

REPORT TO: Audit & Governance Board
DATE: 18th March 2026
REPORTING OFFICER: Director of HR and Corporate Affairs (Interim)
PORTFOLIO: Corporate Services
SUBJECT: Risk Management Progress Update
WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Following on from both an External Audit visit and a Corporate Peer Challenge visit, and their subsequent recommendations, the Council was advised to urgently revise its Risk Management Policy.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to share the progress that the Council has made in the subsequent months in that we have formulated and implemented a new policy, undertaken extensive training and are currently in the process of recruiting to a Risk Management Officer.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report and progress made be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 A new proposed Policy, (Appendix A) was drafted in conjunction with subject matter experts at Zurich Municipal, the Council's Insurers.
- 3.2 The aim of the Policy was to provide direction and alignment to current Risk Management processes across all the Council's Directorates.
- 3.3 Management Team approved the new proposed policy on June 3rd 2025, with Executive Board approving said policy on September 11th 2025, and final approval by the Audit & Governance Board took place on September 24th 2025.
- 3.4 Zurich Municipal also supported us on the journey to improving the Council's Risk Management by providing training across the Council in order to support the introduction of this new policy. The training was delivered to 54 senior officers, along with the Council's Management Team.
- 3.5 It was considered imperative that in order to build on this new policy and training that we pushed ahead with appointing a designated full time Risk Management Officer position.

A Business Case (Appendix B) and Job Profile (Appendix C) has now been approved.

The postholder will ultimately be responsible for embedding this new policy and developing a more mature and consistent risk culture across the Council.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A new updated and operational Policy, together with risk toolkit formation, and risk register templates has been introduced, which collectively fosters a positive risk culture that values openness, transparency, constructive challenge, and collaboration across all levels of the organisation.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An effective Policy will protect the Council's resources and reduce exposure to potential losses and liabilities.
- 5.2 In relation specifically to the Risk Management Officer post it has been agreed with the Leader and Portfolio Holder that it will be funded from the Council's contingency budget. The total estimated cost including oncosts of the HBC9 post will be around £55,000.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
- 6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy
- 6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families
- 6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
- 6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future
- 6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

There are no direct implications for any of the Council's priorities listed above.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The risk of not updating the Risk Management Policy may have led to the Council being susceptible to potential accidents and claims. This Policy has put in place a number of key objectives which will collectively ensure effective Risk Management across the organisation.
- 7.2 The new Risk Management Officer position, when filled, will strengthen further these policy and processes.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as this is a requirement of any new Council Policy being implemented.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Appendix A: Halton Borough Council Risk Management Policy

Appendix B: Business Case: Risk Management Officer

Appendix C: Job Profile: Risk Management Officer