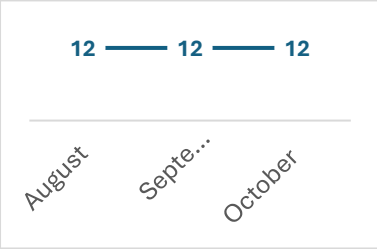
Item 4.2 – Strategic Risk Register
Strategic Risk 4

<table>
<tr><th>Risk Reference and Link to Strategic Priority</th><th colspan="2">Risk Description</th></tr>
<tr><td>SRR4

Strategic Priority 6

“Tackling the public health effects of climate change.”</td><td colspan="2">There is a risk that: we fail to effectively mitigate the public health impacts of climate change on the Welsh population

Caused by:
1. Failure to identify and monitor climate change threats to health
2. Failure to effectively inform actions of partner organisations and policymakers so that health is considered as part of their climate action
3. Failure to effectively engage with our population, partner organisations and policymakers
4. Failure to prioritise resources to actions that make a measurable difference to the health of our population
5. Insufficient leadership in Wales to achieve a joined up and aligned system response to climate change.
6. Failure to take co-ordinated actions with partner organisations across the UK 4 Nations and advocate for UK climate policies that protect and promote health

Resulting in: Failure to prevent harm to the health of our population as a result of climate change, resulting in worse health outcomes and widening of health inequalities.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Executive Director Sponsor</td><td colspan="2">National Director of Policy and International Health</td></tr>
<tr><td>Assuring Committee</td><td colspan="2">Knowledge, Research and Information Committee</td></tr>
<tr><td>Trend</td><td>Current Position of Risk Including Risk Appetite and Risk Decision</td><td>Position Statement – Executive Director Update</td></tr>
<tr><td>
</td><td><table><tr><td>Open</td><td>PHW is open to consider all potential options, subject to continued application and/or establishment of controls recognising that there could be a high risk of exposure.</td></tr></table>
Current Score =12
Target Score = 6
Risk Appetite Level Applied = Open, therefore, within tolerance level.</td><td>October 2026
A baseline assessment of resourcing identified that current resourcing is insufficient to deliver the strategic priority, particularly as climate threats to health are of increasing concern. The new Programme for Government has a strong climate and nature focus and the pace and scale of the challenge and expectations to deliver are increasing significantly. El Nino impacts are as yet unknown but are expected to include increased</td></tr>
</table>

		rainfall and storms in early winter, with colder temperatures towards the end of winter. Moreover, next summer is expected to be warmer. Therefore, the focus of current actions is 1) prioritising activity to focus on preparing for threats in the coming year 2) reviewing how capacity for climate action can be increased 3) refreshing our strategic objectives to align with the new Programme for Government 4) developing our strategic plan to align with the Programme for Government, respond to emerging threats and address priorities agreed with Welsh Government and partners. As of 1 October 2026, the risk score remains unchanged at 12 and will be reviewed at our November Climate Change Programme Board meeting. **August 2026** There has been increased demand associated with climate-related incidents, including multiple heatwave events and recent wildfires, which have required significant operational response and diverted capacity from proactive to reactive action. Debriefing and a staff survey have identified learning. Whilst the summer of 2026 was our hottest on record, our future summers are expected to be hotter. El Niño is expected to cause significant disruption, with an

		increase in wet and stormy conditions in the UK in autumn and early winter and increased temperatures in summer. The risk score has been increased to reflect the increased delivery risk to our services and a reputational risk to the organisation if we are unable to mount a sufficient response to tackling the public health effects of climate change. There is also a recognised gap between our capacity to deliver and the expectations and requirements of the wider system. The next step is to identify how we bridge this gap. The future direction of the programme will need to reflect the forthcoming Programme for Government, which is due to be published in September.

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C1:** Failure to identify and monitor climate change threats to health			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Internal Sources of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
C1.1	Climate change and health surveillance system in development, led by CDSC. Active	Climate Change Surveillance - sub-group of Climate Change Programme Board.	Regular updates from the Surveillance Subgroup to Climate Change Programme Board

[1] Three Lines of Defence Model
First – Operational Management control of organisational risks
Second – Risk management and compliance functions, reporting to senior management
Third – Internal audit to provide assurance.

