

Report



Governance and Audit Committee

Part 1

Date: March 2024

Subject Quarter 3 23/24 Corporate Risk Register Update

Purpose To present an update of the Corporate Risk Register for the end of Quarter 3 (1st October 2023 to 31st December 2023).

Author Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Ward All

Summary The Council's Corporate Risk Register monitors those risks that may prevent the Council from achieving its strategic priorities or delivering services to its communities and service users in Newport.

At the end of Quarter 3, there were 15 risks recorded in the Corporate Risk Register that are considered to have a significant impact on the achievement of the Council's objectives and legal obligations.

Overall, there are 8 Severe risks (risk scores 15 to 25); 7 Major risks (risk scores 7 to 14); that are outlined in the report. In comparison to the Quarter 2 corporate risk register, one risk score decreased (Failure to achieve completion of the Internal Audit Plan). All remaining risks did not change score.

As set out in the Council's Risk Management Policy, the Governance and Audit Committee reviews the Corporate Risk Register on a quarterly basis ensuring procedures are in place to monitor the management of significant risks.

Proposal The Governance and Audit Committee is asked to consider the contents of this report and assess the risk management arrangements for the Authority, providing any additional commentary and/or recommendations to the Cabinet.

Action by Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Cabinet
- Executive Board
- Corporate Management Team

Background

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires Newport City Council to set Well-being Objectives in its Corporate Plan. As a public body, Newport City Council is also responsible for delivering services (statutory and non-statutory) to residents, businesses, and visitors across Newport. We will inherently encounter opportunities and risks that may prevent, disrupt, impact or enhance the delivery of the Council services and achieve the objectives in the Corporate Plan. How the Council responds and manages these opportunities and risks is important to ensure resources are being used efficiently and effectively to maximise value for money and to minimise and/or prevent the risk impacting services, communities, and citizens in Newport.

In March 2024, [Newport City Council's Cabinet](#) approved the Council's new Risk Management Policy and risk appetite statement. Following this approval, the Risk Management Policy will come into effect from 1st April 2024 and will be reported in Quarter 1 of 2024/25. The Corporate Risk Register provides assurance on the most significant risks that the Council was managing in the last quarter.

Officers across the Council regularly manage risk in the course of their duties whether this is health and safety risks, civil contingencies, safeguarding risks to children, young people, adults and carers or risks to assets, buildings, and council employees. The relevant service area(s) and professional disciplines will be assessing and managing these risks as required and reporting these through their own reporting mechanisms. In accordance with the Council's Risk Management Policy, any new, escalated / de-escalated, and closed risks in the Corporate Risk Register are presented to the Council's Executive Board for decision.

Risk Management Process

In Newport City Council risks that may prevent or impact on the delivery of our services is continuously monitored and managed at all levels of the organisation. The diagram below summarises how risks are continuously managed in Newport City Council.

There are many different sources of risks, such as civil contingencies, health & safety, service delivery and projects throughout the organisation where risks to the delivery of the Corporate Plan, or services might be identified and included on the Council's risk register. New risks identified to be included on the register have to be assessed and evaluated to determine their risk scores (Inherent / Residual / Target), existing controls that are in place and where further mitigating controls are required to respond and reduce the overall impact of the risk to the Council. To assess risk scores Newport City Council uses a standard 5x5 matrix that is commonly adopted across Welsh and English local authorities. Appendix 1 of this report shows the risk heat map of the Council's corporate risks using this matrix.



All risks identified are initially agreed by the Head of Service. If the residual risk score is 15 or above or if the Head of Service considers the risk to have an impact on the delivery of services / achievement of Council objectives, it is escalated to the Council's senior management team to determine whether it is included on the Council's Corporate Risk Register or if the risk should be managed by the relevant service area(s).

All risks are recorded in the Council's 'Management Information Hub'. Every quarter, risk owners, and risk action owners are required to assess and provide an update on the risk score and mitigating actions in place. Any risk that has escalated to 15 or above is automatically escalated and requires the Directors team to consider whether it should be included on the Corporate risk register or if they are satisfied that the responsible owner and mitigating actions are effective to be managed within the service area / team.

