

Briefing Note

Committee name: Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee

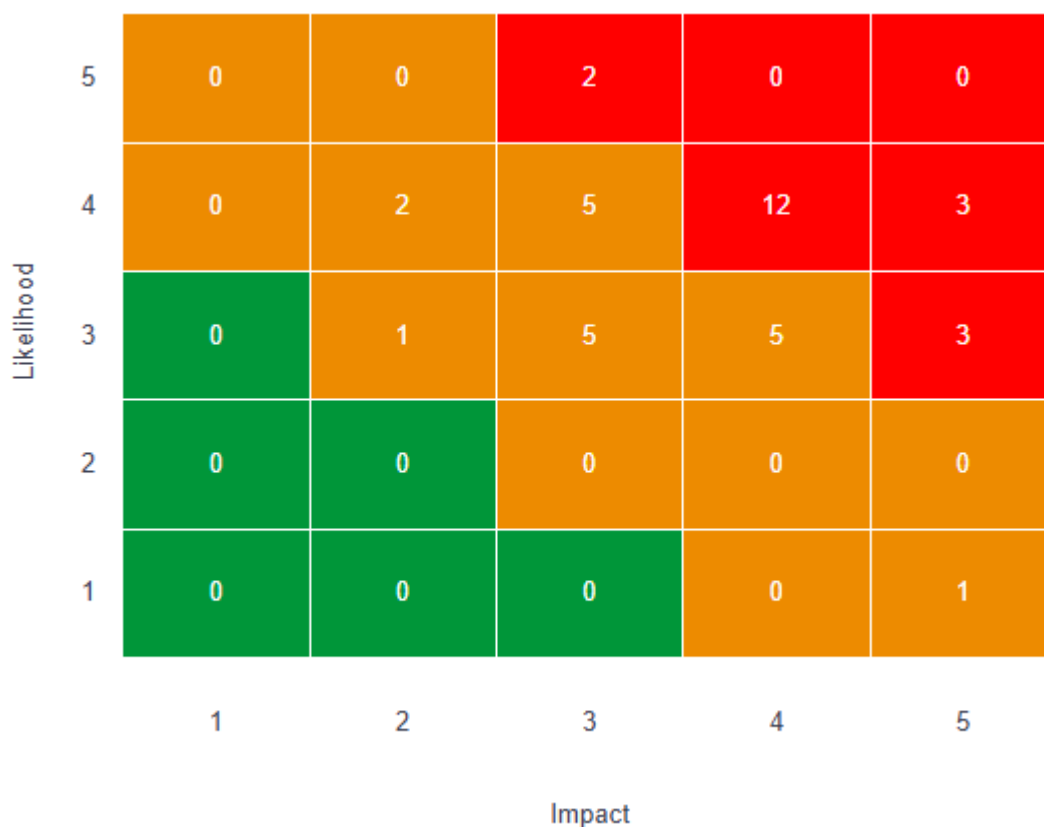
Date: 22/10/2025

Responsible officer: Victoria Bishop – Head of Governance, Risk and Assurance

Cheltenham Borough Council corporate risk register

There are currently 39 risks on the corporate risk register.

The below matrix shows the breakdown of current risk scores:



In summary:

- Four risks were added this quarter
- Seven were closed and archived
- 29 risks had no change since the last assessment
- Two risks reduced since their last assessment
- No risks increased

New risks:

Four risks were added to the corporate risk register this quarter:

1. Private Sector Housing (resourcing) - If CBC does not, or cannot, adequately resource its private sector housing work, then the authority will be unable to meet its statutory obligations and duties.
 - a. Raw risk score – 16
 - b. Current risk score – 16

2. People resource, LGR and financial provision - If we do not make an adequate provision in our financial plan for additional people resources over the next few years then we may not be able to deliver business as usual
 - a. Raw risk score - 20
 - b. Current risk score – 16

Two of those added were confidential risks and so cannot be shared in a public forum.

