



**BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

**Risk Management Strategy
2010/11**

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1. BACKGROUND

Bracknell Forest lies 28 miles west of London within Berkshire. The Borough has good access links and a well educated labour force which has attracted businesses, including multi-national organisations to the area and resulted in our economy being historically above average size and productivity compared to the county and nationally.

The Borough's population has grown significantly since the 1990s. Between 1991 and 2001 the population grew twice as fast as the average for South East England. Our population is relatively young and only 11.5% of our residents are of pensionable age compared to 18% nationally. Whilst the 2001 census showed that 90.6% of the population is "White British" the number of school pupils from Minority Ethnic Groups has grown from 6.15 to 12.7% in 2007 indicating a significant change in population ethnic diversity since 2001.

Bracknell Forest is within the Thames Valley which has been economically buoyant and is generally an affluent area (ranked 319 out of 354 on the Index of Multiple Deprivations 2004). Property prices and levels of car ownership are significantly higher than the national average and free school meals eligibility is low. However, these factors mask significant pockets of deprivation. For instance three primary schools have free school meals eligibility in excess of 15% and 16% of households receive a housing or Council Tax benefit.

The Council has developed its Vision "To make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive; living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment" to reflect local needs based on the Borough's population demographic. Six Priorities for delivering this Vision have been identified supported by 13 Medium Term Objectives. An overriding ambition is to regenerate Bracknell Town Centre to provide a vibrant, economic, social and cultural heart to the Borough. This is reflected in the first of the following 6 Priorities:

- Priority 1: A Town Centre fit for the 21st Century
- Priority 2: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Priority 3: Promoting health and achievement:
- Priority 4: Create a Borough where people are, and feel, safe:
- Priority 5: Value for Money
- Priority 6: Sustain economic prosperity

In a climate of a rising population, changes in ethnic diversity and an economic downturn, we can expect to see significant shifts in service demands in terms of the amount and type of services our residents need. Effective risk management will ensure we are better prepared to face these challenges and is essential for ensuring that our Priorities and underlying Medium Term Objectives are achieved.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council recognises that there are risks involved in everything we do and that as an organisation accountable to the public we have a duty to manage those risks in a balanced, structured and cost effective way. In doing so, the Council will better achieve its objectives and enhance the value of the services it provides.

Risks to the achievement of our objectives are set out in our Strategic Risk Register, Directorate Risk Registers and project risk logs. Our key strategic risks at the Council relate to finance and economics and infrastructure and maintenance of assets. Risk management is about improving the quality of information about the likelihood and consequences of these events occurring and subsequently using this information to make informed decisions and judgements.

The Council produced a revised Risk Management Strategy and a new risk Management Toolkit in 2009 to promote a consistent and corporate approach to risk management, allocate responsibilities for managing risks and provide managers with the tools to identify and mitigate significant risks. Approval and publication of the Policy Statement at Appendix 3 in 2009 demonstrated the Council's intention to embed risk management across the organisation by requiring all Members, officers and staff to assist in and take responsibility for the identification, control and mitigation of risk. The Policy is fully supported by Council Members, the Chief Executive, the Corporate Management Team and the Strategic Risk Management Group.

The Risk Management Strategy and Toolkit have now been updated to reflect the progress made on risk management and action to be taken to further embed risk management during 2010/11.

3. AIM OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The aim of the Risk Management Strategy 20010/11 is to set out the actions for the embedding of robust risk management arrangements across the Council and its Local Strategic Partnership and Strategic Partnership Themes during 2010/11.

4. SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

In order to implement the Policy, this strategy -

- Sets out the arrangements for implementing risk management arrangements.
- Assigns responsibilities for delivering specific elements of the Strategy
- Summarises the progress made to date on embedding risk management and set out the action to be taken forward to fully embed risk management processes
- Develops a training plan to disseminate the requirements of the Risk Management Policy and initiate the development and embedding of a risk management culture

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council has a statutory responsibility to have arrangements in place for managing risks as stated in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended 2006) which says

“The relevant body shall be responsible for ensuring that the financial management of the body is adequate and effective and that the body has sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the body’s functions and which includes arrangements for management of risk”.

In addition, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning.

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Council has effective risk management rests with the Executive. The Governance and Audit Committee supports the Executive in providing independent oversight of the adequacy of all audit and governance assurances. The Strategic Risk Management Group was established to oversee risk management arrangements and report to CMT. The Chief Executive has identified the Borough Treasurer as Lead Officer for Risk Management and delegated to him responsibility for ensuring effective arrangements are in place.

