HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee:	Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	16 February 2022
Report Title:	**Review of Corporate Risks**
Report By:	Corporate Audit and Performance Manager

1.   Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1   The Corporate Risk Register identifies the Council's key strategic risks and the actions being taken to mitigate these. It is reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team quarterly and presented to every Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

2.   Recommendations

2.1   Members are asked to:

   i.   Scrutinise the Corporate Risk Register provided at Appendix 1 and consider the risk profile at Appendix 2.

3.   Implications
3.1   Resource: Having a robust approach to risk management will continue to help the Council minimise future financial risks and implications.

3.2   Legal: The Corporate Risk Register supports the Chief Audit Executive (the Corporate Audit Manager) to provide an annual internal audit opinion that concludes on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control.

3.3   Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Having a Council which is resilient to risk means that it is better positioned to support its communities. Some of the actions detailed on the register will reduce the likelihood and potential impact of risks affecting our communities.

3.4   Climate Change / Carbon Clever: As highlighted in Corporate Risk 7, the Council

will need to adapt to the potential impacts of climate change and build resilience in its own operations and in its communities. Corporate Risk 9 also highlights the need to rationalise property assets and to make sure buildings are fit for purpose, which will reduce the Council's carbon emissions.

3.5 Risk: The corporate risk management process reduces the Council's exposure to risk by ensuring that corporate risks are identified and proactively managed.

3.6 Gaelic: There are no Gaelic implications identified at this time.

4.   Corporate Risk Register
4.1 As part of the risk management process, Highland Council has a Corporate Risk Register, **Appendix 1**. This is reviewed at least every three months by the Executive Leadership Team and is presented to every Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting. Overall responsibility for Corporate Risk sits with the Chief Executive.

4.2 The Corporate Risk Register was last presented to this committee in December 2021.There are currently 16 risks on the Corporate Risk Register. For each risk the following information is given:
- Risk name;
- Risk type;
- Current and target risk rating;
- A description of the risk;
- A risk owner;
- Mitigating actions (with responsible officer, target date, and current RAG);
- Notes (where applicable).

4.3 The current and target risk ratings assigned to these risks are based on the risk matrix, **Appendix 2** and have been determined by the ELT.

4.4 The Executive Leadership Team have taken the decision to split Corporate Risk 2 Security and Resilience into two discrete corporate risks. One risk which focuses on risks to cyber security, and a second risk which focuses on physical assets and infrastructure. Details of these risks are given in Appendix 1:

CR2: Security and Resilience – Cyber Security
CR22: Security and Resilience – Physical Assets and Infrastructure

4.5 Corporate Risk 4 Brexit has been removed from the Corporate Risk Register. Risks arising from Brexit are now being managed as part of business-as-usual activities. Any additional and residual risks remaining will be managed through the Service risk management process.

4.6 Corporate Risk 7 Climate Change is being reviewed by the Risk Owner, and any revisions are expected at the next meeting of this Committee.

4.7 Corporate Risk 18 COVID-19 has been reviewed and updated by the Executive Leadership Team.

Designation: Corporate Audit and Performance Manager

Author: Stephen Carr, Corporate Performance Manager, 28/01/2022

Risk action status: **R** No significant progress | **A** Some Slippage | **G** On Target | **C** Complete

CR1	**Financial Sustainability**		**Risk Rating**	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism		**Risk Type:** Financial	**B2**	**C2**
The Council faces a range of financial challenges, both revenue and capital, and we need to be able to plan and meet these challenges so that we can continue to deliver effective services and achieve all the priorities that we wish to. These challenges have increased significantly since the emergence of COVID-19 which is placing significant pressure on the Council's budget with limited time to plan a financial response. We will need to act more commercially as an organisation to ensure this financial sustainability.				
Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR1.2	Multi-year Budgets: Our financial approach is based on considering a range of different scenarios to address uncertain grant settlements and other external factors. A key part of the approach is looking at multi-year budgets with the flexibility to accelerate or slip actions as conditions change. External factors, including anticipated funding levels, will be reviewed every three months.	Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism	Ongoing	**A**
CR1.4	Budget Savings: Every year the Council has a requirement to deliver approved budget savings, the delivery of which is important to ensuring a balanced budget in-year. Forecast service outturn positions and updates on the delivery of savings are monitored within Services and reported every three months to respective strategic committees. An overview of all savings and the overall monitoring position is scrutinised by the Executive Leadership Team and reported to Corporate Resources Committee.	Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism	Ongoing	**G**
CR1.10	Internal audit of the purchase to pay process: Audit of the purchase to pay process to be undertaken including consideration of the budgetary control process. Exact scope and timing will be agreed with management.	Corporate Audit Manager	June 2021	**C**
CR1.11	Internal audit of procurement expenditure: Audit of procurement expenditure to ensure that contract arrangements are complied with to achieve best value for the Council and any off-contract spend is valid. Exact scope and timing will be agreed with management.	Corporate Audit Manager	November 2021	**C**
Notes: CR1.10; CR1.11: Marked as complete in Q3.				

