

Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee

23 July 2020

Quarterly Review of the Corporate Risk Register

Report by Director of Finance, Performance and Procurement

Executive Summary

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

Risks relating to financial sustainability, cyber security and social care provision have increased in significance due to COVID-19 ramifications and adjusted working practices. However, concerns relating to leadership, governance and culture (including compliance), data protection and the Children's Trust have lessened because of mitigating actions.

Corporate COVID-19 risks are being captured and monitored/managed by ELT with operational COVID-19 concerns managed within services/workstreams.

Risk Management Lunch 'n' Learn sessions will now be delivered as a webinar with the course content modified to facilitate this delivery method. The follow-on course (Risk Management in Practice) has been postponed indefinitely and will commence once it is safe to do so.

Recommendations

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

1. Introduction

1.1 The Committee has responsibility 'to monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the County Council'. 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 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the March RAAC did not take place, although a paper was circulated prior to cancellation. An informal and virtual meeting between RAAC members took place in March, and they were given the opportunity to submit any questions relating to the corporate risk register and supplementary report. Comments were responded to via the Democratic Services Officer who supports the committee.

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

- Corporate risk #7 - Non-compliance and lack of standardisation in some systems and processes
 - Severity decreased from 16 to 12
 - Due to effects of ongoing mitigating actions
- Corporate risk #22 - Financial sustainability of council services
 - Severity increased from 20 to 25
 - Due to COVID-19 ramifications
- Corporate risk #39a - Cyber-Security
 - Severity increased from 20 to 25
 - Increased external website access by staff
- Corporate risk #39b - Data protection responsibilities
 - Severity decreased from 12 to 9
 - Due to effects of ongoing mitigating actions
 - Risk now tolerated
- Corporate risk #58 - Failure of social care provisions
 - Severity increased from 20 to 25
 - Due to COVID-19 ramifications
- Corporate risk #65 - Corporate leadership, governance and culture
 - Severity decreased from 20 to 12
 - To reflect completed mitigating actions
- Corporate risk #67 – Children’s Trust diverting council resources
 - Severity decreased from 20 to 10
 - To reflect completed mitigating actions
 - Risk now tolerated

2.3 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
CR61	Death/serious injury of a child (Council failing in their duty)	25	25
CR66	Lack of suitably qualified and experienced Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP)	25	25
CR68	COVID19 and risk to the delivery of WSCC's services	25	25
CR69	Children’s services will fail to deliver an acceptable provision to the community	25	25
CR39 a	Cyber-security	20	25
CR58	Failure of social care provisions	20	25

Risk No	Risk	Score - Prev Qtr	Score
CR22	Financial sustainability	16	25
CR59	Benefits from transformation are not realised	20	20
CR1	No deal Brexit	16	16
CR11	Recruit and retain staff	16	16
CR50	Insufficient health & safety governance	16	16

- 2.4** The corporate risk register continues to be reviewed at least monthly by ELT, with any actions promptly addressed.
- 2.5** 2.5 The directorate risk registers have been reviewed at least quarterly by each Director and their management team, with support from the Corporate Risk Manager where required. The Corporate Risk Manager has continued to engage monthly with Executive Directorate teams to discuss corporate and other directorate/service risks, and risk governance.
- 2.6** 2.6 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, 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 risks.

Risk
Staff Shortage in Adults Services for older people's visits
Not able to fulfil statutory duties as schools are 'closed'
Community Hubs may not have enough staff capacity to manage an increase in demand, resulting in a failure to deliver essential food and medicine to vulnerable people
Unbudgeted Costs and expenditure incurred by WSCC
Increase in remote working and use of WSCC IT systems may cause a limited or restricted level of accessibility which will put a significant strain on the Councils ability to operate
Once restrictions are relaxed/lifted and we move into the recovery phase the Council may be able to work through the backlog of BAU events in a timely manner due to volume of activity and social distancing restrictions. This will result in a significant reduction in revenue and reputational damage to the Council
Providers are increasingly unwilling to accept new placements which may cause a

Risk
reduction in external placements and in-house foster care arrangements. This will lead to children not being looked after, becoming more vulnerable and at risk of harm
Care homes are struggling to maintain an economically sustainable number of residents when experiencing deaths due to COVID-19 (>50% occupancy required). This lack of revenue creates a risk of care home closures which would then require financial intervention by WSCC to prevent this from occurring
Under new government guidelines, if there were to be an infection outbreak in a school (2 or more persons) WSCC Authorities may be responsible for the subsequent testing to determine the level of infection. This will have significant resource and funding implications
Government have issued instructions to highlight the local authority's role within the national Test and Trace Programme (particularly regarding Local Outbreak Plans). Should the government also issue direction to apply restrictions at a local level it will have further significant resource implications for PH and their ability to manage the current requirement and ongoing threat
If a child is not able to return to their previous school due to capacity issues, WSCC are responsible for finding an alternative location. Should WSCC not be successful in finding a suitable place it will lead to employer/employee or parent/LA conflict; or a place will be found that will have a negative effect on the child's mental health due to the unsettling nature of adapting to the new environment.

- 2.7** Capital Programme risks are reported through their respective programme board. There is ELT representation on this 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 carry out frequent reviews of the project and programme level risk registers.
- 2.8** The Risk Management Lunch 'n' Learn sessions will now be delivered as a webinar and the course content has been amended to facilitate this delivery method. The follow-on course (Risk Management in Practice) has been postponed indefinitely and will commence once it is safe to do so.
- 2.9** 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.
- 2.10** Enduring activities the Corporate Risk Manager is undertaking to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with best practice include:
- Attendance at TMG (chairing when requested) and New Ways of Working group
 - 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
- Continue to engage with Transformation and Capital Programme Boards to support consistent organisational risk governance
- Attendance at/facilitating various internal boards/meetings and working groups

2.11 The committee is asked to consider the Corporate Risk Register and provide comment as necessary.

3. Equality Impact Report

3.1 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.

4. Resource Implications and Value for Money

4.1 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 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.

5. Risk Management Implications

5.1 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.

6. Crime and Disorder Act Implications

6.1 None.

7. Human Rights Act Implications

7.1 None.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Corporate Risk Register

Background Papers

None