

Committee	Dated:
Audit and Risk Management Committee	25 May 2021
Subject: Deep Dive: CR34 COVID 19	Public
Report of: Peter Lisley City of London Corporation Gold Group	For Information
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Summary

1. CR34 COVID 19, corporate risk was initially developed as officers implemented command and control structures, in accordance with London-wide resilience planning, to effectively manage the City of London Corporation 'response to' and 'support through', the global COVID-19 crisis.
2. The strategic intention was and is, that City of London Corporation staff will work with partners to preserve life and deliver our core services and ensure an effective response to, support through and recovery from, the COVID-19 outbreak. To our communities and businesses, especially those most vulnerable. These services have continued to be delivered throughout.
3. The initial risk score of CR34 Covid risk was Red 16, this rose to 24, then reduced again to 16 as England traversed through the initial phases of HM Government mitigation plans and London tier systems. The risk increased back to Red 24 as England entered the last lockdown and has remained as such since. Due to successful attainment of the various phases of HM Government road map to recovery, vaccinations and consistent uninterrupted service delivery the risk score has been reduced to Amber 12. This will continue to be monitored with the road map milestones and impacts on service delivery.
4. City of London Corporation readiness for each phase of HM Government road map is monitored through the Gold group, but operationally led by the Chief Officer responsible for the services in business as usual.
5. Previously senior management have considered splitting the CR 34 COVID-19 risk into two. One risk dealing with operational and tactical uncertainties as they relate to the City Corporation services and working with partners such as the NHS and PHE. The other risk would focus on the City Corporation's role in supporting the City of London from the pandemic. However, as this was an evolving crisis it was not clear when recovery measures would be required, it was decided that CR34 Covid risk would remain as the principal risk in relation

to this matter. This view was subsequently supported by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

6. However, as England emerges from the third lockdown there are now positive signs that the milestones in Government's Covid 19 road map are being successfully met. Senior management now consider that CR34 Covid risk should remain and focus on service delivery and ensuring a workplace safe for staff and Members.
7. As a result, senior management have now agreed that the economic and financial uncertainties brought about by COVID-19 should be included in CR02 'Loss of Business Support for the City' which currently has a risk score of Amber 12.
8. CR35 'Unsustainable Medium Term Finances risk' currently includes the City Corporation's financial recovery risk. This risk is currently scored at an Amber 12 and has recently been reduced from Red 24 following successful mitigation measures.
9. This report is for information.

Main Report

Introduction

10. This second deep dive report on CR34 COVID-19 Risk, see appendix A, has been prepared at the request of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.
11. This global crisis has impacted every country. CR34 COVID 19, is the City of London Corporation COVID crisis corporate risk and its potential impacts on service delivery. It did not and does not set out to replace, business as usual risk management. It addresses the risk at a strategic level and mitigations addressed during the crisis by the City of London Corporation in implementing HM Government Strategies and direction regionally from the London Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) when it sat in the initial phases, then London sub regional structures, initially Central then North Eastern including London Local Authority Gold (LLAG) and London Local Authority Co-ordination Centre (LLACC).
12. There are multiple risks that are outside of the control and scope of the City of London Corporation, during and recovering from this global crisis. The mitigation plan relates to those areas that are within the scope of the City of London Corporation, implementing HM Government strategies and London regional direction/co-ordination, to ensure the service delivery and wellbeing of City of London Corporation customers, staff and members.
13. This corporate risk is owned by Gold, Peter Lisley, who led the mitigation throughout, supported by the Gold group, holding individual strategic risk owners to account initially through a daily Gold group, maturing to a bi weekly structure once stability and consistency was implemented.

