South Ayrshire Council

**Report by Chief Governance Officer
to Audit and Governance Panel
of 26 March 2025**

Subject: Strategic Risk Management

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1.   Purpose

1.1   The purpose of this report is to update Members on the reviewed Strategic Risk Register (Appendix 1) in line with the agreed reporting framework.

2.   Recommendation

2.1   **It is recommended that the Panel:**

2.1.1   considers the reviewed Strategic Risk Register (Appendix 1) updated by Chief Officers; and

2.1.2   notes the 16 key risks and endorses the work currently being undertaken or proposed by risk owners to mitigate these risks.

3.   Background

3.1   The Strategic Risk Register is reported in accordance with the framework within the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

3.2   The Strategic Risk Register was reported to the Audit and Governance Panel of 4 September 2024 for scrutiny and to Cabinet on 25 September 2024 for endorsement.

3.3   Risk Management is also undertaken at Directorate level, within the Health and Social Care Partnership and by leads undertaking complex projects.

4.   Proposals

4.1   The Strategic Risk Register has been reviewed by Chief Officers / Risk Owners and updates provided on progress against implementation of proposed risk mitigations. Risks are referenced against the themes of Governance, Protection and Resources. 16 Strategic Risks are being managed and these are listed as follows:

	Risk	*Risk Rating*	*Theme*
1.	Decision Making and Governance	8	Governance
2.	External Factors including Contingency Planning	10	Governance

	Risk	Risk Rating	Theme
3.	Strategic Planning	8	Governance
4.	Integrity	8	Governance
5.	Internal Audit Actions	6	Governance
6.	Transformation	9	Governance
7.	Child and Adult Protection	10	Protection
8.	Public / Employee Protection	10	Protection
9.	Sustainable Development and Climate Change	12	Protection
10.	Financial Inclusion	12	Protection
11.	Ash Tree Die Back	10	Protection
12.	Prevent – Counter-terrorism (New Risk)	10	Protection
13.	Financial Constraints	16	Resources
14.	Employee Absence	9	Resources
15.	ICT – Digital Resilience, Protection and Capability	8	Resources
16.	Management of Assets	6	Resources

4.2   Full detail of strategic risk management arrangements is provided within the register (Appendix 1).   Ownership is assigned to ensure there is clear accountability and responsibility in terms of risk management. The cause, potential effect, risk score and current mitigations are also recorded.

4.3   Unless considered 'ongoing' throughout the life of the risk register, proposed risk mitigations have a target completion date, and their progress is outlined by use of a percentage completion bar in the report. A status icon is also included which indicates whether or not the specific initiative is on target.

4.4   Members are requested to note that the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) provide information on the risk management of Child and Adult Protection within the Council's Strategic Risk Register. HSCP also develop and report on wider Partnership risk issues within their own bespoke Strategic Risk Register which is presented to the HSCP Performance and Audit Panel on a 6 monthly basis for scrutiny. A link to the most recent HSCP risk register and related reports is provided on page 10 of Appendix 1.

4.5   It has also been considered appropriate to include a new risk in relation to Prevent Counter-terrorism (Risk 12). Current mitigations are in place and proposed mitigations have been identified with target timescales in order to further reduce the likelihood of risks occurring.

4.6   Members are also requested to note that Chief Officers regularly consider new or emerging risks and there is a process whereby significant operational risks, managed at directorate level, can be elevated to strategic level as required.

4.7   It is anticipated that Members will consider the strategic risk management arrangements outlined within this report and be assured that there is a robust system in place for identifying and managing those threats which could have a significant impact on the successful delivery of the Council's objectives.

5.   Legal and Procurement Implications

5.1   The recommendations in this report are consistent with legal requirements.

5.2   There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6.   Financial Implications

6.1   There are no cost implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

7.   Human Resources Implications

7.1   There are no human resource implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

8.   Risk

8.1   *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations*

8.1.1   Risks have been identified and assessed in line with the Council's Risk Management process. This report seeks to confirm that risk mitigation at Strategic level is ongoing and that risks are being managed in line with an agreed approach and methodology.

8.2   *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations*

8.2.1   Rejecting the recommendations may give rise to external criticism, breach of statute or legal challenge.

9.   Equalities

9.1   The proposals in this report allow scrutiny of performance. The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.

10.   Sustainable Development Implications

10.1   *Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)* - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

11.   Options Appraisal

11.1   An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12.   Link to Council Plan

12.1   The matters referred to in this report contribute to the delivery of all Council strategic objectives.

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13.   Results of Consultation

13.1   Consultation has taken place with Councillor Martin Dowey, Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Strategic, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

Background Papers	None
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