

Strategic Risk Register

22/06/21 08:23

#	Risk Title	Description	What is (or are the) Uncertainties	Likelihood	Financial	Service Quality	Reputation	Legal/Regulatory	Health & Safety	Morale/Staffing	July 2020 Risk	Jan 2021 Risk	Current Risk Score	Change (January 21 to Now)	Mitigating Actions / Internal Controls	Current Note (June 2021)
				4	4	4	4	4	2	2	25	16	16	■		
WD2	Adherence to Medium Term Financial Strategy	Failure to sustain a robust on-going medium term financial strategy in WDBC with adequate reserves to meet unforeseen circumstances, due to cost pressures and reduced income, council decisions, changes in Government policy with regard to business rates and affordable housing; Potential impact on delivering the MTFS, particularly if national/regional businesses successfully appeal against business rate valuations or litigation proceedings / legal challenges / planning appeals, etc.	Reduction in Government grant, increasing demand for services and other cost pressures and increased risks associated with localised business rates and council tax support. Additionally, income from activities may not materialise or may be reduced, e.g. a reduction in sales, fees and charges income or business rate appeals. The amount of income received can be adversely affected by a fall in collection rates due to economic downturn, the effects of the pandemic and other factors such as the bankruptcy/liquidation of large ratepayers. The latest forecast for the Devon Business Rates Pooling gain is over £7 million for 2020-21, with the WDBC share of the pooling gain being over £100,000.	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	25	16	16	■	<p>Robust horizon scanning to monitor changes in Government policy. SLT awareness of the risks, cautious approach to budgeting and robust systems of financial control. The Council is not intending to rely heavily on sources of income which may not be sustainable.</p> <p>SLT actively participate in Government consultations, MP discussions and keep aware of changes and the response by peer group, ensuring where appropriate the learning from this is incorporated into strategic plans. SLT engaged in the development of the MTFS. An Amended Budget for 2020-21 was approved by Council in September 2020, in response to the Covid19 pandemic. The latest Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved by the Hub Committee in October 2020.</p>	<p>The Council is in the process of closing its Accounts for 2020/21 and these will be published by 1st August 2021. In the Council's latest budget report for 2020/21, a small surplus of £23,000 is predicted, against the Council's total net budget of just over £7million.</p> <p>The Council has to be entirely independent to fund all of its services on a net budget of just over £7million, as the Borough Council no longer receives any main Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant). The Council has had a reduction in core Government funding of £3million per year since 2010.</p> <p>The Council will prepare its Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period covering 2022/23 to 2026/27 and this will be presented to the Hub Committee at its September 2021 meeting.</p> <p>The Council will continue to respond to national funding consultations and lobby alongside other Devon Councils and national organisations such as the District Councils' Network for a multi-year financial settlement, to aid long term strategic financial planning. The Fair Funding Review and the re-setting of the Business Rates baseline could be deferred from 2022/23. The Council is also awaiting further Government announcements on the New Homes Bonus funding. The Budget Gap over the next two years is likely to be in excess of £0.5million and work is already underway to address this. Much will also depend on the next Government financial settlement for 2022/23 and confirmation on funding items like Negative Revenue Support Grant, which has been assumed in the modelling to start impacting in 2022/23.</p>
WD7	Inadequate Staffing Resource	Failure to have sufficient staffing arrangements. Loss of staff morale, and inadequate resources for training and re-skilling in an ongoing period of change. Failure to engage staff resulting in uncertainty regarding changes in working practices and job security. Particular risk in relation to future terms and conditions. Cost and time of retraining/up-skilling staff. Unrealistic expectations in relation to staffing capacity.	Performance being reviewed to understand whether resourcing levels are correct; difficult to assess accurately as organisation continues to experience change effects and processes being embedded / roll-out of new technology and working practices	4	3	3	3	2	2	4	16	16	16	■	<p>Customer Satisfaction Survey has been initiated and staff away days undertaken to update staff and embed solutions to tackle issues raised.</p> <p>Mechanism in place for ELT to appoint within budget where appropriate without recourse to SLT.</p> <p>Apprenticeship scheme developed by HR.</p>	<p>The ongoing response to Covid-19 continues to impact staffing resource as we continue to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Process business grants</li> <li>- Prepare for new Restart Grants</li> <li>- Implement Covid-19 Secure elections</li> <li>- Offer support and advice to businesses on safety measures</li> <li>- Plan for the removal of restrictions</li> <li>- Plan and implement recovery measures including development of a new Corporate Strategy</li> </ul> <p>Flexibility around government funding has meant that we have been able to extend the temporary Covid marshalls to support business advice on safety measures, supporting our existing EH team resource.</p>

