

Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee

8 November 2021

Quarterly Review of Corporate Risk Management

Report by Director of Finance and Support Services

Summary

This Committee has responsibility for oversight of the Council's risk management arrangements.

The risk relating to the impact working from home may have on the mental and physical wellbeing of staff has been removed as staff have the option to safely utilise council buildings. The risk that children's services will fail to make the necessary improvements to progress from the previous 'inadequate' rating has reduced in likelihood due to the outcome of the Ofsted monitoring visit.

All future Risk Management Lunch 'n' Learn sessions will be delivered as a webinar and this course is now available for staff in Districts and Boroughs at nil cost. The follow-on course (Risk Management in Practice) has been designed for face-to-face delivery using a combination of instruction via PowerPoint and syndicate/group work and will involve staff working through the WSCC risk management process using a generic scenario.

Recommendation

- (1) The Committee is asked to review the information detailed in the report and current Corporate Risk Register, and provide comment as necessary
-

Quarterly update

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Committee has responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of risk management arrangements. That role, together with a description of the Council's approach to risk management, is set out in the Constitution at Part 4 Section 4. It covers the allocation of responsibilities, including the quarterly review of risk management activity.

2 Background and context

- 2.1 During the preceding quarter there have been the following changes to the corporate risk register.

Risk No	Risk	Action	Reason	Current Score
CR69	Children's services will fail to deliver an acceptable provision to the community	Risk severity reduced	Due to outcome of recent Ofsted monitoring visit	15
CR71	Mental and physical wellbeing (and emotional resilience) of staff due to requirement to work from home	Risk closed	Trigger/cause (instructed to work from home) is no longer relevant, and any controls are embedded in BAU	n/a

2.2 The following table summarises risks on the corporate risk register with the current severity graded above the tolerance threshold:

Risk No	Risk	Score - Prev Qtr	Score
CR39a	Cyber-security	25	25
CR58	Failure of social care provisions	25	25
CR72	Children and young people will not be cared for in settings that best meet their needs	16	16

2.3 The corporate risk register continues to be reviewed quarterly by ELT, with any actions promptly addressed.

2.4 The directorate risk registers have been reviewed at least quarterly by each Director and their management team, with support from the Corporate Risk Manager. The Corporate Risk Manager has continued to engage quarterly with Executive Directorate teams to discuss corporate and other directorate/service risks, and risk governance.

2.5 Operational COVID-19 risks are considered and managed within the services, either through the production of new risks or applying the ramifications to an existing risk and its assessment. In addition, specific corporate COVID-19 risks are captured and controlled by the councils COVID-19 response team. The Corporate Risk Manager presents a summary of risks by themes and workstreams to ELT monthly for consideration.

The table below summarises the key corporate COVID-19 risk.

Risk
Increasing/unmanageable workload for staff due to anticipated increase in support to LTP
Community Hub staff recruited on FTC's will seek alternative/permanent employment

2.6 Capital Programme risks are reported through their respective programme board. There is ELT representation on these boards ensuring that significant concerns to the successful delivery of the programmes and/or associated projects are discussed, communicated to ELT, and reflected in the corporate risk register if required. The Corporate Risk Manager has continued to provide support to projects and programmes, and their risk registers.

- 2.7 The Risk Management Lunch 'n' Learn sessions will continue to be delivered as a webinar beyond October 21, and the course content has been amended to facilitate this delivery method. This course is now available for staff in Districts and Boroughs at nil cost. The follow-on course (Risk Management in Practice) has been designed for face-to-face delivery using a combination of instruction via PowerPoint and syndicate/group work and will involve staff working through the WSCC risk management process using a generic scenario. To support staff in better managing their risks the Corporate Risk Manager has produced a variety of resources, which have been communicated to all staff and added to the WSCC Risk Management SharePoint site.
- 2.8 The quality and currency of information contained in the corporate and directorate risk registers will continue to be reviewed and updated. The Corporate Risk Manager is continuing to challenge whether identified actions will sufficiently address the concerns, and within a suitable timeframe.
- 2.9 Ongoing activities the Corporate Risk Manager is undertaking to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with best practice include:
- Attendance at TMG (chairing when requested) and Smarter Working Stakeholder Group
 - Review of Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) risks against TMG risk register
 - Attend the South East Risk Managers Group to share best practice of risk management in the public sector across various local authorities
 - Attend appropriate seminars held by professional bodies e.g. Alarm, CMI
 - Support projects and programmes to provide assurance and support on robust governance
 - Engage and support Executive Directors, Directors, service managers and their teams on capturing and communicating risk
 - Attendance at/facilitating various internal boards, meetings and working groups
- 2.10 At this stage, there will be no additional resources required to facilitate the embedding/management of risk and future actions as current support within the organisation is sufficient. The Corporate Risk Manager is conducting risk workshops and risk training sessions in existing management meetings or during lunchtimes where possible to mitigate resource and scheduling conflicts. However, the 'Risk Management in Practice' course will take place during working hours, and participants will be responsible for ensuring their attendance doesn't significantly impact their role requirement.
- 2.11 The committee is asked to consider the information in this report and provide comment as necessary.

3 Risk implications and mitigations

- 3.1 The subject of the report is the corporate risk register. It would be contrary to the interests of the Council not to ensure that its risk management processes and registers were not aligned to Risk Management Strategy.

4 Policy alignment and compliance

- 4.1 Equality duty and human rights assessment. An Equality Impact Report is not required for this decision as it is a report dealing with internal and procedural matters only, although the Council's responsibilities in relation to the public sector equality duty will be one element of the approach to risk management.

Katharine Eberhart

Director of Finance and Support Services

Contact Officer: Fraser Pake, Corporate Risk and Business Planning Manager,
033 022 28246

Appendices

Appendix A – Corporate Risk Register

Background papers

None