

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Epping Forest and Commons Committee	Dated: 26/1/2026
Subject: Epping Forest Risk Management Update Report	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes• provides business enabling functions	Corporate Plan Outcomes: Diverse engaged communities; Vibrant thriving destination; Providing excellent services; Flourishing public spaces; Leading sustainable environment Business enabling functions: Risk Management
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment
Report author:	Joanne Hill, Environment Department

Summary

This report provides an overview of the risk management processes in place, including risk governance and the format and frequency of reporting, for the Epping Forest charity (charity number 232990) for which your Committee is responsible.

The report provides Members with assurance that these processes align with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and meet the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. A summary of the current Epping Forest risk register is included within the report, and at Appendix 1.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note:

- This report and the summary of the Epping Forest risk register provided within the report and at Appendix 1.
- The assurance of the Executive Director that all risks held by the Epping Forest charity continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

Main Report

Background

Corporate Risk Management Framework

1. The City of London's Risk Management Framework incorporates the organisation's Risk Management Policy; the Risk Management Strategy 2024-29; and Risk Management Guidance and Training.
2. The Risk Management Policy outlines the City Corporation's overarching approach and requirements in risk management.
3. The Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029 articulates the City of London Corporation's approach to identifying, mitigating, and managing risk. It ensures that the City Corporation upholds duties, delivers priorities, and supports and aligns with organisational ambitions, including our Corporate Plan 2024-2029 strategic outcomes enabling delivery, continuous improvement and innovation.
4. To support delivery of the Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029, a Corporate Risk Appetite Statement was recently approved by Court of Common Council. This Statement details the City Corporation's approach to taking risk across nine themes and will be used to aid strategic decision making. Initially, this is being applied to Corporate-level risks only, but will, in time, be rolled out to risks at all levels, including charity risks. Further details will be reported to your Committee as they become available.
5. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
 - Directly by Senior Leadership Teams as part of the regular review process.
 - In response to ongoing review of progress made against Business Plan objectives and performance measures, e.g., slippage of target dates or changes to expected performance levels.
 - In response to emerging events and changing circumstances which have the potential to impact on the delivery of services. For example, changes to legislation, resource availability, severe weather events.

Risk governance and reporting

6. For each natural environment charity, the responsible Management Committee retains oversight of risk, with officers under their relevant delegated authority in the operational management of the charity having day-to-day responsibility for managing and controlling risk.
7. The Charity Commission requires Trustees to confirm in a charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. These risks are to be reviewed annually.
8. The City of London's Risk Management Framework requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.

9. Your Committee, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, reviews the risks faced by the Epping Forest charity on a quarterly basis to gain assurance that risks are being identified and managed effectively. This reporting frequency aligns with the City of London's Risk Management Framework and exceeds the requirements of the Charity Commission.
10. Detailed risk registers are presented every six months. The two interim quarterly reports present summary risk registers, with individual risks being reported in detail by exception.

Current Position

Epping Forest Risks

11. The Executive Director Environment assures your Committee that all risks held by the Epping Forest charity continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.
12. The Epping Forest Risk Register contains 13 risks (four RED and nine AMBER), owned and managed by the Assistant Director, Epping Forest and her management team. Since the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed and updated as necessary; none of the risk scores have changed.
13. The four highest risks (rated Red) are well-controlled with actions in place to reduce the scores over time. They are receiving the close attention of the Assistant Director and her management team; more detail is provided below:
 - a. **ENV-NE-EF 017 Tree event or failure (Red 24, Possible/Extreme).** The risk was originally scored at this high level due to a backlog of works to trees which had been identified during the annual tree surveys. Since then, the survey results have been reprioritised and a scheme of works specified to address them. This will resolve the backlog of works by early 2026, using existing resources. This risk is otherwise actively managed with regular inspections of trees as well as a Severe Weather Protocol which is implemented in the event of large storms/high winds. Once the backlog of tree works is cleared, the risk score will be reassessed and reduced if appropriate.
 - b. **ENV-NE-EF 018 Deterioration of Wanstead Park Reservoirs (Red 24, Possible/Extreme).** This risk is actively managed by colleagues in the Environment Department's Engineering Team and in liaison with City Surveyor's Department. Detailed designs for dam strengthening works and the reinstatement of the up-cascade pumping system are being progressed. However, procurement for the project is on hold pending the outcome of the Panel Engineer inspection which is due in April 2026. The target date to reduce the risk has been extended to November 2026 to reflect the current situation. Further updates will be reported to this Committee as they become available.
 - c. **ENV-NE-EF 006 Failure of raised reservoirs (Red 16, Unlikely/Extreme).** This risk is scored as unlikely to occur, with an extreme impact. Officers are liaising

