







West Oxfordshire District Council Strategic Risk Register
 Reviewed: July 2024
 Next Review: September 2024

ID	Risk Title	Description of risk / opportunity / Impact	Corporate Objective	Date raised	Risk Owner	Initial Risk		Previous Residual Risk Score			Current Residual Risk Score			Change in residual risk since previous review	Follow on Action (if required)	Target delivery date	Risk Acceptance Level	Update comments	Status: Open, Hold, or Closed	Direction of Travel since previous review)	
						Impact category	Likelihood category	Score	Impact category	Likelihood category	Score										
Internal Risks																					
IR1	Financial Stability of WODC	There is a risk that the Council's finances become unsustainable. The future funding available to the Council remains extremely uncertain and the Council is particularly exposed to pending changes to retained business rate growth and new homes bonus income. Commercial income streams are also subject to some volatility. There are also significant cost pressures as a result of inflation. The Council's General Fund Balance is currently healthy but will fall below minimum levels without further action, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	1/5/2023	Finance Director S151	Extreme	Probable	20	Major	Probable	16	Major	Probable	4	16	0	Continued in year budget monitoring and reporting. The 24/25 Budget approved with an updated MTFS reviewed by Executive and Council. Review of earmarked reserves. Further consideration of options - particularly in areas of Waste, Leisure, Homelessness and Asset Management with a view to bridging the financial gap identifies within the MTFS. In addition, more member training to be considered to increase profile of budgetary challenges.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction	Open	
IR2	GDPR / Information Management	If the council is not compliant with the General Data Protection and does not have robust processes in place for Information Management then there is a risk of financial penalties, reputational damage and impact on resources	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	1/5/2013	AD Business Services (PM)	Major	Probable	16	Major	Possible	12	Major	Possible	3	12	0	All emails received from at risk location are quarantined and inspected by ICT staff before being released. New cyber security software installed. See also risk P5 on cyber security. 98% of staff now trained in cyber awareness and final 2% being reviewed. Data Protection training to also be rolled out. PSN renewal underway, and paperwork to be submitted this month.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction	Open	
IR3	Health & Safety	If the council and its contractors / partners are not compliant with the Health & Safety at Work Act, it is at risk of a serious Health & Safety incident / accident leading to financial penalties, reputational damage and risk to services.	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	30/8/2023	AD Business Services (PM)	Major	Possible	12	Major	Remote	8	Major	Remote	2	8	0	Health & Safety Board in place to monitor compliance and report back to the Shareholder. Accidents and incidents remain low. Ongoing service area H&S internal audits being undertaken to ensure compliance	Ongoing	Risk Sharing	Open	
IR4	Legislative Compliance	If the Council and its contractors / partners is not compliant with relevant legislation, it is at risk of not meeting its statutory duty, reputational damage and financial impact	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	30/8/2023	Monitoring Officer	Moderate	Possible	9	Minor	Possible	6	Minor	Possible	3	6	0	Individual ADs and BMs responsible for Legal compliance within their respective areas with an annual declaration in place to monitor compliance. Audit process in place to check compliance. Service areas receive updates on legislation for their service areas. Review of legal services being completed.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction	Open	
IR5	Shareholder Review of Publica	The review of Publica by Human Engine commissioned by the four shareholder Councils has been published at Cabinet with a recommendation to in-source the majority of services. This is subject to a detailed transition plan and financial costings. Staff have been informed through a briefing prior to the recommendation being published. If the detailed transition plan is not published soon providing assurance to those impacted by the decision, there is a risk that service delivery could be impacted due to loss of staff, inability to recruit, and low staff morale. If detailed costings are not undertaken, there is a risk that in-sourcing the services could increase the cost of delivery and not achieve savings / efficiencies.	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	31/8/2023	CEO (GH)	Moderate	Possible	9	Moderate	Possible	12	Moderate	Possible	4	12	0	Report requires: A detailed transition plan to be developed for subsequent agreement by Cabinet and Council. Further due diligence to fully understand the financial implications of the recommendation in the short and long term. The Detailed Transition Plan is now complete and is being presented to Executive, Council and Overview & Scrutiny in July. If approved, staff consultation will commence in September, with a proposed transfer date of 1/11/24. Detailed plans are in place for a successful implementation if approved. Detailed costings have been completed by the S151. Separate Strategic Risk Register in place for the Transition.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction	Open	