CR2	**Security and Resilience – Cyber Security**		**Risk Rating**	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: Interim ECO Communities and Place		**Risk Type:** Technological	**B2**	**D2**
The Council must take all reasonable steps to protect ICT networks and systems from the risks of cyberattack. The Council must also plan effectively				

to respond to and mitigate the impacts of a cyberattack.				
Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR2.8	Cyber Security: ICT undertake an external ICT Security Health check annually to ensure independent verification. Regular patching regimes are in place for ICT infrastructure and we review active security notifications from external sources and community of practise groups such as CISP and NCSC. We will follow and adopt national standards as appropriate from UK and Scottish Governments. We constantly monitor security threat and have weekly reviews and monitoring updates through our ICT Security function. ICT updates and changes are reviewed for security risks prior to implementation.	ICT Operations Manager (Service)	Ongoing	G
CR2.11	Internal audit of cyber security arrangements: Audit of the Council's cyber security arrangements to ensure that these are operating effectively and being adhered to by staff. Exact scope and timing will be agreed with management.	Corporate Audit Manager	March 2022	G
CR2.12	Identify critical impacts of a cyber-attack or ICT outage: Identification of critical corporate functions and applications for prioritisation in event of a cyber-attack or serious ICT long-term outage	Interim ECO Communities and Place	December 2022	G
CR2.13	Increase senior manager awareness related to cyber security: Training and awareness of the potential impact of a cyber-attack and the Council's response plans for all senior managers, and provision of guidance for developing Business Continuity Plans	Interim ECO Communities and Place and ECO Performance and Governance	March 2022	G
CR2.14	Review Business Continuity Plans in relation to cyber security: Effective business continuity plans to be in place which take account of the potential impacts of a cyber-attack or serious long-term ICT outage. These should prioritise the critical corporate functions which have been identified and detail mitigation.	All ECOs	January 2022	A
CR2.15	Scenario testing Business Continuity Plans: Scenario testing of business continuity plans prioritising the critical corporate functions	All ECOs	January 2022	A
CR2.16	Cyber security staff training: Ongoing programme of training and awareness of all staff of their role in prevention of a cyber-attack and their role in the Council's response to an attack.	Interim ECO Communities and Place	March 2022 and then ongoing	A
CR2.17	ICT Infrastructure Resilience: Make infrastructure changes to allow secure direct access to "cloud" systems without having to route via the data centre.	Interim Head of ICT & Digital Transformation	July 2022	G
CR2.18	Backup hardware and email service: Provide backup hardware and email service to allow key staff to continue to operate independently of the Council network in the event of a major cybersecurity incident.	Interim Head of ICT & Digital Transformation	April 2022	G
CR2.19	Cloud-first Strategy: Produce a roadmap for remaining systems and services located in the data centre to migrate to the "cloud" where possible.	Interim Head of ICT & Digital Transformation	May 2022	G
CR2.20	Business case for external cybersecurity services: Investigate options and the business case for contracting external cybersecurity services to provide increased protection from threats and ability to react effectively to a major incident.	Interim Head of ICT & Digital Transformation	May 2022	G

Notes:

The Executive Leadership Team have split Corporate Risk 2 Security and Resilience into two separate corporate risks. One which focuses on risks to cyber security, and a second risk which focuses on physical assets and infrastructure (CR22 Security and Resilience – Physical Assets and Infrastructure).

CR2.12 - CR2.20: Added Q3 2021/22.

CR5	Effective Governance in Local Decision Making	Risk Rating	
		Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: ECO Communities & Place	**Risk Type:** Political, financial, citizen	C3	D3

We need to develop arrangements for effective local decision making and to enable our communities to engage and participate at a local level. We must put in place effective and consistent governance arrangements for local decision making to ensure we are able to fully achieve the priorities of our local communities, while being in alignment with strategic priorities.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR5.3	Resources for Place Based Approaches: A review of resources to support Place Based approaches.	ECO Resources and Finance	Ongoing	G
CR5.4	Local Participation: We will work with Members in local areas on place-based approaches and to explore new ways to widen public participation in Council decisions and in community-run services including prioritisation of budgets.	Head of Community Support and Engagement	Ongoing	A
CR5.5	Local Partnerships: We will develop and facilitate the work of Community Partnerships as a forum for local partnership priorities and action.	Head of Community Support and Engagement	Ongoing	G

Notes:

CR5.4: Work has been ongoing with local committees to explore different approaches to community involvement to identify local priorities and the corresponding direction of local funding. This approach, Participatory Resourcing, builds on the previous model of participatory budgeting which involved communities directing discretionary grant spend, to considering community involvement in broader prioritisation of resources/ developing local priorities and service design across a range of budget areas. This has been seen already in many parts of Highland through the direction of play park resources and place-based investment fund monies, where local priorities for spend have been identified by communities, although the final decision-making rests with the Area Committee as per the governance agreed for spend.

