been completed covering financial, contractual, operational, reputational, environmental, health & safety, legal, strategic, external and social risks?		
Has a full project risk register been created?		
Are risks scored, prioritised, and assigned owners?		
Are mitigation and control measures defined?		
Is there a process for ongoing monitoring, escalation, and review?		

Section 7: Lifecycle, Exit & Contingency Planning

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments
Is there a defined project lifecycle including milestones and review points?		

Is there a clear end-state or transition to business-as-usual?		
Is there an exit strategy for early termination?		
Are financial, contractual, and operational implications of exit understood?		
Are contingency plans in place for major risks materialising?		

Section 8: Assurance & Reporting

Question	Yes/No/N/A	Comments
Is the project subject to appropriate internal/external assurance (audit, review)?		
Are reporting arrangements to management established?		
Is there a mechanism for updating the risk register regularly?		

Actions

The Council's Corporate Leadership Team will periodically consider any actions that are necessary as a result of the Risk Strategy update or any other occurrence. Where appropriate these will feature in the Annual Governance Statement and be reported to Councillors accordingly.

Definitions (Source ISO Guide 73:2009)

Risk	*the effect of uncertainty on objectives (an effect is a deviation from the expected and can be positive and / or negative)*
Risk Management	*co-ordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk*
Risk Management Framework	*set of components that provide the foundations and organisational arrangements for designing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and continually improving risk management throughout the organisation*
Risk Management Policy	*statement of the overall intentions and direction of an organisation related to risk management*
Risk Attitude	*The organisation's approach to assess and eventually pursue, retain, take or turn away from risk*
Risk Management Plan	*scheme within the risk management framework specifying the approach, the management components and resources to be applied to the management of risk*
Risk Owner	*person or entity with the accountability and authority to manage a risk*
Risk Management Process	*systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the activities of communicating, consulting, establishing the context, and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risk*
Risk Assessment	*overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation*

Risk Identification *process of finding, recognising and describing risks*

Risk Source *element which alone or in combination has the intrinsic potential to give rise to risk*

Risk Analysis *process to comprehend the nature of risk and determine the level of risk*

Risk Criteria *terms of reference against which the significance of risk is evaluated*

Level of Risk *magnitude of a risk or combination of risks, expressed in terms of the combination of consequences and their likelihood*

Risk Evaluation *process of comparing the results of risk analysis with risk criteria to determine whether the risk and / or its magnitude is acceptable or tolerable*

Risk Treatment *process to modify risk*

Control *measure that is modifying risk*

Target Risk *risk remaining after risk treatment*