closely with the Environment Department's Engineering Team. Local officers inspect all reservoirs/dams on a weekly basis, and the Reservoir Engineer carries out six-monthly inspections, which control the likelihood of the risk occurring. As works on ponds, reservoirs and culverts are completed, the risk score will be reviewed with the aim of reducing the likelihood rating to 'rare', however, the impact will remain 'extreme'.

d. **ENV-NE-EF 008 Negative impacts from pests or diseases (Red 16, Likely/Major).** This risk is rated as 'likely' to occur with a 'major' impact. The risk is managed effectively by experienced officers as part of their day-to-day duties. Monitoring is undertaken on an ongoing basis and each new pest or disease identified is dealt with according to the guidance of the appropriate lead body. Officers are working with colleagues in the Environment Department's Environmental Resilience Team and the other Natural Environment sites, to develop a division-wide approach to INNS, pests and pathogens. The aim is to reduce the likelihood of the risk to 'possible' but this is a long-term target due to the ongoing presence of pests and diseases.

14. The nine Amber risks are all being managed effectively as part of day-to-day operations. Risk owners monitor each risk, remaining aware of any changes or factors that could affect it, either positively or negatively, and identify any new opportunities to better control each one.

15. Three of the Amber risks are being managed with the aim of reducing the likelihood or impact ratings, and officers are undertaking a range of appropriate actions to achieve the target scores. Full details of mitigating actions are presented to your Committee every six months in detailed risk management update reports.

- **ENV-NE-EF 004: Decline in condition of built assets and infrastructure**
Current risk score: Amber 12 (Possible/Major)
- **ENV-NE-EF 019: Decline in condition of heritage assets**
Current risk score: Amber 12 (Possible/Major)
- **ENV-NE-EF 016: Budget pressures**
Current risk score: Amber 12 (Possible/Major)

16. The remaining six Amber risks, listed below, are 'accepted' with actions in place to maintain them at their current score. These risks have been reduced to the lowest level possible at present, but officers remain aware of changes and opportunities which could enable a further reduction.

- **ENV-NE-EF 010: Negative impacts of development and encroachment**
Current risk score: Amber 12 (Possible/Major)
- **ENV-NE-EF 015: Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site**
Current risk score: Amber 12 (Possible/Major)
- **ENV-NE-EF 003: Risk for health and safety**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Unlikely/Major)
- **ENV-NE-EF 005: Declining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) condition**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Unlikely/Major)

- **ENV-NE-EF 009: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Likely/Serious)
- **ENV-NE-EF 020: Security of site, staff and the public**
Current risk score: Amber 8 (Unlikely/Major)

Corporate and Strategic Implications

17. Effective management of risk is at the heart of the City Corporation's approach to delivering cost effective and valued services to the public as well as being an important element within the corporate governance of the organisation.
18. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-29, our Departmental high-level Business Plan, charity business plans, the Natural Environment Division's core strategies, and relevant corporate strategies, including, but not limited to, the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport; and Volunteering Strategies.
19. Risks which could have a serious impact on the achievement of business and strategic objectives are proactively identified, assessed and managed in order to minimise their likelihood and/or impact.

Conclusion

20. The proactive management of risk, including the reporting process to Members, demonstrates that the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department is adhering to the requirements of the City of London Corporation's Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Epping Forest Summary Risk Register and City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

Contact

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