This approach is supported through the Council's approach to place. A Place Based Framework was agreed by the Council in December 2021. This includes a commitment to identify and deliver against shared priorities within an area along with our communities and partners and to ensure resources, funding and action is targeted to address the needs of people and place. Where Area Place Plans have been developed, e.g. Skye and Raasay Futures, the priorities are already directing the allocation and direction of local funds. A plan for developing Area Place Plans across Highland is being progressed.

To date the approach has been developmental but there is a requirement to formalise this approach to ensure that as a Local Authority we comply with the duty placed on us through the Community Empowerment Act for community involvement in the allocation of 1% of Council budgets.

A motion was agreed at the Council meeting in December which focused on how to improve local democracy. This highlighted the need for a wider review across Highland which covers strategic, operational and community outcomes and that this would involve engagement with the wider public,

staff, unions and other stakeholders. A seminar will be held prior to the next Communities and Place Committee to enable Members to discuss the detail of the motion and to help inform the next Council where this work will be progressed.

Support to local Community Partnerships was the subject of a review by the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) last year and of both a Member Seminar and CPP Board Workshop. This resulted in a proposal on how to resource Community Partnerships being agreed at the CPP Board in December. It was agreed that a Community Planning Development Manager and five local officers would be put in place to support Community Partnerships and deliver against the partnership outcomes for addressing inequality and prevention. The approach to implementation is being considered by each individual partner.

CR6	Workforce Planning	Risk Rating	
		Current	Target
Risk Owner: Interim Head of HR	Risk Type: Financial	C2	C2

Our most important resource is our staff, and they are at the centre of the services that we provide. Given the changing nature of the organisation, and the need to reduce the workforce, we need to make sure we continue to have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR6.3	OHSW: We will continue to address the occupational health, safety, and well-being (OSHW) challenges identified through our annual OHSW report with progress monitored quarterly.	Interim Head of HR	Ongoing	G
CR6.4	Electronic management system: We will introduce an electronic occupational health, safety, and well-being management system to improve reporting and reduce the risk of sending confidential personal information through the post.	Interim Head of HR	April 2022	A
CR6.6	Succession Planning: The workforce planning cycle is established and all services are developing succession plans.	Interim Head of HR	April 2022	G
CR6.7	Absence management: A newly established Attendance Support Officer (ASO) has been working with Services since March 2018, with an additional ASO to be appointed in May 2019 to focus support on costs attributable from absence in schools.	Interim Head of HR	April 2022	G

Notes:
CR6.4: Target set of April 2022. ICT are now project managing this, and timescales are challenging to meet the target date.

CR7	Climate Change	Risk Rating	
		Current	Target
Risk Owner: ECO Performance & Governance	Risk Type: Environmental, Physical	B2	C3

Climate change presents long term challenges both to the Council and to Highland communities. The Council must adapt and build resilience in itself and its communities to address vulnerabilities to the potential effects of climate change (e.g. changing weather patterns, sea level rise). By 2025 Council light fleet is expected to be low carbon.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG

CR7.1	Adaptation Strategy: Our climate change adaptation strategy was last updated in January 2012. We will revise this to identify the key climate change risks to the Council and the Highlands and set out an action plan to address these.	Climate Change & Energy Team Manager	June 2023	G
CR7.4	Develop net zero strategy	Climate Change & Energy Team Manager	March 2022	G
CR7.5	Net zero corporate emissions: Agree target date for net zero corporate carbon emissions	Climate Change & Energy Team Manager	September 2022	G

Notes:

The Council agreed in December a number of actions to accelerate its approach to addressing the climate and ecological emergency. This included the development of a net zero strategy and action plan; that a structured and pro-active communications strategy should be developed, and carbon literacy training and a series of seminars for staff and Members would be rolled out in 2022. It was also agreed that the Transformation Fund should continue be used to ensure resources in the Climate Change team are sufficient to provide the strategic leadership required as well as to support delivery against the identified themes; and finally that additional external funding is also required in order to fully deliver the Council's duties and endorse COSLA's statement for additional funding to tackle the climate emergency.

CR8	Demographic Change		Risk Rating	
			Current	Target
Risk Owner: ECO Communities & Place		**Risk Type:** Social, Customer, Financial	B2	C3

The population in Highland, its distribution, its demography and the related service demands are changing. The Council must plan and act for these changes to be able to deliver the services that people require. This includes achieving the benefits of an integrated health and social care service for adults, involving the development of more community based services.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR8.2	Local Partnership Plans: We will ensure targets are included in Local Partnership Plans.	Children's Planning Manager	Ongoing	G
CR8.3	Balance of Care: Push for progress on shifting the balance of care.	ECO Health and Social Care	Ongoing	G
CR8.4	Workforce Plans: We will ensure there are sustainable recruitment strategies in our workforce plans.	All ECOs	Ongoing	G
CR8.5	Workforce Strategies: Our workforce strategies will include an assessment of changing and increasing demands for services.	Interim Head of HR	Ongoing	G
CR8.6	Financial Strategy: Our financial strategy will include an assessment of the risks and implications associated with demographic change.	Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism	Ongoing	G
CR8.7	Partnership Working: Work with our partners, principally the Community Planning Partnership, to plan services that are responsive to demographic changes.	ECO Communities and Place	Ongoing	G
CR8.8	Economic Recovery Programme: Implement the programme of economic recovery including support for people to access employment as agreed at Council on 04.03.21	ECO Infrastructure and Environment	March 2022	G

Notes:

CR9	Safe and Effective Property		Risk Rating	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: ECO Housing & Property		**Risk Type:** Physical, Financial	B2	D2
We need to ensure that our buildings and premises provide safe and effective environments for people who use our services, and our staff.				