The Borough Treasurer has tasked the Head of Audit and Risk Management with reviewing and monitoring risk management procedures and identifying areas for improvement. There are risk implications across all the aspects of our services and projects and hence all officers across the Council have responsibility for ensuring risks are identified and managed as appropriate. Appendix 1 clarifies roles and responsibilities.

6. PROGRESS MADE DURING 2009/10 AGAINST THE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

During 200/10 the following developmental actions were taken to further improve risk management:

- Training was provided on risk management arrangements as set out in the Risk Management Strategy and Risk Management Toolkit to 2 directorates. In addition, training was provided to building surveyors on procurement risks and risks of fraud in procurement;
- A fundamental refresh of the Strategic Risk Register commenced in March 2010 at the Senior Managers Away day;
- Business Continuity Plans were refreshed and an external consultant undertook a review of the Council’s business continuity arrangements;
- A Flu Pandemic Group was set up during the pandemic to coordinate arrangements for responding to the risks from the pandemic ; and
- Internal audit reviews of directorate risk management arrangements were started.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2010/11

Strategic Risk Register

The Strategic Risk Register has been re-developed from first principles. As part of this process, a new 5 by 5 risk scoring methodology is being introduced which should be clearer for officers and Members to utilise. In

addition, the actions to address the new strategic risks will be included within the body of the Register rather than Service Plans for the relevant risk owner. Progress on these actions will be reported in the Corporate Performance Overview Report rather than individual directorate Performance Monitoring Reports. This will provide for a clearer trail through from risks to implementation of mitigating actions.

Directorate Risk Registers

During 2010/11, directorate risk register will be developed which set out the top 10-15 risks for each directorate as agreed by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). These will replace the risk factors in the Service Plans which focused solely on risks to the achievement of developmental targets and hence did not include risks for business as usual.

Training

All appropriate staff should receive relevant training and guidance to enable them to take responsibility for managing risk within their own working environment. Whilst training on risk management has already been provided in most directorates, it will be necessary to provide further training to assist directorates in developing directorate risk registers.

Strategic Risk Management Group

The membership of SRMG is being strengthened by the attendance of a representative from Corporate Property (the Head of Building Surveyors) and the Team Manager for Climate Change to provide input on risks in their areas of expertise.

Incident Reporting

A new electronic incident reporting system has been set up to record health and safety incidents.

Business Continuity

Following the report from the external consultant as set out in section 6, action is proposed to review our critical functions and agree triggers for activation of the organisational Business Continuity Plan.

Risk Management System

The Strategic Risk Register is currently held on Word tables. It has been agreed by CMT that the risk module of the Performance Management Information System (PARIS) will be used to maintain both the strategic and directorate risk registers. Once the new risk management procedures have bedded down, it is intended that the risk module in PARIS be developed to maintain risks and mitigating action plans.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive: -

- The Executive approves the Council's Risk Management Strategy and any significant amendments to it;
- The Executive will be presented with an updated Strategic Risk Register at least twice per year for consideration and approval;
- Strategic and operational risks and progress on actions to address risks will be included in quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs) and summarised in the quarterly Corporate Performance Overview Report (CPOR) considered by the Executive including any significant changes to strategic risks identified by Officers in-year;
- Members will be expected to attend any appropriate training to ensure they have a sound understanding of the risk management process within the Council and adequate knowledge of risk management to perform their various roles; and
- Risk management considerations should be assessed on each report presented to Members, in the same way as financial and legal implications.

Governance and Audit Committee: -

- Will be responsible for monitoring the adequacy of the governance arrangements, including risk management processes, to ensure that the Council is complying with its statutory and regulatory obligations;
- On an annual basis the Governance and Audit Committee will review and approve the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS is an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements during the previous financial year which includes review of risk management arrangements as an integral part of good governance;
- The Governance and Audit Committee will receive the Strategic Risk Register quarterly following approval at CMT;
- The Governance and Audit Committee will seek assurance that officers are developing and progressing Action Plans to address risks;
- Changes identified by CMT as part of their annual review to the Risk Management Strategy and Guidance incorporating the Risk Management Policy will be considered by the Governance and Audit Committee; and
- Members will be expected to attend any appropriate training to ensure they have sufficient knowledge of risk management to perform their role on the Governance and Audit Committee.