14. The command structure has Chief Officers and senior leaders working as thematic Silver leads, who in the same way as directorate heads hold tactical risks, hold tactical silver risks. It should be noted that Silvers are organisationally cross cutting, to facilitate a mitigation and maintenance plan during the crisis and now recovery from. These risks are moderated and mitigated by Silvers, with risks reviewed at Gold, periodically, and with relevant Chief Officers, who are not in the regular gold group.
15. The strategic intention was and is, that City of London Corporation staff will work with partners to preserve life and deliver our core services and ensure an effective response to, support through and recovery from, the COVID-19 outbreak. To our communities and businesses, especially those most vulnerable. These services have continued to be delivered throughout.
16. Previously consideration was given to splitting the CR 34 COVID-19 risk into two. One risk dealing with operational and tactical uncertainties as they relate to the City Corporation services and working with partners such as the NHS and PHE. The other risk would focus on the City Corporation's role in supporting the City of London from the pandemic. As this was an evolving crisis it was not clear when recovery measures would be required, it was agreed by senior management that CR34 Covid risk would remain as the principal risk in relation to this matter. This view was subsequently supported by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.
17. However, as England emerges from the third lockdown there are now positive signs that the milestones in Government's COVID-19 road map are being successfully met. Senior management now consider that CR34 COVID risk should remain and focus covering service delivery and ensuring a workplace safe for staff and Members.
18. As a result senior management have now agreed that the economic and financial uncertainties brought about by COVID 19 should be included in CR02 'Loss of Business Support for the City' which currently has a risk score of Amber 12.
19. CR35 'Unsustainable Medium Term Finances risk' currently includes the City Corporation's financial recovery risk. This risk is currently scored at an Amber 12 and has recently been reduced from Red 24 following successful mitigation measures.
20. This corporate risk runs parallel to the COVID-19 Gold Strategy to ensure we achieve our overall aim. In that working together with our partners, we will prioritise to deliver our critical services in a consistent manner, to support those who rely upon them in accordance with current HM Government strategy, guidance and direction, to support the regional and national response to COVID-19, minimise the impact and assist the return to normality.
21. We have focussed and delivered on our Core responsibilities:

- the maintenance of critical City of London Corporation functions and services.
 - support for the vulnerable.
 - provision of support to responding agencies as required.
22. In doing so we have provided Community leadership through the provision of assistance and information to our communities and business, maintaining confidence in the City of London Corporation; responsibilities to our staff under the relevant Health & Safety at Work legislation and assisting the return to normality.
23. The CR34 COVID-19 risk was endorsed as a corporate risk by the Committee at its meeting on 31 March 2020. The initial current risk assessment score was a Red 16 based upon the growing evidence of the spread of COVID-19 within the community, the advice and guidance from HM Government to businesses, local government and the public and the potential impact on City Corporation services.
24. Gold group continued to assess mitigation and service delivery over the last year, enabling reassessment of the score of CR34 throughout and raised it from a Red 16 to a Red 24 during the early lockdown and implications, reverting to Red 16 as mitigations come into place. It was then raised again to Red 24 as London entered the tiered then third national lockdown.
25. It has recently been reviewed again, as we are now attaining key milestones on HM Government road map and we continue to successfully maintain our service delivery in core functions. It has been reduced to Amber 12.
26. City Corporation services performed extremely well during this pandemic. The loss of income and other financial consequences, both in the short and medium term, were initially captured through CR34, however after the last deep dive these were moved to CR35 'Unsustainable Medium Term Finances risk' This risk is currently scored at an Amber 12 and has recently been reduced from Red 24 following successful mitigation measures.
27. The risk as explained has several components for the City of London Corporation resulting from its roles as an employer, a provider of critical local government and other services, especially to our most vulnerable in society.
28. Audit and Risk Management Committee will be fully sighted on corporate risk CR01 Resilience and CR24 Operational Security; under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, both the City of London Corporation as a Local Authority and the City of London Police, are Category 1 responders and therefore have statutory responsibilities under this act, they also have a responsibility to support local businesses and residential communities during a crisis.

29. The priority of this risk mitigation has been the preservation of life, in line with Article 2 of the Human Rights Act. The primacy always has and is, to focus on critical services and critical posts, to support the delivery of these services and resilience contingency planning.