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR9.12	Corporate Property Risk Management Board: A new officer working group will be established to focus on a cross-Service approach to Corporate Property Risk. This will have a core attendee list and draw in additional thematic expertise as required. The Board will initially focus on issues relating to fire safety. It will report to the Central Safety Committee and Housing and Property committee.	ECO Housing and Property	April 2022	G
CR9.13	Full Implementation of a Corporate Property Landlord Model: Council-wide implementation of the Corporate Property Landlord Model as agreed at the Housing and Property committee in August 2020.	ECO Housing and Property	December 2022	G
CR9.14	Investment into the Property Estate: £2.85m of funding has been allocated to improve Council property.	Head of Property and Facilities Management	Ongoing	A
CR9.15	Health and Safety Requirements associated with Capital Bids: As part of the Council's Capital Strategy, a health and safety risk assessment tool is being developed. This will assess the level and likelihood of H&S risk where H&S is a reason for requiring capital investment. It will also set out the mitigating actions. This will allow an assessment on whether the mitigating actions are reasonably practical and the extent to which they affect the need and/ or timing of capital investment. This will help to prioritise capital projects which will reduce health and safety risk. Reasonably practicable steps involve a balance of cost (effort, money and time) balanced against risk (severity and likelihood).	ECO Resources and Finance	March 2022	G
CR9.16	Condition Surveys: Understanding the condition of our properties is a continuous process. Condition surveys and how we manage this data are a fundamental aspect of this and can help us plan future investments and disposals.	Head of Property and Facilities Management	Ongoing	G
CR9.17	Asset Rationalisation Strategy: Implementation of our asset rationalisation strategy will ensure that the Council's property portfolio is suitable for service delivery.	Head of Property and Facilities Management	Ongoing	A
Notes: CR9.14: Slippage due to impact of COVID-19.				

CR10	Condition of our Roads		Risk Rating	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: ECO Infrastructure & Environment		**Risk Type:** Financial, Physical	B2	D2
Highland Council is responsible for the largest road network in Scotland, comprising over 6,700 km of carriageways and 1,902 km of footways. The				

Road Condition Indicator (RCI) is a national Key Performance Indicator (KPI). The national average for 2016 was 36.7% and Highland Council was 39.1%. Highland was ranked 21st out of the 32 Scottish Councils, but the rate at which the roads are deteriorating in Highland is increasing. In 2012 the RCI was 29.3%, so there has been a 10% decrease in road condition over the last 5 years. This has been exacerbated and accelerated by the prolonged 2017/18 winter with regular freeze-thaw-freeze conditions causing rapid decline across the whole network. Failure to maintain investment in (capital) re-surfacing programmes and structural repairs will accelerate the deterioration of our roads, resulting in higher (revenue) maintenance costs, and increase the risk to the Council of litigation claims arising from damage to vehicles and personal injuries.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR10.2	Innovation and Partnership working: The Service will continue to use innovative techniques to secure best value for the Council and will work closely with partners, including Transport Scotland, to achieve this.	ECO Infrastructure and Environment	Ongoing	G
CR10.3	Additional Inward Investment: Support lobbying activity to secure additional inward investment in road maintenance.	ECO Infrastructure and Environment	Ongoing	G
Notes:				

CR11	Residual Waste Project	Risk Rating	
		Current	Target
Risk Owner: ECO Communities & Place	Risk Type: Financial, Legal, Reputational, Physical, Environmental	A2	D2

The residual waste project focuses on developing a legally compliant solution for the management of residual waste collected by Highland Council from 2025 when the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 landfill ban becomes active. Complying with the landfill ban poses a range of risks, including:
- Financial – changing practice will produce revenue and capital costs to the Council. Business models need to be carefully costed and reviewed to ensure the most affordable long-term solution is selected.
- Legal – the project is required to comply with the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 – not having a compliant solution in place from 2025 poses a risk of non-compliance.
- Reputational/Physical/Environmental – without a compliant solution there would be the risk of residual waste building up within Highland, with attendant storage, environmental, and reputational impacts.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR11.2	Project Governance: Ensure appropriate governance through the officer project board; senior officer scrutiny from ELT and ORIT, Resources Governance and Transformation Boards; member oversight and scrutiny via the Member Waste Strategy Working Group; Recovery, Improvement and Transformation Board, C&P Committee; and the Council.	ECO Communities & Place	On-going	G
CR11.5	Waste Contract Procurement: Re-procure residual waste contracts for 2023-27	ECO Communities & Place	December 2022	G
CR11.6	Waste Transfer Stations: Progress the development of 3 new waste transfer stations in line with the project plan and waste capital programme	ECO Communities & Place	Ongoing	G
CR11.7	Options Appraisal: Conclude the options appraisal for an Energy from Waste Plant and report recommendations to Committee	ECO Communities & Place	December 2022	C

Notes:
CR11.7: Marked as complete Q2 2021/22.