As risk mitigating actions are completed and the risk is reduced to meet the target risk score, an assessment will be undertaken by the risk owner to determine whether the risk is closed and if the risk mitigation actions have been sufficient to mitigate the overall risk. For risks on the Corporate Risk Register this responsibility would fall onto the Head of Service and senior management team to determine if the risk can be closed.

Newport City Council – Quarter 3 Service Area Risk Summary

Appendix 2 of the report provides an overview of the Council's overall risks reported at the end of Quarter 3. This includes corporate and service area risks across the Council's service areas. In summary, the Council had 43 risks of which:

Total Risks at Q2	Risk Scores Increased since Q2	Risk Scores Decreased since Q2	No Change since Q2	New Risks Since Q2	Closed Risks Since Q2	Escalated Risks ⁺¹	De-escalated Risks ⁺²
43	2	2	39	0	0	0	0

Newport City Council Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Register Summary

At the end of Quarter 3, the Council's Corporate Risk Register included 15 of the 43 risks that are considered to pose the most risk to the delivery of Council services and achievement of its strategic priorities. The 15 Corporate Risks consisted of:

- 8 Severe risks (15 to 25)
- 7 Major Risks (7 to 14)

In comparison to the Quarter 2 corporate risk register, one risk (Failure to achieve completion of the Internal Audit plan) decreased from 16 to 9. All other risk scores remained the same as Quarter 2. Summary of the risk is provided below.

Risk	Risk Summary	Q1 Risk Score	Q2 Risk Score	Summary
<p>Failure to achieve completion of the annual Internal Audit Plan</p> <p><i>Leader of Newport City Council</i></p> <p><i>Transformation & Corporate / Finance</i></p>	<p>The Internal Audit (IA) Plan comprises of opinion and non-opinion related audit jobs and is based on a number of audit days available to undertake the work. If not enough opinion related jobs are completed to draft report stage by the end of the financial year this could impact on the Chief Internal Auditor's ability to provide an overall opinion on the adequacy of the internal control environment, governance arrangements</p>	16	9	<p>At the of end of Quarter 3, there has been good progress made by the Internal Audit team in the delivery of the Audit Plan for 23/24. Since the previous quarter, the Council has recruited 2 auditors and have agreed for South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) to undertake further work.</p>

Risk	Risk Summary	Q1 Risk Score	Q2 Risk Score	Summary
	and risk management processes operated within the Council.			

The Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Register was presented to [Cabinet](#) earlier in March 2024. Cabinet accepted the changes to the Corporate Risk Register and the risk scores for Quarter 3.

Appendix 1 - Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Heat Map and Risk Profile

Appendix 2 – Quarter 3 Newport City Council’s Service Area Risk Summary.

Appendix 3 – Newport City Council’s Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Register (Attached separately).

Glossary – Risk Management terminology and Risk Score Assessment

Financial Summary

There are no direct costs associated with this report.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
The Council does not achieve its objectives as corporate level risks are not adequately managed and monitored.	M	L	Risk Management Strategy has been adopted and mechanisms are in place to identify, manage and escalate emerging and new risks / mitigation strategies. Audit Committee oversight of risk management process.	Directors, Heads of Service and Performance Team

*Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan 2022-27

Service Plans 2022-24

Robust risk management practices increase the chances that all of the Council’s priorities and plans will be implemented successfully.

Options Available and considered

1. To consider the contents of this report and assessment of the risk management arrangements for the Authority, providing any additional commentary and/or recommendations to the next Cabinet meeting.
2. To request further information or reject the contents of the risk register.

Preferred Option and Why

1. Option 1 is the preferred option with recommendations raised by the Audit Committee to be considered and reported to Cabinet and Officers in accordance with the Council’s Constitution.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report itself. The corporate risk register forms an important part of the governance and budget setting arrangements for the Council and the risk register is used to guide the internal audit plan.

There are a number of risks with either a direct or indirect financial impact. For example, the risk around balancing the medium-term financial position is currently rated as severe, due to the high inflationary environment and increasing demand for services. Whilst balanced budgets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were achieved, the challenge of achieving that over the medium term remains, with further difficult decisions being required to do that. It is noted that the risk surrounding the Internal Audit service has been downgraded. Whilst it is clearly positive that good progress has been made in the delivery of the audit plan, close monitoring will be required to ensure that this position is maintained.