Lead Member: -

- A Member "Lead" for risk management will be nominated by the Executive
- The role of Lead Member will include promoting the application of risk management and related training to Members;
- The Lead Member will ensure that a robust risk management process is applied to decisions made by Members;
- The use of risk assessments within reports for decision making will be encouraged by the Lead Member; and
- Oversight of risk management reporting to the Executive and risk assessments included in reports for decision making will be provided by the Lead Member who will provide Member feedback to officers on the robustness and adequacy of risk management information provided.

Corporate Management Team (CMT): -

- The Chief Executive will take overall responsibility for risk management as the Head of the Paid Service;
- The Risk Management Strategy and Guidance incorporating the Risk Management Policy will be reviewed annually by CMT;
- Risk management arrangements and initiatives proposed by the Head of Audit and Risk Management will be considered by and agreed with CMT;
- CMT will review the Strategic Risk Register quarterly;
- CMT will seek assurance that strategic and operational risks and actions to mitigate risk are included in Service Plans;
- Adequacy and progress of actions in Service Plans to address risks will be overseen by CMT and recommendations made to relevant Directors where appropriate to address gaps in assurance;
- Recommendations will be made by CMT to the Head of Audit and Risk management where operational risks need to be escalated to the Strategic Risk Register;
- CMT will recommend any risk management issues to be reported to the Governance and Audit Committee; and
- CMT members will be expected to attend any appropriate training to ensure they have adequate knowledge to perform their various roles

Lead Officer: -

- The Chief Executive will nominate an Officer 'Lead' for risk management;
- The Lead Officer will chair the Strategic Risk Management Group;
- Responsibility for providing assurances to the Governance and Audit Committee and Governance Working Group on the adequacy of risk management arrangements will rest with the Lead Officers for risk management;
- The Lead Officer will ensure that there is adequate staff resource in place to maintain the Strategic Risk Register and provide central risk management support and advice;
- The role of Lead Officer will include promoting the application of risk management to CMT; and
- The Lead Officer will be responsible for ensuring that a programme of training for officers is developed to facilitate the embedding of risk management throughout the organisation.

Directors/Chief Officers

- All Directors will promote risk management in their Departments and ensure that risks are properly assessed and managed at all levels in all their services;
- Each Director will ensure that both operational and also strategic risks for which they are the risk owner are included in their Service Plan together actions to address risks;
- Directors will ensure that in year changes to risks and risks emerging during the year are included in PMRs and draw the Head of Audit and Risk Management's attention to any risks that may need to be escalated to the Strategic Risk Register;
- Directors will report progress on action plans to address risks in PMRs;
- Each Director will ensure that risk management is considered in any partnerships so that risks are understood and the responsibility for each risk is clear;

- Each Director will ensure that his/her representative on the Strategic Risk Management Group is at the appropriate level (i.e. Chief Officer) and that they contribute actively to the Group's activities and within the Department on all risk management issues;
- Directors will ensure that reports for decision making include an assessment of risk; and
- Risk management performance will be reflected in the competency frameworks.

Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG): -

- The SRMG acts as a "Strategic Risk Board," taking the lead in updating the Strategy, reviewing the Strategic Risk Register and reporting to CMT and Members on progress on risk management;
- SRMG will oversee all aspects of risk affecting the Council including but not limited to Strategic Risk Register, Health and Safety and Emergency Planning;
- The SRMG will seek to research good practice in risk management and to adopt appropriate good practice in the Council;
- SRMG members must act as the risk management champions in their own Departments and raise awareness of risk management;
- A brief 'job description' has been devised for SRMG members to clarify and codify their role: -
 - SRMG members will attend the Group's meetings whenever possible
 - SRMG members will be pro-active in the work of the Group
 - SRMG members will support all staff in their Department in relation to risk management matters
 - SRMG members will facilitate Departmental Management Team discussions of risk management matters by providing discussion papers, reports of areas of excellence and weakness etc.
 - SRMG members will have specific tasks and targets set for their risk management work
 - SRMG members will undertake appropriate training to improve their effectiveness

Head of Audit and Risk Management

- The Head of Audit and Risk Management has a key role in ensuring that the Strategic Risk Register is up to date/comprehensive and that actions are being taken to address strategic risks;
- The Head of Audit and Risk Management also plays an important part in ensuring Departments have processes in place to identify and address operational and project risks;
- The Head of Audit and Risk Management will provide assurance on the risk management process and highlight necessary improvements;
- The risk management arrangements will reviewed as required under the Internal Audit Plan;
- Internal Audit Plans must be risk-based, with strategic risks being prioritised when reviewing systems;
- Internal Audit reports must identify the perceived risks clearly and make SMART recommendations for mitigating or eliminating those risks.