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WD4	Business Continuity	Officers fail to develop robust processes to ensure business continuity in the event of a significant event occurring, e.g. Failure to ensure the continuous availability of critical IT systems	Following the event, how quickly will certain systems and processes be able to be back on-line	3	3	5	4	2	3	3	3	15	15	15	▬	Having two HQ locations is main mitigating factor - however an outage of power/ICT at either location would lead to a serious disruption of service. Agile working further reduces reliance on two office buildings. Locality workers can be despatched more easily to ensure customer engagement can be maintained during any incident. Business Continuity plans have been updated - priority areas - ICT Networking - Payroll & Creditors Payments; other plans need to be made more robust	Covid-19 incident management meetings have now reduced to twice a week and remain an effective way of the management team monitoring the impacts.  While we still find ourselves in the 'response' phase of the pandemic, we will now focus on refining our broader business continuity plans to cover other scenarios.		
WD5	Emergency Response	There is high public expectation in relation to supporting communities during coastal erosion/storm damage/flooding events, as well as engagement in longer term recovery, in particular assumptions about capital investment to restore assets. The risk relates to how best to support dispersed communities, e.g. with filling, transporting and laying sandbags as well as providing workforce on site, given limited resources and expectations during an event.	Following the event, the expectation that coastal defences and asset repairs will be urgently undertaken despite competing claims on capital resources	3	3	4	5	3	4	4	4	12	15	15	▬	Robust horizon scanning to monitor changes in Government policy. SLT awareness of the risks, cautious approach to budgeting and robust systems of financial control. The Council is not intending to rely heavily on sources of income which may not be sustain	The Council continues to engage with the Local Resilience Forum and is keeping its emergency response plans up to date		
WD9	Covid-19 (Coronavirus) impact on services	Covid-19 (Coronavirus) will impact on the ability for the Council to deliver its services leading to a drop in operational performance and customer satisfaction. There will be additional financial implications	The situation evolves on a daily basis and there are many uncertainties at this stage . The Govt's road map gives and indication of timescales but these are dependant upon certain conditions being met	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	25	20	12	✓	Incident Planning is well underway but this has already meant a significant impact on service delivery with most of the Senior and Extended Leadership now focusing on ensuring our response plans are robust. A separate risk register is monitoring the impacts of COVID-19	We continue to monitor the government roadmap in order to identify any possible impacts on council services. As restrictions are lifted, we have been able to 'stand down' our community response although there still remains a focus on provision of government grants to businesses which is causing pressure in this area of the Council.  The summer period may well see additional pressures to our localities team given the expected increase in 'staycations'. To support this activity, the Council have extended our Covid-19 compliance officers until the end of the year.		

