

Priority risks/outcomes from comprehensive risk assessment

1. Gridlock in the city

Description of risk and impact - The risk of gridlock in the city has been identified as the highest short term risk with regards to climate change. This impact is likely to become even more prevalent as car use is still increasing rather than decreasing (Projected growth in traffic flows and congestion is expected to increase by 2026 – LTP2) and the small compact nature of Portsmouth, with limited routes on and off the island means that incidents can have a higher impact than they would in other areas of the UK.

The causes of the gridlock can stem from all of the major risks identified, sea level rise can lead to road closures and flooding, hotter drier summers can lead to an increase in tourist traffic, increased emergency vehicles travelling around the city responding to heat-related health impacts and road closures due to surfaces melting. Warmer wetter winters can lead to road closures due to localised flooding and extreme weather events can lead to a range of causes from snow, storms, high winds leading to accidents and trees falling in the road to flash flooding leading to congestion and road closures.

All these causes will have an impact on our service delivery as staff may not be able to get to work or travel around the city and the vehicles that we use to deliver our services will be delayed or even stopped altogether. This may have the knock on effect of school closures or inability to stage international events effectively and reduced services to our most vulnerable residents such as care homes. Supply chains may also be impacted which can impact on our most vulnerable residents i.e. meals on wheels or catering in care homes.

What we are doing already

Transport and Street Management

- Priority routes through city have been identified and emergency plans have been put in place to deal with specific congestion incidents
- Coastal protection measures
- Developing Surface Water Management Plans
- Improvement targets to encourage people to use alternative modes of transport

Adult Social Care

- Holds a list of critical clients to ensure they communicate with those reliant on meals on wheels etc.

Children's Social Care

- Currently piloting home-working and have a case-knowledge critical list
- Identified in the Local Transport Plan 3 highlighting where contingency plans need to be in place

Suggestions for mitigation

- Effective corporate business continuity plans
- Enable effective home working
- Review locations of where fleet vehicles are stored so that they can be accessed in all conditions
- Mapping of staff home locations to ensure cover
- Enable teleconferencing and video conferencing
- Identify priority clients

- Ensure priority routes across the city (i.e. from care homes to hospitals)
- Set realistic public expectations
- Enable staff to travel at off-peak times of the day e.g. 10am, to avoid the worst congestion
- Look at the routes that get most congested in the summer, and analysing the need for transport in relation to increasing tourist numbers – where will they visit?
- Ensure that transport is fully taken into account in the developing Regeneration and Seafront strategies
- Make sure that any issues related to Children's Social care are reflected in the Children's Plan
- Use heat-resistant materials when resurfacing roads
- Look at the needs of people who don't use the car, and providing shading on cycle routes, bus stops etc.
- Research building adaptive capacity in relation to: identify transport areas most vulnerable to flooding; assessing impacts of high winds on bridges and street furniture (things that could block the road)
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategies
- Identify drain locations and conditions and improve maintenance – this might link in to the Surface Water Management Plans

2. Failure of partners to deliver services

Description of risk and impact – The council's reliance on partners to deliver services has increased over recent years and is due to continue increasing with future public spending cuts and the Total Place agenda. This reliance on partners' ranges from large, long term contracts such as Colas, Veolia and our leisure centres to small scale contracts with the voluntary and community sector. Currently 80% of care homes are contracted out to private companies, which highlights the future impact our aging population will have on increasing the council's reliance on partners. This also highlights the importance of mitigating against the risks of climate change in order to protect services to our most vulnerable residents. It is also important to recognise the issue of public expectation and the fact that if people experience a loss of service due to one of our partners not being able deliver in a changing climate, such as having a building that is not adequately flood protected or adapted to higher summer temperatures, then they will see that as a failing of the council not necessarily the partner involved.

The climate risks identified will impact our partners just as much as they will us, however the different situations will mean that for some partners we can include adaptation measures in a contract whereas for others it is an issue of influence rather than contractual obligation. There were a number of examples that came out of the recent extreme snow event in January, with regards to Colas having problems delivering services due to running out of resources (grit) and also suffering an IT failure, which demonstrated the importance of ensuring our partners have effective business continuity plans. Our partners will need to adapt to the changing climate in the same way as us, by adapting their buildings, identifying alternative transport options and using effective business continuity plans and emergency plans.

Suggestions for mitigation

- Partners to have effective Business Continuity plans
- Ensure clear responsibilities and flexibility is incorporated in to contracts so that contractors can transfer to other roles if needed.

- Raise awareness with partners on the likely impacts of climate change e.g. advice to businesses and the third sector
- Use climate change adaptation as an opportunity for partnership working e.g. social care and the health sector (NHS)
- Incorporate in to procurement process e.g. asking contractors to consider adaptation to climate change
- Raise awareness of climate impacts (around heat especially) – this could include teachers, parents and pupils, older residents, care homes, care staff etc.
- Link in to the ageing population strategy

3. Closure of frontline services

Description of risk and impact - The climate risks identified could lead to the closure of frontline services in a number of ways. With a proportion of our buildings such as schools, care homes, day centres, libraries, Housing Area Offices, etc. in the flood zones this increases the potential impact of projected sea level rise leading to flooding. Hotter drier summers may lead to overheating in buildings that aren't properly adapted and could lead to school closures or care homes and day centres having to be closed as the conditions become too uncomfortable for the residents. This could lead to our most vulnerable residents not getting the care they need in the hottest temperatures potentially leading to increased heat related illnesses. Warmer wetter winters not only raise the issue of increased localised flooding and the problem of increased pressure on Portsmouth's already straining urban drainage system, but also the issue of PCC's buildings generally being old and prone to leaking roofs and damp problems. Both of these issues may lead to buildings having to close more often than is the currently the case. The extreme snow event in January saw all Portsmouth Schools close for the first time, this was partly due to staff shortages but also because the buildings simply were not able to cope. Aside from the impact on buildings, the projected climate risks could lead to services that rely on transport having to close such as waste collection services, meals on wheels or the HID's shopping service, which would impact our most vulnerable residents.

The impact of the closure of schools obviously has a range of knock on effects with staff having to take time off which may impact the delivery of other council services or health services across the city.

Public expectations are also important and the more that climate change and changing weather patterns become the norm, the less sympathetic residents will be if our services continue to close.

Waste

- Communicate closures with residents via the website

Transport

- Have twitter pages for communicating information

Suggestions for mitigation

- Ensure adaptation is factored in during the maintenance of our buildings and not just replacing like for like
- Advice to clients on keeping safe during heatwaves
- Ensure new care homes are built to include adaptive measures such as putting plug sockets higher up in case of flooding

- Identify assets in flood zone areas and ensure they are fully adapted and have effective business continuity plans to reduce the risk of closure
- Prioritise most vulnerable clients (meals on wheels, shopping service)
- Use of personalised learning via computers available at all schools
- Ensure flexibility in using alternative locations i.e. not being reliant on using one building to function (could also help to improve partnership working)
- Ensure an emergency "heatwave plan" is in place based on the national Heatwave Plan guidance
- Ensure back-up generators are in place and make sure there are water storage mechanisms in place