

Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee

25 September 2024

Quarterly Review of Corporate Risk Management

Report by Interim Director of Finance and Support Services

Summary

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

The risks of being unable to recruit and retain enough qualified/experienced staff and failing to provide adult social care have both decreased in likelihood.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to review the information detailed in the report 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 Since the previous Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee (RAAC) on 8 July 2024 there have been the following changes to existing risks in the Corporate Risk Register (CRR). The full CRR is included in Appendix A.

Risk No	Risk	Action	Reason	Current Score
CR11	Recruitment and retention	Risk severity reduced	Due to progress of mitigations and risk focussing more on internal actions, as opposed external factors	20

Risk No	Risk	Action	Reason	Current Score
CR58	Failure of social care provisions	Risk severity reduced	Due to progress of mitigations and embedded reactive processes	12

2.2 The following table summarises risks on the CRR with the current severity graded above the tolerance threshold. Full details of the mitigations in place are set out in the full CRR at Appendix A.

Risk No	Risk	Summary of Progress	Score – Prev Qtr	Score
CR22	Financial sustainability	Evidence base being prepared for influencing next Spending Review in early 2025. Ongoing engagement through various networks and across all finance disciplines, and at all officer levels. SE7 151s meet regularly, Director attends quarterly Society of County Treasurers meetings. Ongoing monthly reporting to the Executive Leadership team (ELT) and Members to discuss pressures emerging and management action needed. Monthly update to Cabinet Member for Finance and Property and Leader. Training session completed with Scrutiny Committees in March regarding interpretation and understanding of the Performance and Resources Report. 2025/26 budget planning process commenced, including regular updates to ELT and Cabinet.	25	25

Risk No	Risk	Summary of Progress	Score – Prev Qtr	Score
CR39a	Cyber-security	Working with services to ensure sufficient business continuity arrangements are in place and tested to ensure continuity of critical services if subject to a cyber-attack. Training needs assessment and penetration test regularly undertaken, and programme of education has been developed to ensure Information Security resources are appropriately skilled and corporate practices followed align to National Cyber Security Centre guidance.	25	25
CR11	Recruitment and retention	Recommendations arising from the recent Task and Finish Group looking at careers and skills are now being implemented and these include actions to develop new supply chains and supporting recruitment into hard to recruit roles. Initial benchmarking of salaries completed which broadly indicates parallels across Local Authorities. Improvements in recruitment now being seen throughout the council.	25	20
CR78	Oracle Implementation	Regular reviews of programme progress by ELT, Cabinet, Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee and Internal Audit. Review outcomes of phased user testing. Collaborate with stakeholders to implement effective training.	20	20

3 Risk de-escalation or closure

3.1 There have been no risks either de-escalated or closed during this reporting period.

4 Risk Management Framework

- 4.1 The CRR continues to be reviewed quarterly by ELT, with any actions promptly addressed. In addition, risk is now considered as part of the quarterly ELT strategy sessions.
- 4.2 The directorate risk registers have been reviewed at least quarterly by each Director/Assistant Director and their management team, with support from the Corporate Risk Manager. The Corporate Risk Manager has continued to engage quarterly with Directorate leadership teams to discuss corporate and other directorate/service risks, and risk governance.
- 4.3 The quality 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 period.
- 4.4 Capital risks are managed through various project hubs and the Capital programme, all reporting to the Capital and Assets Board. The Board is chaired by the Director of Law and Assurance with other relevant ELT and senior officers in attendance and ensures that significant concerns to the successful delivery of the programme and/or capital 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 the management of their risks.
- 4.5 Risk Management Lunch 'n' Learn sessions are being delivered as an online seminar every 2 months which is also available for staff in Districts and Boroughs, and other partnering organisations, at zero cost. 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.
- 4.6 At this stage, there will be no additional resources required to facilitate the embedding/management of risk and future actions as the 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. All risk management training will take place during working hours, and participants will be responsible for ensuring their attendance does not significantly impact their role requirement.

5 Risk Activities

- 5.1 Significant activities the Corporate Risk Manager has been undertaking to support continuous improvement and alignment with best practice include:
 - Quarterly attendance at ELT Strategy sessions
 - Quarterly attendance at all directorate management team meetings to review existing corporate and service level risks, including horizon scanning discussions to identify additional concerns
 - Provision of risk management support to Assistant Directors and Heads of Service

- Support to projects and programmes to provide assurance and support on robust governance
- Inclusion of risks into the business planning process
- Increased collaboration with Internal Audit to ensure the risk management framework remains robust and aligned with best practice, and to support discussions and outcomes of ELT risk strategy sessions
- Design and delivery of an internal project management course (apprenticeship pathway) to ensure risk is considered throughout the project lifecycle
- Support to the Southeast Risk Managers Group to share best practice of risk management across various local authorities
- Regular collaboration with Resilience and Emergencies Team and Fire and Rescue Service colleagues to review the corporate risk profile against National and Regional (Community) Risk Registers

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The committee is asked to consider the information in this report and provide comment, as necessary.

7 Risk implications and mitigations

- 7.1 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 aligned to Risk Management Strategy.

8 Policy alignment and compliance

- 8.1 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.

Mike Suarez

Interim Director of Finance and Support Services

Contact Officer: Fraser Pake, Corporate Risk and Business Planning Manager, 033 022 28246, fraser.pake@westsussex.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix A – WSCC Corporate Risk Register

Background papers

None