As well as risks specific to the Finance service, the report highlights high levels of risk in a number of areas, such as Children's Services, homelessness, the property estate and the highways network. These areas all result in financial pressures, either due to increasing demand for services or the challenges in maintaining assets to an appropriate level. As a result of their high significance, these particular pressures are specifically referenced within the Council's budget for 2024/25, with investment being made in all of these areas in response to those pressures.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. As part of the Council's Risk Management Strategy, the corporate risk register identifies those high-level risks that could impact upon the Council's ability to deliver its corporate plan objectives and essential public services. Governance and Audit Committee are responsible for reviewing and assessing the Council's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements. However, the identification of corporate risks within the risk register and monitoring the effectiveness of the mitigation measures are matters for Cabinet. As the report notes above, the majority of the risk scores remained the same in Quarter 3, with only one change to the risk score relating to achievement of the internal audit plan, for which the score decreased.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Effective monitoring and reporting of the Council's Corporate Risk Register is essential in minimising and preventing the likelihood and impact of risks against our objectives. The Council's risk management is a key area in the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

The recent Internal Audit review of the Council's risk management arrangements confirmed that the Council has 'Substantial' (highest assurance rating) and effective processes in place to manage, identify and monitor its risks. The new Risk Management Policy (presented to Cabinet in March 2024) will set the necessary appetite and arrangements to deliver the Council's strategic priorities.

Scrutiny Committees

Not Applicable. Audit Committee have a role in reviewing and assessing the risk management arrangements of the Authority.

Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment

For this report, a full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment is not required to be undertaken. This is because this report is not seeking any strategic decisions or policy changes, with its purpose being to update Governance and Audit Committee on the current risk register and risk management process of the Council.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and its 5 ways of working principles this report supports:

Long Term – Having effective risk management arrangements will ensure that the opportunities and risks that will emerge consider the long-term impact on service users and communities.

Preventative – Identifying opportunities and risks will ensure the Council is able to implement necessary mitigations to prevent or minimise their impact on Council services and service users.

Collaborative – The management of risk is undertaken throughout the Council and officers collaborate within service areas, Corporate Management Team and the Council's Cabinet to ensure decisions are made in a timely manner and are evidence based.

Involvement – The Council's Risk Management process involves officers across the Council's service areas and Cabinet Members.

Integration – Risk Management is being integrated throughout the Council and supports the integrated Planning, Performance and Risk Management Framework. The Framework ensures that planning activities consider the opportunities and risks to their implementation and overall supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and legislative duties.

Consultation

The Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Register was presented to Cabinet in March 2023. Cabinet accepted the changes to the register and the risk scores for Quarter 3.

Background Papers

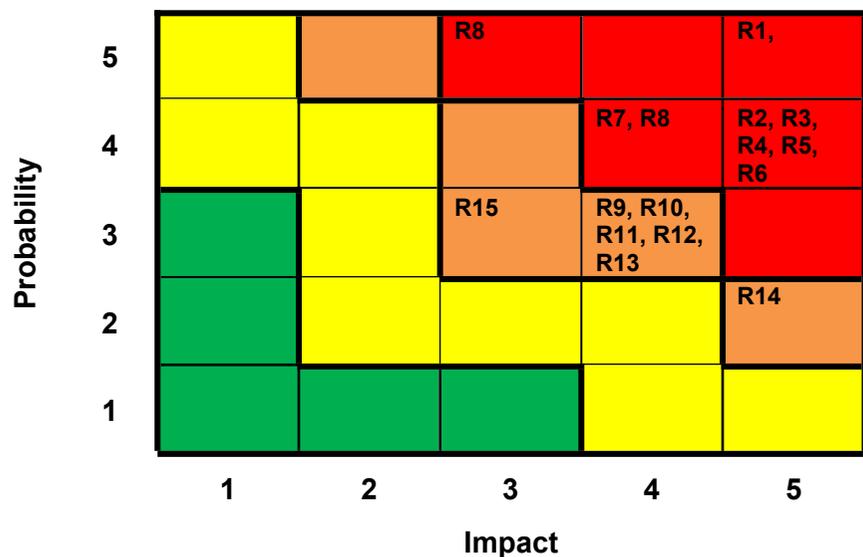
[Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Update to Cabinet](#)