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C1:** Failure to identify and monitor climate change threats to health			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Internal Sources of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
	engagement with surveillance partners across the 4 Nations and international system.		

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C2:** Failure to effectively inform actions of partner organisations and policymakers so that health is considered as part of their climate action			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Source of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
C2.1	Active engagement and collaboration with partner organisations, including Welsh Government, Future Generations Office and the wider public health system in Wales.	Climate Change Programme Board	Partnership working is being considered through one of the Climate Change Programme Board Subgroups, with updates shared at Climate Change Programme Board. Climate Change Programme Board meets bi-monthly.
C2.2	Climate Change is part of our Policy Advocacy Programme priorities	Policy Advocacy Programme Board	Post election, advocacy for climate action is now part of Climate Change Programme Board's business as usual, connecting with organisation-wide advocacy work.

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C3:** Failure to effectively engage with our population, partner organisations and policymakers			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Source of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
C3.1	Ongoing active engagement and collaboration with the public, partners and policy makers	Climate Change Programme Board	Climate Change Programme Board meets bi-monthly and considers this risk as a standing agenda item.

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C3:** Failure to effectively engage with our population, partner organisations and policymakers			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Source of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
	regarding the threat to the public from climate change as part of the workplan.		
C3.2	Ongoing collaboration with primary care through Greener Primary Care Team and programme.	Climate Change Programme Board	Climate Change Programme Board meets bi-monthly and considers this risk as a standing agenda item.
C3.3	Climate Change is part of our Policy Advocacy Programme priorities	Policy Advocacy Programme Board	Post election, climate policy advocacy has moved to become part of business as usual for Climate Change Programme Board. Policy Advocacy Programme Board's focus will now move to establishing longer-term ways of working, rather than focusing on advocacy for specific subjects.

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C4:** Failure to prioritise resources to actions that make a measurable difference to the health of our population			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Source of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
C4.1	Distributive leadership model within PHW aiming to ensure that all colleagues have the skills and time to ensure that climate sensitive practice is part of their day job.	Climate Change Programme Board	Climate Change Programme Board to receive updates on action to build staff capacity from one of the subgroups. Climate Change Programme Board meets bi-monthly, and risk is a standing agenda item.
C4.2	Work underway to understand resource allocation to each of the strategic priorities.	Business Executive Team	This has been discussed at Business Executive Team meeting. Resourcing for climate change will form part our organisational Optimisation Programme.

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C5:** Insufficient leadership in Wales to achieve a joined up and aligned system response to climate change.			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Source of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
C5.1	This is dependent upon broader system recognition in the threat of climate change to health and partners' allocation of sufficient resources. Engagement with Welsh Government and partner organisations through national meetings and working with partner organisations to support a system approach.	Climate Change Programme Board	Climate Change Programme Board meets bi-monthly and considers system response.

Internal System of Controls – Linked to 'Caused By' section of Risk Description and Source of Assurance [1] **C6:** Failure to take co-ordinated actions with partner organisations across the UK 4 Nations and advocate for UK climate policies that protect and promote health			
Control Reference	**Internal Control**	**Source of Assurance**	**How/When is it monitored?**
C6.1	Active engagement with 4 Nation colleagues to ensure that our practice is aligned where feasible and we are learning from others' experiences and advocating for the Welsh population.	Climate Change Programme Board	Climate Change Programme Board meets bi-monthly and receives updates on 4 Nations working.

Gaps in Assurance / Action Plans for the cause C1 Failure to identify and monitor climate change threats to health						
Reference	**What Action?**	**How will we measure efficacy?**	**How will this action impact/mitigate the risk?**	**Who is Responsible?**	**By When?**	**Progress**
AP1.1	Climate change programme board and associated sub-groups have mechanisms in place to ensure that we are actively horizon scanning, monitoring, and taking action on climate related threats to health	Log to capture threats to health developed and monitored by CCPB	Regular identification of the risks and monitoring of our actions to mitigate them.	Sumina Azam and Meng Khaw	Q4 2025-26	October 2026: El Nino remains a concern and a staff briefing is currently being developed following a Met Office briefing on the subject. August 2026: We are working with partners at Exeter University as part of our Net + partnership to strengthen our horizon scanning capability. We have undertaken de-briefing sessions and surveys with staff in relation to our heatwave response in order to identify lessons learnt.

