

Strategic Risk Register - Comhairle nan Eilean Siar												
Print Date: 02 Sep, 2025												
Risk Code	Risk Event	Primary Risk Category	Secondary Risk Categories	Responsible Person	Causes	Risk Effects	Initial Risk Rating	Proximity	Existing Controls	RiskTreatment	Revised Risk Rating	Risk Action Title
SR1	4.1.5. There is a change in external political leadership with different priorities.	Political		Malcolm Burr - Chief Executive	UK and Scottish Elections. Constitutional change.	Financial cost. Fail to meet Strategic Priorities. Changing Strategic Priorities. We do not have the support of the Scottish Government or the UK Government. Economic uncertainty.	Medium	Medium-term	COSLA. Islands Growth Deal. Corporate Strategy 2022-27. Financial Plan. Constitutional documents. Good networks, including with both Governments.	Retain the threat	Medium	
SR2	4.1.4. Continued reduction of income streams.	Budget / Financial	• Political	Sandy Gomez - Chief Financial Officer	UK Budget. Scottish Government Budget. Local Government Funding. Priorities of Scottish Government.	Reduction in local services. Failure to meet statutory services. Impact on island economy. Reducing financial reserves to absorb future financial challenges. Difficulties in developing medium-term financial strategy due to One-year financial settlements from Scottish Government.	High	Current	Engagement with COSLA. Engagement through Scottish Directors of Finance. Engagement with Scottish Government on: Public Service Reform; Single Authority Model; Islands Strategic Partnership; Community Planning; Local Outcome Improvement Plan.  Engagement with UK Government on: Community Renewal Funding; other structural funding opportunities.	Retain the threat	High	
SR3	4.1.4. Unplanned expenditure / budget savings are not realised	Budget / Financial		Sandy Gomez - Chief Financial Officer	Additional cost associated with recovery and replacement of systems following the cyberattack. Agreed savings proposals not implemented. Overspends - projects, winter maintenance, mainland placements, severe weather (climate change). Increased energy costs. Pay inflation climbs above budgeted figures. Inflationary increases in contracts, e.g. bus service, air service. Health & Social Care demand. Fraud. Construction market volatility (see SR20).	Further reduction in financial reserves. Failure to meet statutory services. Necessary reduction in services required to make savings - Service Redesign. CRC Financial implications.	High	Current	Balances. Review of Earmarked Reserves to identify funds that can be released to support the budget. Monitoring and management of known budget pressures, such as Mainland Placements. Project monitoring through Investment Delivery, and by Budget Board, Service Committees and Policy & Resources Committee. E-Mentoring and external advocacy.	Retain the threat	High	
SR4	1.1.5. Destabilisation of local economy. Failure to support growth in key sectors and progression of key infrastructure projects.	Budget / Financial	• Social	Anne M Murray - Chief Officer, Economic & Community Regeneration	Drop in working age population. Rising energy costs. Drop in consumer spending. Transport link problems. Scottish Highly Protected Marine areas. Resource issues means unable to invest in specific sectors, including for significant projects. Failure to achieve equal coverage of Next Generation Broadband (NGB) connectivity to all areas of the OH. Outer Hebrides unable to influence decision makers and sources of finance (e.g. Cal Mac, Scottish and UK Government, Crown Estate).	Sector economic failure. Rise in unemployment. Lack of economic opportunity. Jobs are not created in rural areas. Decrease in population. Transport infrastructure restricts economic growth.	Medium	Current	Support to new and existing businesses. Support to traditional industries such as crofting, agriculture, textiles and fisheries. Capital Programme. Range of external funding sources being delivered and continuously levered in. Engagement and lobbying SG and UKG on island-specific issues, including transport and digital connectivity. Community Renewal Funding.	Reduce the threat	Low	Deliver the Outer Hebrides Economic Strategy

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SR6	3.1.2. Fail to ensure that appropriate Social Care Services are available for the people of the Outer Hebrides.	Social	• Reputational	Nick Fayers - Chief Officer - Health and Social Care	Insufficient resources to meet rising demand. Ageing population. Business decisions of external providers. Inefficient use of resources. Ineffective partnership working. Inadequately trained and supported management and workforce. Assets and infrastructure not fit for purpose. Service redesign. National Care Service not suitable for Island needs. Legacy of the impact of the pandemic in relation to unmet need, workforce challenges and the pressure across the health and social care system.	People are unable to live safely at home (or in a homely setting) for as long as they could. People unable to access social care services when they need it. Not achieving Best Value or best outcomes for service users/carers. Reputational damage. Poor inspection grades and outcomes.	High	Current	Development of New Strategic Plan. Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014. Integrated Corporate Management Team Restructuring of Care at Home Service. Partnership working with Housing stakeholders to deliver new campus and model of care and strategic planning for services to attract and retain workforce. Exceptional Care Board - professional, clinical and financial oversight for integrated exceptional care. Scottish Government Island Assessment Group for HSC. Integrated service delivery in Barra. Corporate Asset Management Plan. Social work eligibility criteria maintained at substantial/critical. Contracts and service level agreements for all social care service providers. Workforce Plans for 2023-26 aligned to national strategy with local context reflected in the detailed actions. Robust responses to NCS consultation process and feedback through stakeholder groups.	Reduce the threat	High	
SR9	4.1.4. Partnership working failure (excluding the Adult Health & Social Care Integration Bill is addressed at SR6)	Budget / Financial	• Social	Malcolm Burr - Chief Executive	Partner fails (legally, financially, other) or is no longer able to provide their side of the partnership. Grant or funding to partner is cut.	The responsibility to deliver the service or function for which the partnership was formed, may fall to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.	Medium	Current	Community Planning Partnership. Regional Resilience Partnerships. Highlands & Islands Transport Partnership. COSLA. Service Level Agreements. Islands Scotland Act and Islands Deal Programme Director.	Retain the threat	Medium	
SR11	1.1.3. Failure to provide adequate assets and infrastructure to support long-term service objectives.	Asset / Infrastructure	• Budget/Financial	Calum Mackenzie - Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure	Insufficient revenue funding to ensure lifecycle maintenance. Lack of Capital Funding for investment. Lack of capacity in Construction Sectors. Severe weather (climate change). Construction Market Volatility (see SR20). Changes to building regulations.	Deterioration in asset condition. Not meeting regulations with regards to service delivery. Inefficient & unprioritised investment. Increased insurance claims. Increased Health & Safety risk. Increased maintenance costs (planned & reactive). Affects service delivery. Significant infrastructure damage.	High	Current	Use of Asset Management Plans to inform investment priorities. Allocation of funding and capital investment through Asset Investment Team. Health & Safety Policies. Insurance. Explore alternative sources of funding to supplement established capital programme etc.	Reduce the threat	Medium	
SR13	4.1.4. The Comhairle fail to deliver high quality continuously improving services that are reflective of local needs.	Budget / Financial	• Social	Malcolm Burr - Chief Executive	Reducing resources. Ageing population. Recruitment challenges. Failure to deliver projects. Partnership working. Political initiatives. Cyber Crime. Social unrest.	Corporate priorities are not fully delivered/supporting actions are ineffective.	Medium	Current	Local Outcome Improvement Plan. CnES Service Business Plans including Service Redesign. Public Service Improvement Framework. BVAR 2022. Public Reporting. Community Engagement. Emergency Plans. Risk Registers. Business Continuity Planning. Budget Board. Links with COSLA and Scottish Government. Digitalisation Strategy.	Retain the threat	Medium	
SR14	4.1.3. The Comhairle does not have the capacity, or a sufficient workforce, to deliver services. Rapid reduction of workforce.	Workforce	• Social	Norma Skinner - CE - Chief Officer, HR, Strategy and Performance	Reduction in revenue funding. Depopulation. Reduction in working age population. Recruitment challenges. Increased sickness absence. Industrial relations. Shortage in skilled workforce. Gender imbalances. Childcare shortages. Emergency Planning Event. Construction Market Volatility (see SR20).	Lack of effective succession planning. Vacant posts in areas containing statutory duties. Lack of engagement with staff (resulting in reduced pace of change). Strike action. Unable to deliver services. Reduced employee productivity.	Medium	Current	Organisational change. Workforce and succession planning. HR Sub-Committee. Joint Consultative Committee. Local Negotiating Committee. Employee Forum. Corporate and Service Workforce Plans. Apprenticeship Strategy. Health & Wellbeing. Business Continuity Management. Emergency Plans. Corporate Management Team. Safety Committees. Digitalisation Strategy.	Retain the threat	Medium	

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SR16	4.1.2. The Comhairle is unprepared for Climate Change. Failure to adapt to the effects of Climate Change.	Asset / Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget/Financial</li> <li>Community Safety</li> <li>Environmental</li> <li>Political</li> <li>Reputational</li> <li>Social</li> </ul>	Calum Mackenzie - Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure	Climate Change. Rising sea levels. Changing weather patterns. Increased adverse weather events. Lack of resource for mitigation and adaptation. Slowdown in climate mitigation and adaptation globally due to other pressures. Growing pressure of climate change impacts.	Unable to fulfil legislative and regulatory changes – political damage. Loss or damage to assets & infrastructure. Disruption to services and wider community. Economic activities disrupted; economic growth restricted.	High	Short-term	Climate Change Act 2009. Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting Duties. OHCPP Climate Change Working group. Comhairle Carbon Management Plan. Flood Risk Management Plan. Emergency Planning. Climate Change Senior researcher in post. Comhairle Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Development of Resilience Strategy.	Retain the threat	High	
