

Report to: Audit and Governance Committee
Date: 27th September 2023
Title: Strategic Risk Register Quarterly Review
Report of: Chief Internal Auditor
Ward(s): All
Purpose of report: To report to Committee the outcomes of the quarterly review of the register by Corporate Management Team
Officer recommendation(s): To receive and note the update to the Strategic Risk Register
Reasons for recommendations: The Council is committed to proper risk management and to regularly updating the Committee with regard to the Strategic Risk Register.
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Strategic Risk Register is a high level document that records the key risks facing the council: those risks that would prevent the authority from achieving its overall strategies and objectives.
- 1.2 Maintaining the Strategic Risk Register is a vital part of the governance arrangements of the authority and, as such, it is overseen by the Corporate Management Team who review it on a quarterly basis.
- 1.3 The risk register shows the risk, a description of the risk, the risk score if no action is taken (original risk score), the internal controls put in place to mitigate the risk and the risk score after these controls are in place (current risk score).
- 1.4 The risk register is brought to the Committee when any changes have been made to it following review by the Corporate Management Team and after an election.

2 Process

- 2.1 The Strategic Risk Register is the top level of the risk management process. Whilst the Strategic Risk Register is considered quarterly at the Corporate Management Team, this is a simply a review of the register itself.
- 2.2 There are many different risks and pieces of work that feed into the Strategic Risk Register. These are managed and monitored on a day to day basis within the relevant sections and departments.
- 2.3 The quarterly meeting of the Corporate Management Team to discuss the Strategic Risk Register allows the relevant Director/Assistant Director to provide feedback on risks in their area. This information is then used to consider changes that may need to be made to the Strategic Risk Register.

- 2.4 The Corporate Management Team will also carry out “horizon scanning” at these meetings: considering issues that are arising and considering whether they need to be included in the register.

3 August 2023 Review

- 3.1 The Strategic Risk Register was taken to Corporate Management Team on 16th August 2023 for the quarterly review.

- 3.2 The Corporate Management Team reviewed the risk scores for all the risks and considered that the scores should remain at their current levels based on the cost of living crisis and issues with recruitment.

- 3.3 Consideration was also given to a risk raised by the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee. This is the risk around the cost of Homelessness to the council. It was agreed that this risk needed to be recorded in the risk register but that it should be included as a description and a mitigating action under two existing risks.

- 3.4 The two risks in question are SR_002 Changes to the economic environment makes the council economically less sustainable and SR_003 Unforeseen socio-economic and/or demographic shifts creating significant changes of demands and expectations.

- 3.5 Under each risk the following description and mitigating action have been added:

Description:

Increased Homelessness presentations due to the economic situation, lack of available social housing and rising private sector rents leads to an increased number that require prevention or place into emergency accommodation. This will have a detrimental impact on the resource required for prevention and the General Fund. The nightly paid accommodation budget will be impacted and more significantly the loss of Housing Benefit Subsidy will increase at the end of the financial year.

Mitigating action:

Full action plan in place in the Housing Options and Wellbeing team with a target of a reduction of 100 placements by December 23. Creation of a physical Housing Hub, co-locating with partners to deliver a local, joined-up, preventative model. Lead the East Sussex Housing Partnership providing Health and Housing outcomes.

- 3.6 The Strategic Risk Register can be seen at Appendix A.

4. Financial appraisal

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 This report is for noting only and therefore the Legal Services team has not been consulted on the content of it.

6. Risk management implications

- 6.1 If the Council does not have an effective risk management framework that is subject to proper oversight by Councillors it will not be able to demonstrate that it

has in place adequate means to safeguard Council assets and services, and it could be subject to criticism from the Council's external auditor or the public.

7. Equality analysis

7.1 An equalities impact assessment is not considered necessary because the report is for information only and involves no key decisions.

8. Appendices

Appendix A - Strategic Risk Register

9. Background papers

None

Jackie Humphrey

Chief Internal Auditor