[Quarter 2 Corporate Risk Update to GAC](#)

Risk Management Policy

Dated: 20th March 2024

Appendix 1 – Quarter 3 2023/24 Risk Heat Map



Corporate Risk Heat Map Key (Quarter 3 2023/24)	
R1 - Pressure on the delivery of Children Services	R9 - Cyber Security
R2 - Pressure on Adult & Community Services	R10 - Schools Finance / Cost Pressures
R3 - Balancing the Council's Medium-Term budget	R11 - Demand for ALN and SEN support
R4 - Highways Network	R12 - Educational Out of County Placements
R5 - Pressure on Housing and Homelessness Service	R13 - Welsh Government's Net Carbon Zero Target by 2030
R6 - Newport Council's Property Estate	R14 - City Centre Security and Safety
R7 - Stability of Social Services Providers	R15 - Failure to achieve completion of the annual Internal Audit Plan
R8 - Eliminate Profit from Social Care	

Risk Score Profile between Quarter 4 2022/23 and Quarter 3 2023/24

Risk Reference	Risk	Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Lead Directorate / Service Area	Risk Score Q4 2022/23	Risk Score Q1 2023/24	Risk Score Q2 2023/24	(Current) Risk Score Q3 2023/24	Target Risk Score
R1	Pressure on the delivery of Children Services	Cabinet Members for Social Services	Social Services / Children Services	25	25	25	25	12
R2	Pressure on Adult & Community Services	Cabinet Members for Social Services	Social Services / Adult Services	20	20	20	20	12
R3	Balancing the Council's Medium-Term budget	Leader of the Council / Cabinet	Transformation & Corporate / Finance	20	20	20	20	10
R4	Highways Network / Infrastructure	Cabinet Member for Infrastructure & Assets	Environment & Sustainability / Infrastructure	20	20	20	20	15
R5	Pressure on Housing and Homelessness Service	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation & Housing	Environment & Sustainability / Housing & Communities	20	20	20	20	12
R6	Newport Council's Property Estate	Cabinet Member for Infrastructure & Assets	Transformation & Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation	16	16	20	20	12
R7	Stability of Social Services Providers	Cabinet Members for Social Services	Social Services / Adult Services	20	20	16	16	12
R8	Eliminate Profit from Social Care	Cabinet Members for Social Services	Social Services / Children Services	15	15	15	15	4
R9	Information and Cyber Security	Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation	Transformation & Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation	12	12	12	12	8

Risk Reference	Risk	Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Lead Directorate / Service Area	Risk Score Q4 2022/23	Risk Score Q1 2023/24	Risk Score Q2 2023/24	(Current) Risk Score Q3 2023/24	Target Risk Score
R10	Schools Finance / Cost Pressures	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years	Chief Executive / Education Services	12	12	12	12	12
R11	Demand for ALN and SEN support	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years	Chief Executive / Education Services	12	12	12	12	6
R12	Educational Out of County Placements	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years	Chief Executive / Education Services	12	12	12	12	4
R13	Welsh Government's Net Carbon Zero Target by 2030	Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Biodiversity	Environment & Sustainability / Environment & Public Protection	12	12	12	12	2
R14	City Centre Security and Safety	Cabinet Member for Infrastructure & Assets	Environment & Sustainability / Infrastructure	10	10	10	10	9
R15	Failure to achieve completion of the annual Internal Audit Plan	Leader of the Council	Transformation & Corporate Finance	12	16	16	9	6

Appendix 2 – Quarter 3 23/24 NCC Service Area Risk Summary

Directorate	Service Area	Total Q3 Risks	Risk Scores Increased since Q2	Risk Scores Decreased since Q2	No Change since Q2	New Risks Since Q2	Closed Risks Since Q2	Escalated Risks ^{*1}	De-escalated Risks ^{*2}
Chief Executive	Education	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
	Regeneration & Economic Development	4	1	0	3	0	0	0	0
Environment & Sustainability	Environment & Public Protection	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
	Housing & Communities	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
	Infrastructure	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Social Services	Adult Services	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
	Children Services	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
	Prevention & Inclusion	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transformation & Corporate	Finance	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Law & Standards	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
	People, Policy & Transformation	6	0	1	5	0	0	0	0
Total		43	2	2	39	0	0	0	0

*1 – Escalated Risks – Risks that have been escalated from Service area risk registers to Corporate Risk Register

*2 – De-escalated Risks – Risks that have been de-escalated from Corporate Risk Register to service area risk register

Glossary

This document provides an explanation of terminology used in this report and supporting documents.