SR17	4.1.1. Disruption to services and to the wider community.	Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social</li> </ul>	Malcolm Burr - Chief Executive	Emergency Planning Event, i.e. epidemic (affecting the UK, Scotland or Outer Hebrides) or pandemic (global). Extreme weather event. Climate Change.	Unable to deliver services. Surface water flooding, storm damage, drought, overheating. Panic and disruption, panic buying. Stressed supply chains. Increased unemployment. Recession. Community impacts. Local economy impacts. No travel. Increased absenteeism. Harmful to trade.	Medium	Current	Emergency plans and protocols. Business Continuity Plans. Corporate Management Team. Communications Officers. Preventing the further spread of infection. Environmental, organisational and general hygiene measures to reduce flu transmission. Self-isolation advice. Home-working operations.	Reduce the threat	Low	Emergency and Business Continuity Plans updated regularly and reported to necessary Committees
SR19	4.1.5. Widespread cybercrime and cyber insecurity	Technogical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget/Financial</li> <li>Reputational</li> </ul>	Calum Mackenzie - Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure	Internal threats. Rapidly evolving vulnerabilities in software or hardware. Global increase in cyberattacks. Artificial Intelligence.	Loss of data. Theft of data - misuse of personal information. Render computer systems inaccessible. Unable to deliver Comhairle services. Misinformation and disinformation.	High	Current	Investment in cyber security - new technologies, and staffing. Improved cyber resilience. Disaster Recover Plan. Cyber Risk Plan. Digital Strategy. Staff awareness through Microsoft Teams ICT Notices, mandatory Information Security Training course.	Reduce the threat	Medium	
SR20	3.1.3. Uncertainty in relation to Construction Market costings. Slow development and delivery of infrastructure investment projects.	Asset / Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social</li> </ul>	Calum Mackenzie - Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure	Construction Market Volatility: availability of key construction materials; increased tariffs; increased costs as a result of the energy crisis; product manufacture delays arising from Brexit, Covid and the war in Ukraine.	Increased challenges to local supply chain. Postponement of large-scale developments. Negative effect on local economy. Vulnerable people unable to afford the upkeep of their homes. Comhairle unable to deliver services safely, effectively and efficiently due to insufficient investment in sub-standard assets and infrastructure.	High	Current	Engagement with local supply chain to provide transparency in relation to future capital investment. Monitoring of the Capital Programme. External funding.	Reduce the threat	Medium	
SR21	3.1.5 Cost-of-living pressures	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget/Financial</li> </ul>	Malcolm Burr - Chief Executive	Rising costs including energy costs. Inflation. Market volatility.	Increased food and fuel poverty, inequalities. Increased pressure on Education. Increased pressure on partners.	High	Current	Strategic Anti-Poverty Steering Group. Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund. Community Foodbanks / Fridge. Warmbanks. Third-sector voluntary and community grant funds.	Retain the threat	Medium	
SR22	1.1.1 Local stakeholders are not ready for the significant and unprecedented uplift in construction and related activity over the next decade.	Asset / Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget/Financial</li> </ul>	Anne M Murray - Chief Officer, Economic & Community Regeneration	New activity generated by the Deep Water Terminal. Implementation of capital projects arising from the Islands Growth Deal and Community Regeneration Partnership. Renewable Energy activity and associated infrastructure, along with other regional transformation projects which have been estimated to amount to £8.4bn potential investment into the Outer Hebrides between 2025 and 2040.	Failure to meet the resource requirements essential to deliver across this suite of activity, resulting in project impacts / project delay / project failure and loss of funding. Impact on local infrastructure (roads, transport connections), services (including health), communities, existing economic sectors (for example, loss or workforce, or reduction on tourist accommodation due to competition from energy sector.	High	Current	Initiating large-scale project planning led by internal project board. Initiating Comhairle service reviews to identify & subsequently resource requirements. Major Developments Forum. Engaging with Government & Crown Estate Scotland around resource requirements.	Reduce the threat	Medium	Comhairle Major Development Oversight Board