

Toolkit

Business Risk Assessment Template

Understanding the different risks that you face as a business is key to deciding what, if any, proportionate steps you might want to take to mitigate them. The likelihood of many of these risks will be outside of your control, however there are still steps that can be taken to help reduce the impact on your business, your staff and your customers. By working with neighbouring premises, you will likely be able to achieve more.

The National Risk Register sets out the assessment of the likelihood and potential impacts of a range of different risks that may directly affect the UK. The publication of information on these risks is intended to encourage public debate on security and help organisations, individuals, families and communities, who want to do so, to prepare for emergencies. This informs the London Community Risk Register, and the council and its partners localise it to produce the Westminster Borough Risk Register.

These have been summarised below and presented in a way that will help you understand the risks your business may typically face, as well as some of the local context.

Risk		Westminster Context	Business Risk Assessment			
Risk Area	Example Hazard		How likely is this to impact your business?	What would the impact be?	Do you have existing control measures?	Do you need to do more?
Failure of utility infrastructure	This might be a failure, in the gas, electricity, water or telecommunications supply to your building or business gas supply.	In 2019 there were 30 occasions where the council was notified of utilities failures impacting multiple premises. Many of these are short-lived, e.g. 4-8 hours. However, the Kingsway fire in 2015 resulted in many hundreds of premises being without gas or electricity for three days.				
Denial of Access to the Premises	There are many events that might not directly impact your premises but might prevent you from accessing your premises – e.g. a nearby crime scene, fire or gas leak.	In 2019 there were 18 occasions where the Council were notified of incidents that resulted in evacuations or reduced access to properties. Many of these are short-lived, e.g. 4-8 hours. In 2020, an unexploded WW2 bomb caused the evacuation of a part of Soho for 24 hours.				
Transport Disruption	There are many events, ranging from road traffic collisions, protests or floods that can cause transport disruption.	Transport disruption is commonplace in Westminster. It has a greater impact on businesses that are more reliant on deliveries or vehicular access or that are near sites that attract regular disruption. Large scale protests, e.g. Extinction Rebellion, can cause disruption over an extended period.				
Disease Hazards	Pandemic disease, or influenza is infrequent but, as 2020 showed, can have a very significant impact resulting in staff absence; changed working practices and changed legislative frameworks.	There is no greater risk to Westminster than there is anywhere else in London of an outbreak originating within the city.				

Business Risk Assessment Template (continued)

Risk		Westminster Context	Business Risk Assessment			
Risk Area	Example Hazard		How likely is this to impact your business?	What would the impact be?	Do you have existing control measures?	Do you need to do more?
Environmental Health Risks	<p>There are a range of environmental or public health risks caused by hazardous materials.</p> <p>For most businesses, food supply contamination and legionella are the most relevant.</p>	<p>The most likely to impact businesses relate to food supply contamination or a legionella outbreak. However, a disease may spread more rapidly and be more difficult to contain due to the high density of population.</p>				
Major Events/ Protests	<p>There are regular major events, protests, marches and rallies across the borough which reach 100,000+ attendees.</p>	<p>While the council and police work hard to plan for events and seek to manage the impact of protests on businesses – they can be significant. Businesses near locations that might be a focus for a protest, e.g. embassies or government departments, or on regular routes for marches are liable to be impacted to a much greater extent.</p>				
Public Disorder	<p>Public disorder can be a threat to the safety of staff and customers; cause damage to property and vehicles and/or increase fear and anxiety.</p>	<p>There are regular protests, marches and rallies across the borough - these are generally peaceful but do have the potential for public disorder.</p> <p>Other violent incidents, such as between gangs, can have a similar impact.</p>				
Industrial action	<p>While industrial action can impact on a wide range of industries and services, the biggest impact arises from those that impact on critical infrastructure upon which many people rely.</p>	<p>Over recent years industrial action on the transport network, has been the most common scenario where industrial action has had an impact on Westminster.</p> <p>For example, in 2016-2018 industrial action on rail networks caused significant disruption over many months.</p>				

<p>Natural Hazards</p>	<p>Natural hazards include weather events, such as high winds and snow, and also groundwater or surface flooding.</p> <p>They can give rise to transport disruption or damage infrastructure but can also directly impact your premises and property or prevent access for staff or customers.</p>	<p>Storm Ciara. Feb 2020</p> <p>Staff may experience transport difficulties and roads may be closed.</p> <p>The council manages the gritting of core roads via the Westminster winter service plan.</p> <p>Much of Westminster is heavily urbanised with effective drainage systems, however significant prolonged rainfall across the city could cause localised surface water flooding.</p>				
<p>Terrorist threat</p>	<p>The national threat level is set by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre.</p> <p>Terrorist attacks cause harm to people and/or damage to property. They will also give rise to crime scenes and disruption.</p> <p>An attack could directly impact your staff, customers or premises or occur nearby.</p>	<p>There are numerous high-profile buildings or crowded places in Westminster, that may prove attractive to a terrorist. There have been a number of successful and attempted terrorist attacks in Westminster.</p> <p>Many factors impact on the risk to a premises, including the nature of the business, its clientele, its location and its surroundings. Being well prepared and having effective protective security measures can help reduce this.</p>				
<p>Cyber Security (Infrastructure)</p>	<p>Cyber attacks can disrupt systems and result in the theft or loss of data, and damage consumer trust.</p> <p>A cyber attack might also impact on financial, transport or utility networks.</p>	<p>There is no greater risk to Westminster than there is anywhere else in London. There is no specific physical location a cyber-attack would be more likely to take place and such an attack is not constrained to physical borders.</p>				