Gaps in Assurance / Action Plans for the cause C2 Failure to effectively inform actions of partner organisations and policymakers so that health is considered as part of their climate action						
Reference	**What Action?**	**How will we measure efficacy?**	**How will this action impact/mitigate the risk?**	**Who is Responsible?**	**By When?**	**Progress**
AP2.1	Proactive engagement with policy makers on the climate change agenda	Increased engagement with policy makers and a greater reference to health within the climate change agenda	Strengthen the relationship between health and climate change in the policy arena	Sumina Azam	Q4 2025-26	October 2026: We have been approached by Welsh Government in relation to early engagement on the Climate and Nature Action Plan (CNAP), and are in active discussion with NRW about how we can support the delivery of the plan. August 2026: We are meeting with policy makers frequently and have been invited to input into the WG Climate and Nature Action Plan. We worked closely with partner organisations as part of our heatwave response, to ensure that health was a key consideration.

Gaps in Assurance / Action Plans for the cause C3 Failure to effectively engage with our population, partner organisations and policymakers						
Reference	**What Action?**	**How will we measure efficacy?**	**How will this action impact/mitigate the risk?**	**Who is Responsible?**	**By When?**	**Progress**
AP3.1	Review of formal arrangements with key strategic partners, including UKHSA, IANPHI, and NRW	Joint actions / approach on climate and health.	Strengthen opportunities for effective collaboration with joint aims.	Sumina Azam	Q4 2025-26	October: Discussions remain on-going (including with Welsh Government) in relation to an MOU with UKHSA. August 2026: Draft plans have been received from UKHSA and are currently under review. We have been asked to provide WG with advice to inform their position.

Gaps in Assurance / Action Plans for the cause C4 Failure to prioritise resources to actions that make a measurable difference to the health of our population						
Reference	**What Action?**	**How will we measure efficacy?**	**How will this action impact/mitigate the risk?**	**Who is Responsible?**	**By When?**	**Progress**
AP4.1	Development of a route map for Strategic Priority 6 (Climate and health) to enable identification of resource requirements for delivery.	Route maps to be reviewed and approved by Executive Team, with resourcing a consideration.	Resource requirements will also enable identification of resource gaps.	Sumina Azam / Rebecca Masters	Q2 2025-26	October: Strategic objectives are currently being refreshed following publication of Programme for Government and resourcing discussions are underway. Aligned to this, work is underway to develop our Strategic Plan for 2027-30. August 2026: The route map for SP6 is currently under review and a baseline assessment of capacity has been completed. This has been discussed with the Executive Team. Next steps are to understand the next programme for government and to understand the capacity gaps.

Gaps in Assurance / Action Plans for the cause C5: Insufficient leadership in Wales to achieve a joined up and aligned system response to climate change.						
Reference	**What Action?**	**How will we measure efficacy?**	**How will this action impact/mitigate the risk?**	**Who is Responsible?**	**By When?**	**Progress**
AP5.1	Discussions with Welsh Government, and participation in Welsh national climate change meetings to enable system alignment and joined up action to protect health.	Health considered as part of climate action by public bodies.	Participation will enable advocacy for a population health perspective.	Sumina Azam / Rebecca Masters	Q4 2025-26	October 2026: Discussions are on-going with Welsh Government and wider partners, and a small workshop is planned for November to identify priorities for our strategic plan and align resourcing. August 2026: There is a need to review the wider programme architecture of the climate change work in Wales to ensure appropriate representation.

Gaps in Assurance / Action Plans for the cause C6 Failure to take co-ordinated actions with partner organisations across the UK 4 Nations and advocate for UK climate policies that protect and promote health						
Reference	**What Action?**	**How will we measure efficacy?**	**How will this action impact/mitigate the risk?**	**Who is Responsible?**	**By When?**	**Progress**
AP6.1	Engagement with 4N, FPH, WHO and IANPHI colleagues, along with international organisations regarding the climate and health agenda.	Review of national and international partnership landscape, including regular updates to CCPB	Alignment of work and methods and sharing of good practice.	Sumina Azam / Rebecca Masters	Q4 2025-26	October: Engagement continues and Public Health Wales recently completed a rapid review of international literature on extreme heat in health settings. August 2026: Engagement continues, with recent international learning regarding heatwave experiences which will inform our own response to managing extreme heat.