Risk Appetite – the amount of risk that Newport City Council is willing to seek or accept in the pursuit of the Council’s long term objectives.

Inherent Risk Score – The level of risk in the absence of any existing controls and management action taken to alter the risk’s impact or probability of occurring.

Residual Risk Score – The level of risk where risk responses i.e. existing controls or risk mitigation actions have been taken to manage the risk’s impact and probability.

Target Risk Score – The level of risk (risk score) that Newport City Council is willing to accept / tolerate in managing the risk. This is set in line with the Council’s overall risk appetite.

Risk Mitigation Action – Actions identified by the Risk Owner to respond to the risk and reduce the impact and probability of the risk of occurring.

Risk Mitigation Action (Red Progress Score) – Significant issue(s) have been identified with the action which could impact on the ability of the action meeting its completion date. Immediate action / response is required resolve its status.

Risk Mitigation Action (Amber Progress Score) – issue(s) have been identified that could have a negative impact on the action achieving its completion date. Appropriate line manager(s) should be informed and where necessary action taken.

Risk Mitigation Action (Green Progress Score) – The action is on course for delivering to the agreed completion date and within the agreed tolerances.

How the Council Assesses Risk

An assessment of the likelihood and impact of risk is important to measure, compare and monitor risks to ensure efficient use of resources and effective decision making. This assessment is carried out using the risk matrix as described below.

Risk Assessment Matrix

A Corporate Risk Register will contain the high-level risks for the whole authority. In order to differentiate between these high level risks a 5x5 risk assessment matrix will be applied. The matrix is shown below, and further detail is included in appendix 3.

Risks are scored using the scoring system for probability and impact and assigned a rating based on the tolerances set out in the matrix below

Score	Description	Impact Measures						
		Strategic / Policy	Operational / Business Continuity	Financial	Governance / Legal / Regulatory	Health & Safety	Reputational	Project Delivery / Savings / Benefits
5	Severe	Failure of a key strategic objective	Serious organisational / service failure that has direct impact on stakeholders including vulnerable groups. Service disruption over 5+ days.	<u>Corporate / Project</u> Unplanned and/or additional expenditure disturbance. Capital > £1M Revenue >£1M	Legislative / Regulatory breach resulting in multiple litigation / legal action taken on the Council (linked to Financial / Reputational Impacts).	Multiple major irreversible injuries or deaths of staff, students or members of public. (Linked to Financial / Reputational Impacts)	Severe and persistent National media coverage. Adverse central government response, involving (threat of) removal of delegated powers. Officer(s) and / or Members forced to Resign.	Project status is over 12 months from anticipated implementation date. Project(s) do not deliver the major benefits / savings identified in business case. This is linked to Financial / Strategic / Reputational Impacts
4	Major	Severe constraint on achievement of a key strategic objective	Loss of an important service(s) for a short period that could impact on stakeholders. Service disruption between 3-5 days.	<u>Corporate / Project</u> Unplanned and/or additional expenditure disturbance. Capital > £0.5M - £1.0M Revenue >£0.5M- £1M	Serious legislative breach resulting in intervention, sanctions and legal action. (Linked to Financial / Reputational Impacts)	Major irreversible injury or death of staff, student or member of public. (Linked to Financial / Reputational Impacts)	Adverse publicity in professional / municipal press, affecting perception / standing in professional /local government community Adverse local and social media publicity of a significant and persistent nature.	Project status is 6 to 12 months over from anticipated implementation date. Project(s) do not deliver major benefits / savings identified in business case. This is linked to Financial / Strategic / Reputational Impacts
3	Moderate	Noticeable constraint on achievement of a key strategic objective /	Loss and/or intermittent disruption of a service between 2-3 days.	<u>Corporate / Project</u> Unplanned and/or additional	Significant legislative breach resulting in investigation. (Linked to Financial	Major reversible injury to staff, student or member of	Adverse local publicity / local public opinion including social media.	Project status is 1 to 6 months over from anticipated implementation date.