Emergency Planning Officer:-

- To update and maintain the Council's Civil Emergency Plan and to provide the framework and coordinating role to its Business Continuity planning

process to ensure the Council is able to respond at corporate level in the event of an emergency or critical incident;

- To report to SRMG quarterly on business continuity strategies, plans and procedures to ensure the organisation can respond to a business critical incident;
- To ensure coordination and training across all departments of the Council to ensure the ability to implement plans;
- To ensure adequate liaison with all other appropriate agencies and neighbouring authorities in respect of their emergency response plans and the interaction with this Council; and
- To facilitate periodic training and testing of the plans.

Senior Advisor Health and Safety:-

- To advise and assist line managers throughout the Council's operation on matters relating to their duties and obligations under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and related legislation;
- To liaise with managers in investigating accidents and in carrying out risk analysis and safety audits and to produce reports as required;
- To provide a lead role in the production and maintenance of the Council's safety policy;
- To develop and implement action plans to reduce health and safety risks identified by risk assessments and inspections;
- To undertake such other work as the Council or the Director of Corporate Services may determine as being compatible with the responsibility levels of the post; and
- To report to SRMG on a six monthly basis on health and safety inspection visits and incidents reported and investigated.

The Head of Building Surveyors

- The Head of Building Surveyors advise CMT and SRMG on the risks associated with the Council's properties.

The Chief Officer: Information Services

- The Chief Officer: Information Services advises CMT and SRMG on the risks associated with information technology and information security.

The Team Manager Climate Change

- The Team Manager Climate Change advises CMT and SRMG on the impact of climate change risks and will coordinate the climate change risk assessment.

Heads of Service/Cost Centre Managers/Project Managers: -

- These managers are the experts on their services and projects and they must make regular and thorough risk assessments to identify significant strategic risks and mitigation where appropriate;
- Risks must be included in Service Plans, Project Initiation Documents (PID) and in any report requesting budget provision, changes to service levels etc.
- Risks must be monitored during the year and new or changed risks reported via the quarterly PMRs;
- Risk management topics should be on the agenda for team meetings regularly and at least quarterly. Project teams would expect to consider risk management at most, if not all, of their team meetings;

- Managers will ensure that risk management is considered in any partnerships so that risks are understood and the responsibility for each risk is clear;
- Managers will be expected to attend any appropriate training to ensure they have adequate knowledge to perform their role; and
- Risk management will be included in competency frameworks.

Partnership Leads

- Partnerships Leads should ensure that partnerships comply with the Partnership Governance Toolkit which incorporates risk management responsibilities;
- Arrangements for risk management for each partnership must be agreed with the partners;
- There should be processes in place to review partnership risks and progress on risk action plans at least twice a year; and
- Procedures must be put in place for identifying partnership risks that have a Council wide impact and for reporting these to the Head of Audit and Risk Management.

Employees: -

- Employees must carry out risk assessments as instructed;
- They must draw to management's attention any risks to the achievement of day-to-day objectives that have not been identified previously so that these can be recorded and action take to mitigate them where required;
- Employees will be expected to attend any appropriate training to ensure they have adequate knowledge to perform their role; and
- Risk management will be reflected in competency frameworks.

AN ANNUAL CYCLE FOR RISK MANAGEMENT

	QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
SRMG meets	X	X	X	X
Risk Management Strategy reviewed	X			
Strategic Risk Register reviewed by SRMG	X	X	X	X
Strategic Risk Register reviewed by CMT	X	X	X	X
Strategic Risk Register approved by the Executive		X		X
Strategic Risk actions updated and reported through CPOR	X	X	X	X
Update on risk management provided to Governance and Audit Committee or equivalent	X	X	X	X
AGS reflecting risk management reviewed by CMT	X	X	X	X
AGS reflecting risk management approved by Governance and Audit Committee or equivalent	X	X	X	X
Directorate risk registers reviewed , updated and included in Performance Monitoring Reports	X	X	X	X
Reporting on Actions to address directorate risks in PMRs	X	X	X	X

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The Council provides a diverse range of services to the community, partners, businesses and visitors to the area and recognises that, as a large and multi-functional organisation, it is exposed to a wide variety of risks. It is therefore committed to effective risk management as an integral part of the Council's governance arrangements and internal control framework in order to: -

