

RISK APPRAISAL

Recommendations:

1. That elected members advise officers as to the weight they should give to the issues below, and
2. That elected members consider if there are any other external risks they wish officers to assess and seek to mitigate.

	Yes	No
Does the decision involve new expenditure?		No
Is there an existing budget for the proposed expenditure (insert code)	N/A	
What procurement level is required?	N/A	
Are there equalities impacts / an equalities assessment required?		No
Does this require a full council decision? (Reports for full council decision should still be sent to the relevant committee where possible.)	Yes	
Is there a background paper or papers? (provide links below).		No

Background

1. Your officers are committed to completing a risk register as an ongoing, iterative process. Each new activity is risk appraised and considered by staff. The potential impact, both financial and organizational, of a risk occurring contributes to the approach officers take when advising council on the appropriate level of reserves that council should maintain.
2. Officers are not the only individuals who should take part in the process of risk appraisal, and elected members have a unique role in understanding the needs of the community and of the wider area.
3. Risk appraisal is also not a value neutral process; council’s assessment of the occasions on which it may wish to intervene is, in and of itself, part of the risk appraisal. Under issues below we have listed forthcoming risks that we have concerns about as officers, but where we wish elected members to decide what weight or priority we should give to them.

Issues

4. The impact of cuts or financial changes at Northumberland County Council (NCC). The Town Council is already assuming responsibility for funding environmental work; elected members’ guidance is needed as to what extent officers should appraise or prepare to mitigate the risk of NCC withdrawing from one or more of its major services by making changes to the budget or reserves policy.
5. The impact of a major retailer or employer withdrawing from the town. The Town Council is already involved in regeneration work - elected members’ have provided guidance as to what extent officers should appraise or prepare to mitigate the risk of either a major retailer withdrawing from the town centre or a major employer withdrawing elsewhere in the town, but work is still ongoing to understand what this means with regard to the budget.
6. Loss of a key staff member; council has now had experience of the extent to which the loss of a key staff member can impact upon the council’s work, and work to mitigate this is now under way via a training policy, but officers require support as they develop means of assessing the success of this mitigation.
7. Elected members have made clear their concern that climate change is a significant risk to the community, but more guidance is required for officers as to the extent to which council can mitigate this risk.

8. Elected members are asked to consider if there are any other risks they wish officers to take account of.

Issues arising from proposal.

None.

Rationale for recommendation.

None.