CR12	NHS Highland Partnership		Risk Rating	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: The Chief Executive		**Risk Type:** Financial, Legal, Reputational	D2	D2

The partnership agreement between NHS Highland and The Highland Council determines that NHS Highland is the lead agency for Adult Services and The Highland Council is the lead agency for services for children. The re-negotiation of this Agreement has been completed and executed on behalf of both organisations. The scheme is now awaiting approval from the Scottish Government. It is necessary to monitor the implications of the adoption of the Feeley Report and the proposed National Care Service which are likely to result in potential need to change the model or make other changes impacting on delivery of service in terms of future partnership working with NHSH.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR12.4	Feeley Report: Monitor the implications of legislation to implement the proposed National Care Service and consider the adoption of the Feeley Report and potential need to change the model or make other changes impacting on delivery of service in terms of future partnership working with NHS Highland.	Head of Integration Adult Social Care	Ongoing	G

Notes:
As raised by Elected Members at the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 23 September 2021, this risk requires review given the National Care Service for Scotland Consultation. The Council wishes to see Local Government at the centre of change in relation to the social care consultation. It will be reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team following the submission of the Council's response which was agreed at Council on 28 October 2021 and when greater clarity on the proposals is available nationally.

CR14	Inverness and Highland City Region Deal		Risk Rating	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: ECO (Infrastructure & Environment)		**Risk Type:** Financial, Reputational	D2	D2

The Inverness and Highland City Region Deal is a significant programme of investment in the Highlands, coordinated on behalf of partners, by The Highland Council. Given the profile and importance of this investment, it bears associated financial and reputational corporate risks.

Delays to project delivery within the programme (such as individual project issues, COVID-19, BREXIT) may impact benefits expected from the programme. The programme has a finite delivery deadline with an extension not possible. A key indicator to delivery is the rate of spend within the projects and there is underspend apparent already.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR14.1	Risk Register: All projects are required to maintain risk registers and issues registers. This is in addition to an overall programme level risk and issue register.	City Region Deal Programme Manager	Ongoing	G
CR14.2	Programme Board: An officer board meets quarterly to scrutinise the progress of projects.	City Region Deal Programme Manager	Ongoing	C

CR14.3	Member Scrutiny: A Member led scrutiny board meets quarterly and minutes are provided to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee. Quarterly progress is also reported to this Committee, including business cases for approval. An annual report is presented to a Full Council meeting.	City Region Deal Programme Manager	Ongoing	C
CR14.4	Project Benefits Realisation Plan: Revise and publish project benefits realisation plan	City Region Deal Programme Manager	March 2022	G
CR14.5	Programme Benefits Realisation Plan: Revise and publish programme benefits realisation plan	City Region Deal Programme Manager	March 2022	G
CR14.6	Remedy project underspends: Identify underspend issues and agree rectification plan	City Region Deal Programme Manager	July 2021	A

Notes:
CR14.2; CR14.3: Marked as complete Q3 2021/21. Meetings have been completed or are diarised.
CR14.6: Ongoing work to re-plan spend with each affected project.

CR17	Open Water Safety		Risk Rating	
			Current	Target
Risk Owner: ECO (Infrastructure and Environment)		**Risk Type:** Physical, Legal.	C2	D2

As a landowner, the Council has a duty of care under the Occupiers Liability Scotland Act 1960 to take reasonable steps to safeguard those on their land including open water. Failure to do this may put people at risk of harm. Highland Council is currently reviewing its policy and practice to ensure it is robust.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR17.1	Open Water Policy: A short life officer working group will be established to review current policy and strategy around Open Water Safety. This group will contain officers from across Council services, and from partner organisations. An Open Water Strategy will be being developed in line with Scotland's drowning prevention strategy and implemented accordingly.	ECO Infrastructure and Environment	December 2020	A

Notes:

CR18	COVID-19		Risk Rating	
			Current	Target
Risk Owner: Chief Executive		**Risk Type:** Health, Operational, Financial, Legal, Reputational, Economic, Social	A1	D3