Closed risks

Seven risks were closed, archived and are being appropriately managed on their service level risk registers:

1. Failure to support nature and biodiversity - If we fail to deliver projects to support nature, then there will be a potentially irreversible impact on local biodiversity due to climate change, with implications for the well-being of our communities.
 - a. Risk score at time of closure – 6
 - b. Risk has been reviewed, due to low risk (risk score remains the same but has been low for a while), Head of Planning is going to put this back on Service Level risk register so have removed from Corporate
 - c. The overall carbon neutral and biodiversity risk has been reviewed (see below) and incorporates elements of this risk
 - d. Nature recovery supplementary planning document is going cabinet in October and the action plan for sustainable alternative natural green space goes to cabinet in November.

2. Devolution - If Gloucestershire is not part of an effective strategic authority it may reduce or limit the councils ability to secure funding and investment and take advantage of devolution powers offered.
 - a. Risk score at time of closure – 15
 - b. It has now been almost 12 months since the white paper. Following the announcement of the initial six devolution priority areas, there is no indication as yet from Government that there will be further waves announced. Therefore, it is unlikely that Gloucestershire can take advantage of being part of a future devolution deal in the medium term. We will wait to see what is announced in the Autumn statement and can re-add this risk if the situation changes, but at present there is nothing that CBC can do to impact this risk. We will add this to our horizon scanning document.

3. Publica Information technology - If the Councils do not effectively manage the changes to Publica then we may lose valuable IT Staff putting the councils IT systems at risk
 - a. Risk score at time of closure – 8
 - b. There is more clarity on the position of Publica in the medium term. IT with publica remains stable and is able to meet the needs of partner councils. While integration of housing IT systems is ongoing this can be managed as part of local service risks.

4. Cost of living crisis - If medium term risk of inflation continues then this may impact on the councils financial stability, our ability to deliver services & major developments and have a negative impact on our residents & team members
 - a. Risk score at time of closure – 12
 - b. The cost-of-living crisis as a title is no longer appropriate in this context but has been rolled into medium term financial strategy (MTFS) risks and costs pressures. This will also be reviewed with other service managers as to if it needs to sit on their service level risk registers.

5. Government's Fair Funding Review - If the Government review concludes significant changes to business rate retention, Government grant funding or Council Tax generation for Cheltenham then the MTFS budget gap may increase, requiring greater savings than already planned.
 - a. Risk score at time of closure -15
 - b. This risk has now been incorporated as part of the MTFS risk and therefore no longer needs to sit independently on the risk register

6. General Balances - If the level of General Balances is not sufficient to cover anticipated future pressures or unanticipated events, then this may result levels falling below the minimum required level as recommended by the Section 151 Officer in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
 - a. Risk score at time of closure/move to service level plan – 15
 - b. This risk has been moved to the finance service level risk register and therefore has been closed on the corporate risk register.

7. Lifeline Alarm Service - If we continue to experience delays in answering times with the lifeline alarm services then this delays emergency response times which could has a potential risk to life, safeguarding concerns, reputational damage.
 - a. Risk Score at time of closure – 10
 - b. Service with our monitoring centre has now returned to normal for the last week and so this risk has been removed from the risk register.

One risk is being reviewed to reflect the updated corporate plan:

The proposed wording is:

1. Cheltenham Council Carbon Neutral - If we fail to make Cheltenham Borough Council carbon neutral by 2030, and if we do not enable biodiversity, then we will not achieve our corporate objective.
 - a. This risk will be assessed alongside other carbon neutral risks, and the team will consider if there are any other corporate risks for carbon neutral to be added to the corporate risk register.

Overview of change in risk score:

Two risks reduced since their last assessment

1. Rough Sleeping Initiative Funding - If there are external financial changes to jointly commissioned arrangements for Rough Sleepers, then the council may have to increase its funding via the General Fund in order for the service provision to continue at current standards.
 - a. Changed the risk wording, reduced the risk scoring from 12 to 9, and updated the mitigating actions
2. Property Compliance - If there is ineffective management of property compliance then this will result in regulator intervention and reputational damage
 - a. Mitigation measures updated and risk reduced accordingly from 16 to 12

The highest risks on the corporate risk register are:

The top two risks have a current risk score of 20:

Risk ID	Risk Status	Risk Title	Risk Description	Risk Manager	Date Raised	Risk Category (Multi-Select)
159	Active	Housing Revenue Account	If the housing revenue account becomes unviable then this may result in the council being unable to fund service delivery, investment in existing homes and the delivery of new housing.	Jon Whitlock	21/01/2025	Financial Customer satisfaction Performance Governance
142	Active	Leisure & Culture Venues	If the council does not have a long term vision & investment plan in place for its leisure & culture venues then significant unplanned maintenance, repairs & investment may be required to keep the venues running & it may undermine the ability of the Trust (or any future provider) to run leisure & culture services in a profitable way.	Richard Gibson	14/01/2025	Financial Reputation Customer satisfaction H&S wellbeing Contractual governance

The following risks have a current risk score of 16.

Risk ID	Risk Status	Risk Title	Risk Description	Risk Manager	Date Raised	Risk Category (Multi-Select)
145	Active	Prioritisation of capital resources	If CBC are unable to prioritise medium term projects and programmes which require significant capital financing, then it will increasingly have to rely of borrowing to fund service investments increasing the pressure on our revenue budgets to fund repayments.	Jon Whitlock	20/02/2025	Financial Capacity Reputation Governance

195	Active	Private Sector Housing (resourcing)	If CBC does not, or cannot, adequately resource its private sector housing work, then the authority will be unable to meet its statutory obligations and duties.	Bernadette Reed Louis Krog	12/09/2025	Reputation Legal
197	Active	People resource, LGR and financial provision	If we do not make an adequate provision in our financial plan for additional people resources over the next few years then we may not be able to deliver business as usual	Ann Wolstencroft	18/09/2025	Employee Capacity Reputation Customer satisfaction Performance Legal
146	Active	M5 J10 Planning	If the SLP councils do not come to an agreement with GCC as Local Highways Authority, in regard to the highway capacity in advance of the full build out of M5 J10 and an appropriate method of testing S106 contributions, then this may have a major impact on how planning applications are considered and impact on meeting the councils 5-year housing land supply.	Tracey Birkinshaw	07/05/2025	Contractual governance Performance
151	Active	Impact of lack of 5 Year housing land supply	If the housing delivery action plan, which seeks to address the lack of a 5-year housing land supply, is ineffective then will need to consider alternative actions.	John Spurling	14/01/2025	Reputation Capacity Performance
153	Active	Cheltenham, Gloucester & Tewkesbury Strategic & Local Plan	If there is a failure to gain political consensus across the partners to reach key milestones & failure to adequately resource work then this would impact on reaching milestones which would lead to delay, costs, lack of delivering statutory part of development plan & potential special measures.	John Spurling	21/01/2025	Reputation Contractual governance Financial Performance Capacity Governance Legal
158	Active	Local Government Reorganisation	If local government re-organisation is not managed effectively then it may impact on financial viability, services to residents and staff motivation and retention.	Gareth Edmundson	12/12/2024	Employee Financial Capacity Reputation Customer satisfaction Performance Governance

188	Active	Demand for Housing accommodation	If the number of asylum seekers and refugees and homelessness generally continues to increase in Cheltenham, and there is insufficient accommodation to meet the demand for housing then there will be increased pressures on homelessness and rough sleeping services.	Martin Stacy	25/06/2025	Financial Capacity Customer satisfaction Performance Reputation
152	Active	Cheltenham Trust	If the Trust is unable to deliver on its five-year business plan & run leisure & culture services in a profitable way (within context of cost of living crisis) then the council may incur financial costs to ensure the organisation remains solvent.	Richard Gibson	14/01/2025	Financial Reputation
160	Active	Medium Term Financial Strategy (GF)	If CBC is unable to come up with long term solutions which bridge the gap in the medium-term financial strategy, then it will find it increasingly difficult to prepare revenue budgets year on year without making unplanned cuts in service provision.	Jon Whitlock	21/01/2025	Financial Capacity Customer satisfaction Governance Reputation
157	Active	Cyber Security	If CBC have a cyber security breach then this could impact the Council's ability to deliver services leading to resident hardship, financial loss & reputational damage.	Ann Wolstencroft	21/01/2025	Reputation Governance Financial

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