



Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 9 APRIL 2026</b>
Subject	<b>STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER AND RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Every, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk">mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Email: <a href="mailto:david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk">david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
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Summary/Purpose	The report sets out the current Strategic Risk Register for the Council and current Risk Management Strategy.
Annexes	Annex A – Strategic Risk Register Annex B – Risk Management Strategy
Recommendation(s)	That the Committee: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Review the Strategic Risk Register and mitigation measures.</li><li>2. Approve the Risk and Opportunity Management Policy</li></ol>
Corporate priorities	All
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Corporate Leadership Team, Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** This report sets out the Strategic Risk Register for Cotswold District Council which has been reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team ("CLT") during Q4 of the financial year.
- 1.2** The risks set out in Annex A of the report represent provide an update of the authority's strategic risks and the risk management work being undertaken; to assist the committee in fulfilling their obligations to periodically review the authority's Corporate Risk Register and to consider the effectiveness of the council's risk management arrangements.
- 1.3** The report also sets out the latest Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy for approval by the committee. This is included as Annex B to the report.

## **2. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

- 2.1** The Audit and Governance Committee is the Committee of the Council charged with approving the Risk Management Strategy, reviewing risk management reports and making recommendations to Cabinet. The committee previously considered the Risk and Opportunity Management Policy at their meeting on 27 May 2025.
- 2.2** The strategy sets the Council's approach to risk management including defining what is Risk Management, our risk appetite as a council, definitions, roles, and responsibilities, and how risk management is embedded across the organisation.
- 2.3** No changes have been made to the Strategy with the exception of a review of roles and responsibilities.
- 2.4** The Council's risk appetite level is Cautious, although this can change on a risk-to-risk basis. It is willing to consider all potential options but with well evaluated risks and learning from experience. The risk appetites considered in the policy are shown below for information.



Averse	Cautious	Creative and Aware	Eager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safe Business delivery options with low risks limited reward</li><li>• Reluctant to take action given uncertainty</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safe delivery of options that have a medium degree of risk and potential for reward</li><li>• Tight corporate control over change</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Willing to consider all potential options that are most likely to result in success</li><li>• Well evaluated risk taking</li><li>• Learns from experience</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eager to be creative and innovative</li><li>• Higher rewards despite inherent risk</li><li>• Willing to accept significant loss</li><li>• Actions when results are unknown</li></ul>

- 2.5** Accepted best practice is for risk management to be reported to members on a regular basis.
- 2.6** External Audit, as part of the annual assessment of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Value for Money) have recommended that the frequency of the review of the strategic risk register should be quarterly.
- 2.7** The Council's constitution sets out the role of Audit and Governance Committee includes "Monitoring the arrangements for the identification, monitoring and control of strategic and operational risk within the Council" and "consider summaries of specific risk management reports, quarterly."
- 2.8** Members should view this review in response to the recommendation, and it is proposed that the strategic risk register is included in the work programme for the committee with a quarterly review frequency.
- 2.9** As an additional measure, the strategic risk register will be included in the wider quarterly performance reporting to Cabinet from Q3 2025/26.



### 3. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

3.1 In assessing risk, the Council utilises a 5x5 matrix (as shown below) with a score given to the Initial Risk and the Residual Risk (Current Risk)

Likelihood	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
		Impact				

3.2 The strategic risks facing the Council are set out in Annex A and are considered the risks that could impact the successful achievement of the Council's long-term core objectives, priorities, reputation, and outcomes. These risks are classed as strategic as these are no able to be managed at service level.

3.3 There are 15 risks on the Strategic Risk register with 2 new risks since the previous register was considered by the committee at their meeting on 04 December 2025. A new risk covering **Fraud and Corruption** has been included and a service risk has been escalated from the Finance service risk register covering the risk of **PCI/DSS Compliance**.

3.4 The final column of the risk register indicates the Direction of Travel since the previous register.

3.5 The risks are summarised below for the purposes of this report, but members are encouraged to review Annex A.

- 1 risk scored 16 (Red) – Local Plan (previously scored 12)



- 3 risks scored 15 (Red) – Cyber Security, Health and Safety Compliance (unchanged). Civil Contingency (previously scored 10).
- 1 risk scored 12 (Amber) – Financial Sustainability.
- 9 risks scored 9 (Amber) – Procurement, Contractor Failure, Corporate Plan delivery (no change). Compliance GDPR/Data breach, Staff recruitment and retention, Service Standards (LGR impact), Democratic resilience (all increased in score)
- 1 risk scored 6 (Green) – Staff capacity (LGR workload).

	<b>Impact</b>		<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Total	52.00		46.00	160.00
Average	3.47		3.07	10.67
Previous Total	48.00		39.00	132.00
Previous Average	3.43		2.79	9.43
<b>Change in Total</b>	<b>4.00</b>		<b>7.00</b>	<b>28.00</b>
<b>Change in Average</b>	<b>0.04</b>		<b>0.28</b>	<b>1.24</b>

**3.6** Further controls, mitigation, or contingency is detailed for each risk set out in Annex A with follow-up action where appropriate.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.



**6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1** If the Council's governance arrangements are weak then Council is at risk of failing to safeguard the use of public funds. In turn this would lead to poor external assessments, damaging the reputation of the Council.

**7. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 7.1** An equalities impact assessment is not required for this report.

**8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1** There are no climate or ecological emergency implications arising directly from this report.

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1** None.

(END)