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has had a devastating impact on nations across the world. The UK and Scottish Governments introduced Emergency legislation in March 2020 to address a national health emergency. It has become apparent that there are 4 harms resulting from the pandemic. These include the impact of the virus on health, but also indirect health, societal and economic harms. Following the lifting of the majority of legislation in August 2021, protection from and recovery from these direct and indirect impacts will continue to present significant risks to the Highland Council as

the country learns to live with the virus and any new variants as they arise.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR18.1	Staff Health and Safety: Reducing the immediate, short and long term health and safety risks to all staff. • Preparation of risk assessments per Service led by ECOs followed by mitigation ☐ Each Service to complete its own Health and Safety Plan ☐ Protective measures to reduce the risk of staff exposure to the virus ☐ Protecting staff from exposure to the virus ☐ Promoting advice and guidance to staff ☐ Reducing impact on mental health by promoting resources available ☐ Development of policy framework to support new hybrid working arrangements ☐ Developing a process to manage outbreaks impacting the workplace ☐ Liaison and engagement with staff and with Trade Union representatives to understand concerns and address issues	ECO Resources and Finance	Ongoing	**G**
CR18.4	Customer and Client Health and Safety: Reducing the risk of the virus to customers and clients in council estate and assets. ☐ Preparation of risk assessments per Service led by ECOs followed by mitigation • Adaptation of estate and assets and policies • Prioritisation of resource to reduce risk	ECO Resources and Finance & ECO Property and Housing	Ongoing	**G**
CR18.5	Operational Continuity: Reducing risk to operational activities and ensuring service continuity and prioritisation where necessary. ☐ Preparation of business continuity plans and actioning mitigation and contingency plans to address risk by all Services • Processes to mitigate for and manage outbreaks in the workplace • Agreeing how to prioritise services if staff absence cannot be covered and service disruption cannot be avoided. For some operations this may require Committee agreement in advance and/or Member briefing given public interest in certain areas of front-line service delivery. • *Continued* development of ICT resource and capacity and security to *support* remote working • Revised approach to performance and prioritisation • *Provision of COVID related* projects • Development of mitigation for any delays to Project Dochas (bringing ICT in-house) resulting from COVID. To include options to ensure ICT business continuity. Identify emerging risks and possible mitigation	ECO Resources and Finance (All ECOs from Q4)	Ongoing	**G**
CR18.6	Reducing Financial Impact: Reducing the current and future financial impact of COVID-19 to the Council.	ECO Resources and Finance	Ongoing	**G**

	• Financial recovery planning • Implementation of policies and measures to reduce and *prioritise* spend • Support Elected Member lobbying for resources • Draw down of relevant Covid funding streams *to be* maximised			█
CR18.8	Effective Communications: Clear and timely communications to accurately inform *and reassure* stakeholders and reduce any potential negative reputational impacts. • Communication to provide internal and external information, warning, informing and reassurance to stakeholders *through various methods and channels.* • Promotion of vaccination and testing facilities *and other national messaging.* • Liaison with Local Resilience Partners to coordinate messaging • Manage expectation of stakeholders • *Ensure cross-service situational awareness and escalation of risk through Tactical and Strategic (Gold) groups*	ECO Performance and Governance	Ongoing	C
CR18.9	Support the Socio-Economic Recovery of the Highlands: Identify any potential socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on the Highlands, and where relevant design and implement appropriate interventions. • Poverty Reduction Strategy (led by ECO Communities and Place) • Economic Recovery Strategy (ECO Infrastructure and Environment) • Recovery Board Action Plan (Interim ECO Transformation) • Implementation of Budget for Health and Prosperity (ECO Resources and Finance) • Future Highland Health and Prosperity Plan (Chief Executive)	Chief Executive	March 2021 & ongoing	A
CR18.10	Supply chain and procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and delivery of enhanced cleaning services and other building control measures: • Stepped protection process (to avoid staff placing themselves at risk) • Risk assessments to accurately identify PPE requirements • Centralised procurement of PPE • Stock resilience • Scotland EXCEL national support process for procurement • New supplier options • Provision of enhanced cleaning services • Building risk assessments and implementation of control measures in line with national guidance e.g., CO2 monitors, ventilation, track and trace etc	ECO Property and Housing	Ongoing	G
CR18.11	Supporting partners to reduce the risk of all COVID harms to the Highland communities: • Supporting the roll-out of asymptomatic testing • Supporting the rollout of the vaccination programme • Leading ongoing resilience support via helplines and food support	Interim ECO Communities and Place	Ongoing	G

	• Participating in Local Resilience Partnership activity to tackle and reduce harm		

Notes:
Each risk action is developing a corresponding action plan which is being managed by the responsible officer.
The risk was reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team in December 2022. Any minor amendments to the risk are in italics.
CR18.4: ECO Property and Housing will be added as a responsible officer from Q4 2021/22.
CR18.5: Responsible Officer to be changed from ECO Resources and Finance to All ECOs from Q4 2021/22.
CR18.5: The Fuel Support Scheme design is administratively light, and a delivery timeline is in place and agreed by relevant teams. Teams would be mobilised to mitigate staffing reductions.
CR18.5: The COVID-19 Business Grants Team is comprised of a core team sourced from the Economy and Regeneration Team, a range of other Service staff, e.g., Finance, and processors brought in on part-time basis as required. While each grant scheme is unique, the team have developed standard processes and can adjust staffing based on grant workload and individual availability.
CR18.11: Added in Q3 2021/22.
CR18.8: Marked as complete Q3 2021/22.