30. The financial impact of this crisis and recovery from, are now embedded in both CR02 and CR35.

31. The Gold strategic Intentions throughout this crisis, has been to deliver the overall aim in that the City of London Corporation will:

- work with Public Health England and our other partners to prioritise and deliver a consistent and cohesive response on behalf of our resident, business and transient communities who rely upon critical City Corporation services.
- share appropriate and timely information with elected Members, staff, partners and our communities with the aim of minimising misinformation and increasing community confidence.
- respond alongside appropriate partners to requests for service from the public.
- provide sufficient information to our staff to enable a degree of self-sufficiency in avoidance of infection or management of the consequences of potential or actual infection.
- make efficient use of our resources.
- ensure our plans take account of the welfare of our staff in the course of business as usual activities
- deliver the City Corporation to normality as soon as is practicable

32. City of London Corporation as with its stakeholders and partners has:

- implemented structures to put in place emergency plans in response to, support through and recovery from this crisis
- implemented business continuity management arrangements
- supported information directed by Public Health England and HM Government to warn, inform and advise the public
- provided advice and assistance to businesses' and voluntary organisations
- shared Information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination
- co-operated with pan London and local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency

33. Our resilience team, supported by business continuity leads across all departments, have implemented our business continuity plans across the whole organisation, initially being in crisis now focused on recovery from. We

maintain our virtual Borough (Corporation) Emergency Control Centre, BECC to co-ordinate critical services, reporting into Gold.

34. City of London critical services have successfully been delivered in a proportionate manner by front line staff in critical posts, for example to care for our most vulnerable, manage open spaces, port health, markets, crematorium service with staff on the ground. All other staff, often also delivering critical services e.g. Town Clerks, Chamberlains and other departments, where possible working from home in compliance with HM Government directions. This has required IT services to be resilient and all staff to master new technological skills sets.
35. This has worked well, with critical services being delivered and where appropriate business as usual functionality continuing.
36. Some functions could not continue whilst HM Government implemented national 'lockdown'. Detailed planning is in place to implement each phase of HM Government road map to return services as we can.
37. Performance of critical service delivery continues to be monitored through chief officers and Gold group, in relation to performance, gaps, risk and future proofing resilience.
38. In addition to focusing on our most vulnerable and those who need our support, our focus has and is on the wellbeing of our staff, across the City of London Corporation, to enable them to provide these critical services.
39. Communications, to our staff, Members, business, communities and partners has been key in our planning, mitigation and now recovery.
40. The tragic loss of life as a result of this crisis, has been a significant concern Nationally and Regionally. This required extensive risk mitigation, to support our most vulnerable, Bart's Hospital and London region. We supported the London SCG Mortality Planning Group, providing resources to support innovative solutions. City of London Corporation Cemetery, Crematorium and coronial services have been resilient throughout this crisis.
41. Across the City of London Corporation estate, we effectively closed the estate in support of HM Government 'lockdown'. We maintained and facilitated safe and secure access, for those key workers who required access to provide critical services. We are now phasing in the safe reopening in line with HM Government updated strategies. The focus is always to ensure safe places of work and business.
42. In considering what went well:
 - All City of London core services were delivered and to a high standard
 - City of London IT infrastructure enabled effective resilience across all departments to work from home and across COVID secure sites.

- The City of London Corporation structures, were implemented well, delivering on all HM Government mitigations and core service delivery with consistency of quality and standard.

43. In considering lessons learnt:

- A wider cross departmental pool of crisis management trained officers is required.
- It was identified that a wider members cohort trained in crisis management would be useful and training is being planned. In addition a standing Emergency Committee is being considered as part of the Governance Review.
- Longevity of a crisis with a pandemic type long term impact, tested traditional short term crisis mitigation; structures worked well, but resilience and London wide impacts being considered.

Conclusion

44. Throughout this crisis we have maintained our service delivery across all critical core functions.

45. We are in readiness to reopen inline with HM Government road map, whilst maintaining contingencies in case of further peaks or lockdowns.

46. The COVID-19 crisis has been a challenging and constant changing dynamic, one that the command team have had to effectively work through and prioritise to. At all times support to our most vulnerable in society has been the focus.

Appendix

- Appendix A – CR34 Covid-19 Risk Register