Birmingham City Council

Risk Management Policy Statement 2013

Reviewed March 2013

This document forms part of a set of policies and procedures for all levels of staff to use to manage risk. The others are:

- The Risk Management Strategy which describes the council's objectives, how these will be met, a definition of risk and the roles and responsibilities of both Members and staff regarding risk management
- The Risk Management Methodology which describes the practical steps to be taken in managing risk
- A detailed Risk Management Toolkit, which provides further guidance along with background information, reference material and links to other useful information.

These documents are all available on InLine at Risk Management documents and, with the exception of the Toolkit, are also posted on the Birmingham.gov website.

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Our Risk Management Policy, Strategy and Methodology support the City Council's Corporate Planning Framework. The Council has a clear vision for Birmingham. This is: "An inclusive city in which many more people can play their part – a fair chance for everyone in Birmingham".

The vision is supported by the three key priorities outlined in the Leader's Policy Statement in June 2012. These are underpinned by key policies and plans, objectives and targets that cover the main areas of the Council's activity and are included in the Council Plan.

The Council has a well established approach to managing risk and includes a risk assessment of the Council Plan within the document. The Council has recognised that risk is an integral part of innovation in order to deliver the key priorities of the Council. By managing risk proactively we can take full advantage of opportunities and better use the resources available.

In particular a clear understanding of the risks and opportunities arising from the changing nature of service delivery is important; partnership working with businesses, academia, the public sector and the community is increasing and more services are being "bought in" rather than directly provided by the Council. New types of service providers are being used, or may be used in the future, such as Trusts, Social Enterprises and Co-operatives as well as 3rd Sector organisations to drive service improvements. There is a greater emphasis on personal choice and personal responsibility, and a greater concentration on reducing inequality and protecting the most vulnerable members of our society. However, all these changes in service delivery provide new risks and opportunities to be managed.

Council objectives relate to the whole city and indeed region. As a result they can be influenced by an enormous variety of risks and opportunities. It would be impossible to identify all of these risks and opportunities. It is therefore important to focus on high risks and getting early warning of when they become more imminent, or start to take effect, and to enable us to be in the best position possible to make the most of opportunities.

Advice has been provided to directorates through the Risk Management Strategy and Risk Management Methodology documents, and the publication of the Risk Management Toolkit. There is a regular process of risk assessment at a corporate level. This process identifies and scores key risk factors, and results in the Corporate Risk Register - a public document. This outlines the controls and plans in place to respond to the risks and opportunities identified. Transparency and accountability are key to the process.

As part of the corporate governance agenda the Council includes an Annual Good Governance Statement (AGGS) within the Statement of Accounts. The AGGS incorporates a statement on internal control, including risk management. Directors and Heads of Service are also required to produce a governance statement in relation to their Directorate / service to support the AGGS.