Score	Description	Impact Measures						
		Strategic / Policy	Operational / Business Continuity	Financial	Governance / Legal / Regulatory	Health & Safety	Reputational	Project Delivery / Savings / Benefits
		Service Plan objective.		expenditure disturbance. Capital = £0.25M - £0.5M Revenue = £0.25M to £0.5M Revenue = £0.25M to £0.5M	/ Reputational Impacts)	public. Not life threatening. (Linked to Financial / Reputational Impacts)	Statutory prosecution of a non-serious nature.	There is significant reduction on delivery of benefits / savings identified in business case. This is linked to Financial / Strategic / Reputational impacts.
2	Low	Constraint on achievement of Service Plan objective that does not impact on Corporate Strategy	Brief disruption of service that has a minor impact on the delivery of a service. Service disruption 1 day.	<u>Corporate / Project</u> Unplanned and/or additional expenditure disturbance. Capital = £0.1M - £0.25M Revenue = £0.1M – £0.25M	Moderate impact leading to warning and recommendations.	Some minor reversible injuries. (Linked to Financial / Reputational Impacts)	Contained within Directorate Complaint from individual / small group, of arguable merit	Project status is 1 to 4 weeks over from anticipated implementation date. There is minor reduction on delivery of benefits / savings identified in business case. This is linked to Financial / Strategic / Reputational impacts.
1	Very Low	Constraint on achievement of Service / Team Plan objective	Minor disruption of a non-critical service.	<u>Corporate / Project</u> Unplanned and/or additional expenditure disturbance. Capital < £100k	No reprimand, sanction or legal action.	Some superficial injuries. (Linked to Financial / Reputational Impacts)	Isolated complaint(s) that are managed through the corporate complaints process and service area.	Project status is 1 week over from anticipated implementation date. There is insignificant / no impact on delivery of benefits / savings

Score	Description	Impact Measures						
		Strategic / Policy	Operational / Business Continuity	Financial	Governance / Legal / Regulatory	Health & Safety	Reputational	Project Delivery / Savings / Benefits
				Revenue <£100k				<p>identified in business case.</p> <p>This is linked to Financial / Strategic / Reputational impacts.</p>

Score	Probability	Criteria
5	Very likely 75% +	<p>Systematic Risks – Local evidence indicating very high probability of occurrence if no action / controls are in place. Risk is highly likely to occur daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly.</p> <p>Emerging Risks – National and Global evidence indicating very high probability of occurrence on local communities if no action / controls are taken. Risks are highly likely to occur within the next 5 years.</p>
4	Likely 51-75%	<p>Systematic Risks – Local evidence indicating high probability occur in most circumstances with near misses regularly encountered e.g. once or twice a year.</p> <p>Emerging Risks – National and Global evidence indicating high probability of occurrence on local communities if no action / controls are taken. Risks are likely to occur within the next 5-10 years.</p>
3	Possible 26-50%	<p>Systematic Risks – Local evidence indicating distinct possibility with circumstances regularly encountered and near misses experienced every 1-3 years.</p> <p>Emerging Risks – National and Global evidence indicating distinct probability of occurrence on local communities if no action / controls are taken. Risks are likely to occur within the next 10-15 years.</p>
2	Unlikely 6-25%	<p>Systematic Risks – Local evidence indicating low to infrequent near misses experienced every 3 + years.</p> <p>Emerging Risks – National evidence indicating low probability of occurrence on local communities if no action / controls are taken. Risks are likely to occur within the next 16-25 years.</p>
1	Very Unlikely	<p>Systematic Risks – Local evidence indicating risk has rarely / never happened or in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Emerging Risks – National evidence indicating very low probability of occurrence on local communities if no action / controls are taken. Risks are likely to occur within the next 16-25 years.</p>

Systematic Risks – Risks that are known or are becoming part of social, cultural, economic, and environmental systems that govern our lives.

Emerging Risks – Risks that are further away, less defined, and early stage of being known about.