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				3	4	3	4	4	1	4	16	16	12	✓		
WD1	Political Commitment for Change	On-going political commitment to support changes needed for ongoing financial sustainability & community resilience	Considerable external political uncertainty and Governmental inertial; leading to uncertainty over policy direction and financial decisions from central government. Political balance of the Council impacting on policy and decision-making within and between SH & WD. Lack of briefing/understanding of issues or clear direction affects decision making by Members.	3	4	3	4	4	1	4	16	16	12	✓	Keep Members informed and updated on central government policy relating to local government services. Provide Members with training and ongoing development. Ensure Members are fully briefed on options within the policy and budgetary framework in order to inform decisions. Ensure policy changes are brought forward in a timely way for decision making, that due process is followed and that there is appropriate consultation, information and scrutiny. Provide regular L&DL briefings, group meetings and Member briefings and drop-ins.	Council have supported the development of a new Corporate Strategy which will set out a clear direction and priorities for the future. The draft strategy will be considered by Council in July 2021 and there will then be a period of consultation on the emerging priorities. A final strategy and detailed delivery plans will be considered by Hub and Council in September 2021.
WD9	Health and Wellbeing Service Provision	Covid-19 has a significant impact on Leisure provision given the nature of activities and hygiene requirements. The risk is that as leisure centres make adjustments to reduce the risk of Covid-19 to both staff and customers, the capacity of the centres is significantly reduced while many overheads and operating costs remain the same.	There are many uncertainties:- - When leisure centres may reopen - When they do open, what will the customer appetite be - How long any measures that reduce capacity will have to remain in place	3	4	2	2	2	4	2	16	16	12	✓	- Engage with Leisure Services provider to understand issues and support where possible - Continue to monitor local and national position (given that all leisure providers will be in the same position)	All Centre's are open and running activities in line with Covid-19 restrictions and as before the popular activities being Swim School, casual swimming, group exercise classes, then going to the gym. Average monthly usage for all 6 Centres is running at c35,000 whereas prior to the pandemic this would be between 52-55,000. In the first month of returning, 634 centres memberships were taken but overall numbers are at 56% at c3,800 compared to c6,700 in Feb '20. Swim School is performing very well with numbers currently at 71% compared to Feb'20. Group exercise classes occupancy is at c75% and is still affected due to space and number restrictions. GP Referrals are back but numbers are still small and other activities, schools and clubs are beginning to return.  Fusion highlight that customers are upbeat and usage is going in the right direction. This will hopefully improve further when Step 4 of the lockdown eases. However in a recent APSE report the effects of the pandemic on leisure are likely to last for another 18months with social distancing and public anxiety likely to suppress centre usage for a period of time. A report to Members on Leisure is on the Hub Committee Forward Plan for October 2021.
WD8	Delivery of waste & recycling service changes	The risk is that the Trial of 3 weekly residual collections is negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic as a result of higher than normal waste from homes resulting in skewed data	One aim of the trial is to collect data which will be used to inform a Member decision on introduction of the scheme to all households. It is likely that data will be compromised due to lockdown when more waste was created.	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	6	6	9	✗	Cross check trial data against whole district data and take into account in Hub Committee report.	At the Hub Committee meeting on 27th April 2021, Members considered a report on the Waste Collection Frequency Trial (Minute HC86). In this report, the findings of the trial of three-weekly refuse collections to around 1,000 households in the Borough was endorsed. It was resolved that a further report be presented to the Hub Committee in September 2021 that details the potential income/costs and the national waste strategy impacts, so that a final decision can be made on whether a three-weekly refuse collection should be implemented throughout the Borough from Spring 2022. During the interim, the Council will continue to collect on a three-weekly basis from the trial households. While the overall risk score has increased (as the likelihood of inaccurate data has materialised), in extending the trial, it is likely that we will have more accurate data to make a decision on.

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				2	2	1	3	3	2	1	10	6	6	—		
WD9	Delivery of Reopening High Street Safely Scheme	The risk is that the Council does not comply with the ERDF grant funding conditions related to the Reopening the High Street Safely Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarity of eligible expenditure that delivery partners wish to incur</li> <li>- Ability to demonstrate sufficient evidence to support claim</li> </ul>	2	2	1	3	3	2	1	10	6	6	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear guidance related to the scheme to be provided to all Town Councils</li> <li>- Approval of items for payment to be made through WDBC</li> <li>- Where possible, expenditure will be incurred directly by WDBC to reduce the requirements for Delivery Partner Agreements and likelihood that evidence is not obtained</li> </ul>	Following the extension of the programme, plans have been developed and submitted to MHCLG for approval. We currently await their agreement to proposed activities. To mitigate the risk that funding may not be able to be reclaimed, activities will not commence until formally agreed.