- Help ensure the achievement of the Council's overall aims and objectives
- Preserve and enhance service delivery
- Promote better decision making
- Encourage innovation through balancing risk with opportunity

In terms of the basic principles which underpin our approach to risk management, it is the Council's policy to ensure that:

- There is a single corporate approach to risk management which is adopted consistently by services, projects and partnerships;
- The roles and responsibilities for risk management are clearly defined, communicated and understood by all staff;
- Risk assessments are undertaken as part of all strategic decision-making;
- Risk assessment is an integral part of the corporate and service planning process;
- Strategic risks are identified, evaluated and recorded in the Strategic Risk Register;
- Operational risks are identified and recorded in Service Plans;
- Risks the Council faces are managed by implementing measures to avoid, reduce and control them to within the Council's risk tolerance level;
- Actions plans to address risks are recorded;
- Partnership arrangements are subject to risk assessments ;
- Projects and programmes manage risk throughout their life cycles in line with the corporate programme and project management approaches; and
- The effectiveness of risk management arrangements are reviewed annually.

The Council's Strategic Risk Management Group is responsible for the implementation of a unified risk management strategy, the promotion of risk awareness and the monitoring of the effectiveness of risk management measures undertaken.

This policy requires elected Members, officers and staff to assist in and take responsibility for the identification, control and mitigation of risk to minimise the possibility and impact of losses or disruption. Risk management is a continuous process that demands awareness and action. It is the responsibility of each Service Area to comply with the Council's Risk Management Policy and the corporate approach to risk management. Senior Managers are accountable for managing risks to which their area is exposed whilst all employees have duty to support the Council's initiative be managing risks within their control.

STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Object and Functions

The Strategic Risk Management Group shall make recommendations to CMT, the Governance and Audit Committee or any other committee of the Council on matters affecting or likely to affect the organisation's exposure to significant risk. The Strategic Risk Management Group shall:

- I. Be responsible for risk assessment matters that relate to Bracknell Forest Council's services, programmes, projects and/or to employees and all other people who may be affected by the Council's activities;
- II. Receive reports in respect of Health and Safety and Emergency and Business Continuity Planning,
- III. Receive and review updates of the Strategic Risk Register, receive reports on risk management and monitor the effectiveness of risk management policies and procedures;
- IV. Ensure that risk management becomes embedded across the Council; and
- V. Report quarterly to the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

2. Membership

The membership of the Strategic Risk Management Group shall be determined by CMT and shall include

- I. Representatives from each Directorate;
- II. The Council's Emergency Planning Officer;
- III. The Senior Health and Safety Advisor;
- IV. The Head of Audit and Risk Management;
- V. The Head of Building Surveyors;
- VI. The Chief Officer: Information Services; and
- VII. The Team Manager Climate Change.

3. Chairman

The Group shall be chaired by the Borough Treasurer.

4. Meetings

The Group shall meet at least four times a year but a special meeting may be called if 24 hours notice is given in the case of emergency. All meetings shall be convened during normal working hours. Additional meetings shall be arranged if necessary as agreed by the Chairman.

5. Agendas

- I. All items should be submitted to the Secretary of the Group at least ten working days before the meeting for inclusion on the agenda.
- II. Each Member of the Group shall receive a copy of the agenda and papers at least three working days before the meeting.

6. Meetings

- I. Minutes of the meetings of the Group shall be documented as soon as possible after the meeting.
- II. The minutes shall be reported to CMT and copies shall be circulated to all members of the Group.

Equality Impact Assessment Record

Date of EIA	1 April 2009
Directorate	Corporate Services
Part One - Initial Screening Record	
1. Activity to be assessed	Risk Management Strategy
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing
4. Who are the members of the EIA team?	Head of Audit and Risk Management
6. Initial screening assessment. If the answer to either of these questions is 'yes' then it is necessary to go ahead with a full Equality Impact Assessment.	1. Does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? The Risk Management Strategy is not expected to adversely affect any group within the community or cause any group to be discriminated against. 2. Does the activity make a positive contribution to equalities? It is not expected that risk management will make a positive contribution to equalities. <div style="background-color: #cccccc; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 10px;"></div>
7. Did Part 1: Initial Screening indicate that a full EIA was necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – full EIA completed and recorded below. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No –A full EIA is not completed record ends here. A full EIA is not appropriate in this case as an EIA is only needed where the activity is outward focused and this strategy is internally focused and/or where the activity is for a people oriented service which is also not the case.