		Risk Rating		
CR19	**Continuation of Education post COVID-19**		**Current**	**Target**
Risk Owner: ECO – Education and Learning		**Risk Type:** Physical, Financial, Reputational	**C2**	**E2**

It is paramount to identify and mitigate risk to the workforce and the loss of learning and teaching, closing the attainment gap and ensuring senior phase pupils are able to access sufficient face to face teaching time to prepare for exams in May 2022. There are also financial risks associated with managing the increased operational costs within existing resources for Council and school settings. The Council also needs to manage local outbreaks and be prepared for any potential future localised restrictions.

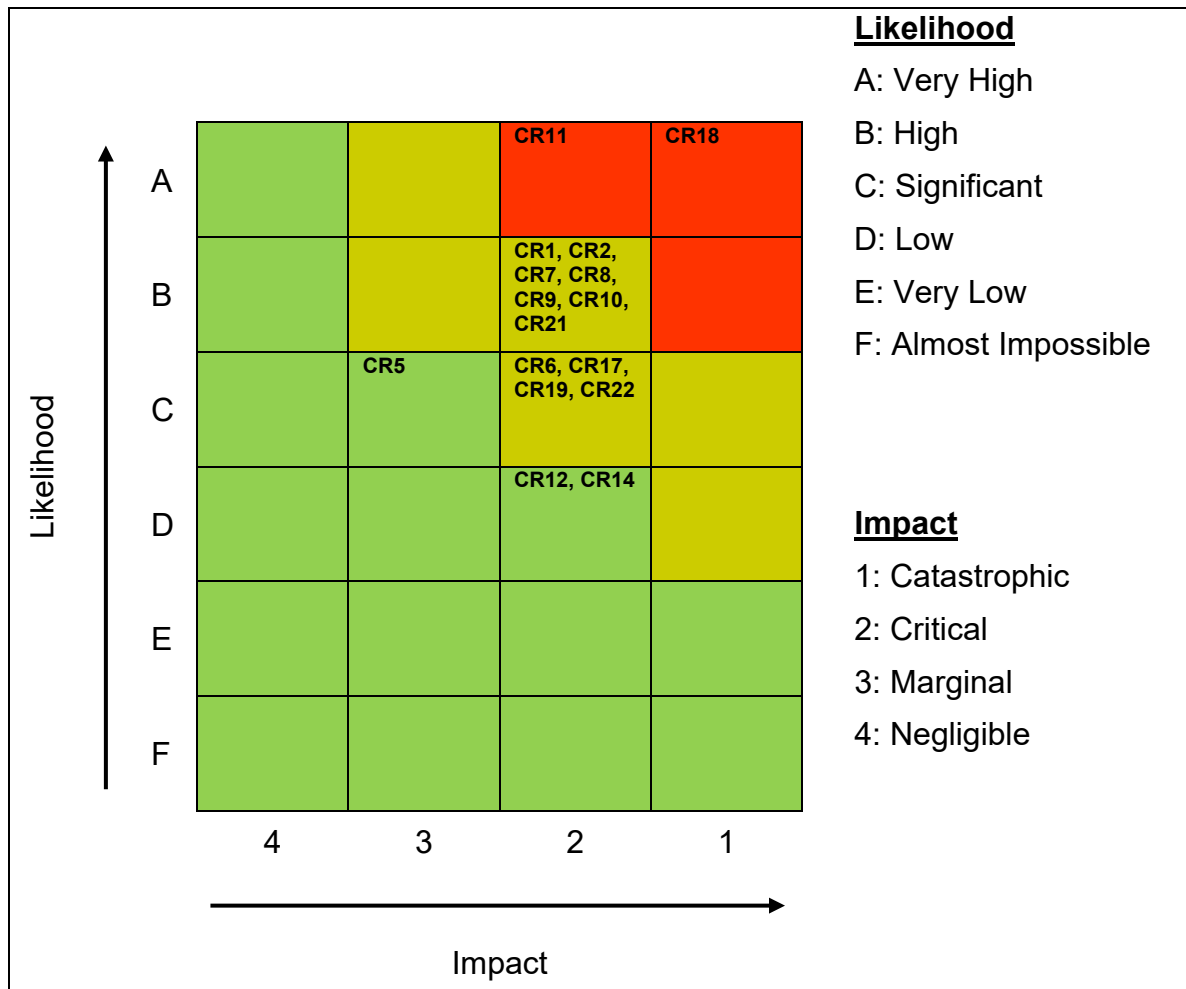| **Mitigating Actions:**		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR19.2	Tactical Group: Meeting regularly as required for oversight of local and national picture and to agree necessary actions in response to outbreaks or changes in guidance/ restrictions, as well as wider communication to Schools and parents and Public Position statement to be updated based on these discussions	Corporate Communications and Resilience Manager	Ongoing	**G**
CR19.3	School Lets: Phased return of school lets working with partners and taking into account national guidelines, risks and the cost of enhanced controls.	Head of Property and Facilities Management	Ongoing	**G**
CR19.7	Outbreak planning: Weekly meetings with NHS Health Protection Team and service-wide planning for contingencies in event of outbreaks, closures and relevant communications issued signed by chief executive. Reporting on numbers of positive Covid cases to Scottish government with a focus on senior phase pupils (attainment/ SQA).	ECO Education and Learning	Ongoing	**G**
CR19.12	Options for pupil devices: Significant proportion of Chromebook estate will be unsupported by Google and will subsequently be end of life from June 2022 – therefore requirement to establish options for future provision of pupil devices (2022 onwards).	Head of Resources – Education & Head of ICT	March 2022	**G**
Notes:				

