CIPFA Benchmarking Guidance

	Guidance
1	Does the Executive Team/Senior Leaders have a good understanding of and regularly review the key risks facing the organisation and their likely implications for service delivery?
2	Does the Executive Team/Senior Leaders ensure that mitigating actions are implemented for significant risks where appropriate?
3	Does the Executive Team/Senior Leaders have and use appropriate risk information to guide all major decisions?
4	Does the Executive Team/Senior Leaders conduct regular reviews of the effectiveness of the risk management framework, and does this include at least an annual review of the risk management policy to ensure it remains appropriate and current?
5	To what extent do senior leaders oversee the risk management culture and are these responsibilities reviewed annually?
6	How well do Board Members/Elected Members and the Executive Team/Senior Leaders/Senior Leaders effectively challenge the risk analysis and evaluation?
7	To what extent has the remit of the Risk Management function/Risk Manager been determined, including the provision of adequate resources to deliver a 'fit for purpose' risk management framework?
8	Are the Executive Team/Senior Leaders, Board Members / Elected Members, Trustees, Ministers, etc. proactive in supporting and encouraging risk management, and does the leadership of the organisation encourage and support innovation through well managed risk taking?
9	To what extent are there mechanisms in place for the organisation to learn lessons from risk events?
10	Is there a risk policy that: - has been approved by appropriate officers and members - provides a clear and concise outline of the organisation's requirements for risk management - provides a description of where risk management is positioned as part of the organisation's overall approach to governance - specifies the accountabilities and responsibilities for managing risk - specifies the processes, methods and resources available to be used for risk management - specifies the way in which risk management performance will be measured and reported.
11	Does the risk management policy specify the organisation's risk appetite, and does this generally encourage managed risk taking throughout the organisation?
12	How well does the risk management strategy support the aims and objectives of the organisation, by delivering successful outcomes and using risk management to facilitate sufficient planning, implementation, monitoring and reviewing?
13	To what degree are staff at all levels encouraged to report incidents, challenge practices and raise risk issues?
14	To what degree do staff have properly delegated, clear and appropriate responsibility for day-to-day and specialist risk management, investigation of incidents, business continuity management and managing risks/opportunities,

	controls and contingencies?
15	Are people clear when risks and opportunities should be referred elsewhere or escalated (e.g. line management, Audit Committee, Risk Committee, Board etc.) for consideration?
16	Are arrangements in place to ensure staff receive assessment of their development needs and appropriate guidance and training, both internal and external, to rapidly address any risk management training, in terms of both induction and continuing development needs?
17	Do Board Members / Elected Members, Trustees etc. receive appropriate risk management training to help them understand and discharge their responsibilities, for the level of risk they are facing?
18	Is key risk management information communicated to the appropriate parts of the organisation, and is there a reliable communications strategy in place so that if risks materialise, those affected by the potential impact fully understand and have confidence in the remedial action that the organisation may need to take?
19	Are staff aware of the significant risks, as appropriate to their role and the level of risk they face in that role?
20	Are all key partnerships and shared services formally identified and are there consistent and common approaches to managing risks with partners, which cut across organisation boundaries?
21	Where different public sector bodies work together to manage risks for shared strategic objectives: - Has the extent to which risks can be transferred to or shared with organisations best placed to manage and / or carry them (both public and private), been assessed? - Is there an agreed protocol that defines when risk identification and assessments should be carried out jointly, and clearly establishes accountability and capacity maintained to monitor performance and take early action in the event of difficulty?
22	Are sufficient budgetary resources provided to fund the implementation of the risk management strategy, and are additional budgetary resources provided when additional risk activities are cost-effective?
23	Have active risk management measures, supported by appropriate resources, been taken to minimise insurable risks?
24	Does the organisation have appropriate tools for: 1. Collecting risk information? 2. Analysing risk information? 3. Recording risk information? 4. Communicating risk information?
25	Are there formal links between risk management and other key business processes, for example decision making, major investment decisions, strategic planning, financial planning, policy making and review, policy and project implementation and performance management?
26	Are all significant risks and existing control and contingency measures identified: - to reflect the internal and external context? - within clear risk assessment boundaries pre-identification? - to take account of different procedures, tools and techniques? - to link to the achievement of corporate, departmental or service objectives? - allowing the causes and consequences of risk to be identified? Is 'horizon scanning' carried out to identify emerging risks and is the identification of opportunities embedded within the organisation? Are risk evaluation criteria

	applied consistently across all categories of risk, with evaluation carried out in terms of 'likelihood' and 'impact'? Are risks ranked for (if appropriate) gross risk, net risk and target risk?
27	Are there adequate early warning indicators in place to alert people to the potential impacts of risks - that are acted upon, with a mechanism to check that such indicators remain fit for purpose?
28	Do the options for mitigating the risk include consideration of avoidance, modification, transfer and retention of risk (and, in the case of opportunities, seeking to exploit) and are the key risk control and contingency measures regularly assessed to see if they are in place and effective?
29	Are the key outputs from the risk management process: 1. Communicated to all relevant people? 2. Reviewed (at a later date) to ensure they remain valid, reflect changes in the context, and support better informed decisions?
30	Are appropriate arrangements in place to respond to Information Risk?
31	Is there an effective Business Continuity Management System in place?
32	Has the organisation established arrangements for escalation of risks to ensure that it and Board Members / Elected Members, Trustees, Ministers etc. have appropriate, up to date information on risks?
33	Can you evidence that all strategic risks are managed effectively - without incurring disproportionate risk management costs or experiencing excessive losses? Are there arrangements to ensure that opportunities are taken and managed cost effectively - without incurring disproportionate risk management costs or experiencing excessive losses?
34	Is there evidence that staff, particularly managers, are confident with risk and use it to deliver the outcomes the organisation wants?
35	To what extent does assurance information cover all significant risks, key controls and their effectiveness?
36	Is an assessment of the performance of the organisation's risk management arrangements reported and to what extent is risk information disclosed to stakeholders?
37	Is there a detailed statement, that is independently reviewed, about whether risk management is effective and carried out as approved, and is the framework regularly and independently reviewed?
38	Is there demonstrable evidence that risk management is contributing to better - delivery outcomes - better financial outcomes - supporting the reputation of the organisation?
39	Is there demonstrable evidence that risk management approaches are having a beneficial effect on how risks to the public are being managed?