Public Report
Audit Committee

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Audit Committee – 25 November 2025

Report Title
Risk Management Guide Refresh 2025

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?
No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)
Fiona Boden, Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Fiona.Boden@rotherham.gov.uk

Chloe Harrop, Corporate Improvement Officer
Chloe.Harrop@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Council introduced a completely revised Risk Policy and Guide in late 2015 which was approved by the Audit Committee on 24th November 2015. The Policy and Guide has been received and refreshed regularly since then and was last considered by the Committee on 28th November 2023.

The changes to the Guide this year are minimal. The last extensive refresh of the Guide was undertaken in 2023 and was approved by the Audit Committee. The Risk Management Policy was formally adopted by Cabinet on the 23rd January 2023 and is due for a refresh by 2028.

In the course of the coming year, work will continue to ensure the Council's approach to risk management is well embedded across all projects and all staff, by providing training, clear guidance, supporting the Risk Champions and reporting according to agreed timelines.

Recommendations

The Audit Committee is asked to approve the Risk Management Guide 2025.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Revised Risk Management Guide 2025

Background Papers

Report to Audit Committee: 29 July 2025 (Risk Management Annual Summary for 2024-25 and Corporate Strategic Risk Register Update)
Report to Audit Committee: 14 January 2025 (Corporate Strategic Risk Register)
Report to Audit Committee 28 November 2023 (Risk Management Guide Refresh)
Report to Cabinet: 23 January 2023 (Risk Management Policy)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Risk Management Guide Refresh 2025

1. Background

1.1 This report aims to inform the Committee of the results of a refresh of the Council's Risk Management Guide.

1.2 The Council introduced a completely revised Risk Policy and Guide in late 2015 which was approved by the Audit Committee on 24th November 2015. The Policy was considered by Cabinet on the 23rd January 2023 and is due to be refreshed by 2028, and the Guide was last considered by the Audit Committee on 28th November 2023.

1.3 Whilst previous reviews have included significant changes (in 2021 due to the impact of the pandemic for example), there are no significant changes required this year.

1.4 The Risk Management Annual Summary for 2024-25 was presented to the Audit Committee on the 29th July 2025, in accordance with the risk management standard ISO31000. The report summarised the principal risk management activity carried out in the Council throughout the financial year.

1.5 The Corporate Strategic Risk Register is presented to Audit Committee twice a year and directorate risk registers are presented to Audit Committee annually as part of a rolling programme.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The risk management process was subject to an Internal Audit review in March 2024 against the requirements of the relevant international standard, ISO31000. The review concluded that substantial assurance could be derived from the controls that were in place. This is the highest assurance level possible.

2.2 There have been no significant changes to the Council's overall management and governance arrangements since the Risk Management Guide was last updated in November 2023. Meanwhile, the specific risk management processes in which the Council operates have remained broadly unchanged.

2.3 Consequently, there have been no significant changes in the Risk Management Guide this year. The only more substantive update relates to improving the clarity of the escalation and de-escalation arrangements between risk registers, following recommendation IR2 from the 2023/24 Value for Money arrangements Specifically, sections 4.7.5 and 4.7.6 have been added to outline these arrangements.

2.4 All other changes are minor and aimed at enhancing readability. These include updated links and revised terminology.

2.5 The Council's Risk Management Objectives remain to:

- Ensure the Council successfully manages risks and opportunities corporately, operationally and within projects and partnerships
- Ensure that risk management makes an effective contribution to Corporate Governance and a satisfactory Annual Governance Statement
- Ensure that all parties understand their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of effective risk management
- Provide simple, intuitive processes to assist in the identification and prioritisation of risk and the appropriate allocation of resources
- Incorporate the principles of effective risk management into all planning and management processes to achieve consistency of approach

2.6 Work is continuing to implement the principles contained in the Risk Management Guide and to further embed risk management processes across the Council's operations. The Corporate Strategic Risk Register is reviewed quarterly by the Strategic Leadership Team, the Directorate Risk Registers are reviewed monthly at Directorate Leadership Team meetings and risk owners monitor risks on an ongoing basis. The Corporate Strategic Risk Register is also considered twice a year by Audit Committee and Directorate Risk Registers are presented on an annual rolling programme.

2.7 The Risk Management Group, which includes the Risk Champions, continues to meet bi-monthly to co-ordinate and drive risk management development throughout the Council.

2.8 In addition to the work of the Risk Management Group, the main driver behind embedding risk management is training for staff at management levels in the Council. A programme of training is in place for new starters and manager M2 grades or above and is currently delivering training to approximately 150 managers a year.

2.9 Additionally, an online mandatory risk management training module is delivered through the e-learning system to all staff.

2.10 In February 2025, an external risk consultant delivered bespoke in-house training and staff participating gained a qualification accredited by the Institute of Risk Management (IRM). An additional course will be provided through the external risk consultant in 2026.

2.11 The Risk Management Policy and Guide underpin the Council's approach to risk management and continues to inform all risk management training and risk registers. The policy and guide are available to all staff through the intranet, and all managers are referred to it when they complete their risk management training.

2.12 The refreshed Risk Management Guide is attached at Appendix 1.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 This report only considers the refresh of the Risk Management Guide, so no specific options have been considered.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 There has been no external consultation on the proposal.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence will be responsible for ensuring that the revised Risk Management Guide is made available on the staff intranet once approved and communicated to staff.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The are no direct financial implications on the Council's budget because of the recommendations of this report. The Risk Guide does not require additional cost and there are no procurement issues. The risks contained in the Council's risk registers require ongoing management action. In some cases, additional resources may be necessary to implement the relevant actions or mitigate risks. Any additional costs associated with the risks are reported to the Strategic Leadership Team and elected Members for consideration.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. Any actions taken by the Council in response to risks identified will take into account any specific legal implications.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 HR colleagues are actively engaged with supporting delivery of the proposed training scheduled for 2026.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Risk Management arrangements are designed to identify Children and Young People's Services risks where appropriate.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Proposals for addressing individual risks captured by our arrangements incorporate equalities and human rights considerations where appropriate.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 The proposed refresh of the risk guide will support the Council's aim to achieve net zero aims, by improving the organisation's risk management process and thereby allowing climate risks to be identified and managed.

11.2 The recommendation in this report will have no direct significant impact on emissions. It will however improve risk management processes within the

Council and may contribute to identifying climate change-related risks in indirectly contribute to the reduction of emissions.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no direct implications for partners. SLT have a responsibility, where appropriate, to promote a risk management culture with partners and stakeholders.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 It is important to review the effectiveness of our approach to capturing, managing, and reporting risks on an ongoing basis. This report sets out how the approach to risk management will be developed over the course of the coming year.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Fiona Boden, Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence

Approvals obtained on behalf of:-

	Named Officer	**Date**
Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services	Judith Badger	14/11/2025

Report Author: Chloe Harrop, Corporate Improvement Officer
Chloe.Harrop@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website.