CR21	Elections		Risk Rating	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: Chief Executive		**Risk Type:** Political, Financial, Reputational, Citizen	B2	B3

There is a risk to the business continuity of Council Services due to the workforce requirements to deliver effective elections at local and national levels. Democracy is at the core of what we do and delivering safe and secure elections that protects the health of the voter, its stakeholders and the health of the democracy is a priority for the Council. Resources throughout Council services will be re-prioritised to take on election duties, with the size and scale of undertaking the Local Government Election on 5 May 2022, specifically during the week of the election and the beginning of the following week, it is recognised that this will impact the overall delivery of Council services.

Due to COVID-19, all election processes have been redesigned to deliver a safe and secure election with a call upon several specialised services to support the election team, if required, to deliver a safe successful election. Although a recognised service impact, there is an immediate reduction of this because of:
- The in-service day on 5 May for schools on polling day, safeguarding impact to education of our pupils and
- In peak of election week, Monday 2 May is a public holiday, although election services will be in full operation, the majority of council services will be closed.

There is a risk with the high reliance on the ward managers in the area hubs to receipt the anticipated 200 nomination forms. These staff could be unavailable in the scenario of a major incident and mitigation for this risk is being considered. The election office has also undertaken an exercise to understand the allocation of staff against the overall resource plan for poll and count services to understand their overall commitment to elections and a fair percentage of staff can be allocated.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR21.1	Critical Services: Safeguard critical services.	All ECOs	Ongoing	G
CR21.4	Core Election Team resilience: Build resilience in the core election team.	ECO Performance & Governance	Ongoing	G
Notes:				

CR22	Security and Resilience – Physical Assets and Infrastructure		Risk Rating	
			Current	**Target**
Risk Owner: Chief Executive		**Risk Type:** Physical	C2	D2

The Council must take all reasonable steps to protect our staff and communities from risks to their safety and security. Our infrastructure must be secure to protect against terrorist and criminal activity. Also, the Council must plan adequately to respond effectively to an emergency, to mitigate the impact upon our communities and to enable business continuity of critical services and full recovery.

Mitigating Actions:		Responsible Officer	Target Date	RAG
CR22.1	Building Access Policies: All of our Responsible Premises Officers (RPOs) will develop site specific Building Access Policies. These will include evacuation and lockdown plans.	Head of Property Services	March 2018	A

CR22.2	Multi-agency planning and exercising: 1. We will continue to fully participate in multi-agency planning and exercising Regional Resilience Partnership (RRP) and Local Resilience Partnership (LRP) for emergencies based on the national risk register 2. We will continue to participate in the multi-agency CONTEST Group as part of the UK government's Counter-terrorism strategy 3. All Emergency Liaison Groups (ELGs) will take part in exercises	Communications and Resilience Manager	Ongoing	G

Notes:
Following the decision by the Executive Leadership Team to split Corporate Risk 2 into two risks, CR22 was added to the Corporate Risk Register in Q3 2021/22. The definition of this risk has been updated to reflect its focus.
CR22.1 was renamed from CR2.1 in Q3 2021/22.
CR22.2 was renamed from CR2.6 in Q3 2021/22.

Appendix 2: Corporate Risk Matrix

					Likelihood
					A: Very High
					B: High
					C: Significant
					D: Low
					E: Very Low
					F: Almost Impossible

Likelihood (vertical axis, top to bottom: A, B, C, D, E, F)
Impact (horizontal axis, left to right: 4, 3, 2, 1)

Likelihood \ Impact	4	3	2	1
A	green	amber	red: CR11	red: CR18
B	green	amber	amber: CR1, CR2, CR7, CR8, CR9, CR10, CR21	red
C	green	green: CR5	amber: CR6, CR17, CR19, CR22	amber
D	green	green	green: CR12, CR14	amber
E	green	green	green	green
F	green	green	green	green

Impact
1: Catastrophic
2: Critical
3: Marginal
4: Negligible

The colour coding of the risk matrix indicates the following:

Green	The overall level of risk is low, and it is below the corporate risk appetite. Management of this risk through the corporate risk process is optional.
Amber	The overall level of the risk is moderate. It is above the corporate risk appetite and actions are in place to manage and reduce the overall risk.
Red	The overall level of the risk is high. It is above the corporate risk appetite line and should be managed as a priority. Risk actions are in place to manage and reduce the overall risk.