External Risks																							
ER1	Cyber Attack	If the ICT network is not adequately protected then it is susceptible to a Cyber - Security Attack leading to loss of systems and data, significant downtime, reputational damage and impact on service delivery and resources	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	1/5/2013	AD Business Services (PM)	Extreme	Probable	20	Blocking of USB and other devices. PSN compliance. Revised policies. Staff awareness training. Business Continuity Plan in place, reviewed and tested. Enhanced encryption software and other specialist cyber tools. Investment in cyber training for the ICT Team and specialist officer/s in post. Cyber Essentials re- accreditation submitted. Ongoing network Internal & External Penetration checks. Continual Password Audits across our network to evaluate weak password. Detailed review of Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery Plans in light of recent cyber attack on neighbouring council.	Major	Possible	12	Major	Possible	3	12	0	98% of staff now trained in cyber awareness and final 2% being reviewed, this will be followed by Phishing emails to test understanding and awareness following the training. Ongoing investment in cyber team with dedicated team now in place. Regular review of User Privileges and Information Asset Register. Cyber updates being presented to Council Audit & Governance committees, Public Audit & Risk Committee (ARAC) and Governance Meetings. Preparation underway to submit latest PSN submission.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction		Open	
ER2	Global Pandemic	If there was another global pandemic, then there is a risk to the delivery of council services due to lack of resource availability, impacting on costs and reputation	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	1/7/2023	CEO (GH)	Moderate	Possible	9	New risk to replace Covid specific risks, as Covid is now BAU. Lessons learnt from previous pandemic, Council and partners are now setup to work remotely and able to continue to deliver services in the midst of a pandemic. There is an effective framework in place with Oxfordshire partners.	Moderate	Possible	9	Moderate	Possible	3	9	0	Watching brief should a further pandemic be predicted	Hold	Risk Acceptance & Retention		Hold	
ER3	Fraud & Corruption Risk	If the Council does not have controls, checks and measures in place when commissioning and procuring goods, works and services, there is a risk of fraud and / or corruption which may impact on cost, reputation, and services.	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	7/11/2023	CEO (GH)	Major	Probable	16	Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit (CFEU) in place to manage Fraud and Corruption and ensure that the Council and its employees understand the risks and have controls, checks and measures in place to mitigate this activity. CFEU report to the Council's Audit and Governance Committee. Employees receive regular training. CFEU test controls to ensure fit for purpose	Moderate	Possible	9	Moderate	Possible	3	9	0	CFEU currently developing service risk registers for fraud to further improve awareness and controls. Any changes to processes / controls will be monitored / managed for any services which may transition from Publica to direct Council delivery.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction		Open	
ER4	Refugees / Asylum Seekers	If there is an increase in refugees / asylum seekers into the District, the Council may need to find alternative accommodation which may impact on the Council in terms an increased demand on housing support and services services.	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	28/10/2023	AD Business Services (PM)	Moderate	Probable	12	Migrant hotels are currently in place, however, this may be changing which may have an impact on housing support and services.	Minor	Possible	6	Minor	Possible	3	6	0	WoDC is working with Cottsway Housing to provide additional properties using the LA Housing Fund from the Home Office. Numbers are decreasing as families move into private rented accommodation, social housing or return to their home country. No additional demand expected currently from ARAP/ACRS. New cohorts of refugees is BAU. Monitoring potential risk of increased homelessness if asylum seekers granted permission to remain.	Ongoing	Risk Acceptance & Retention		Open	
ER5	General Election	The General Election is taking place on 4th July 2024. There is a risk that there will be insufficient resources available to deliver the requirements of the election including polls and count, a heightened risk of cyber security and changes to administration resulting in changes to Local Government.	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	1/6/2024	CEO / Elections	Major	Probable	16	Project established to manage General Election. Request for employee support across the Council and Publica has been published. Guidance on the pre-election period has been communicated. ICT have systems in place to monitor any unusual activity on the ICT systems.	Major	Possible	12	Major	Possible	3	12	0	Work will be ongoing to ensure the Council delivers a seamless General Election poll and Count	Complete	Risk Reduction	Risk will now be removed	Closed	New Risk
ER6	Diddly Squat	The release of series 3 of Diddly Squat covers the Planning Decision by West Oxfordshire District Council and the subsequent Planning Appeal. There is a potential risk to Council reputation, targeted abuse which impacts on employee safety and morale	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	1/4/2024	CEO / Comms	Moderate	Probable	12	Content of Diddly Squat to be monitored. Project Team setup to manage any fallout from the series and to ensure the safety of our employees.	Moderate	Possible	9	Moderate	Possible	3	9	0	Ongoing monitoring of public comments being submitted to the Council to ensure any potential risk to employees is managed effectively. Ongoing support in place for impacted employees	Ongoing	Risk Reduction	Risk will be reduced as impact reducing	Open	New Risk

Strategic Risks																							
SR1	Major Civil Emergency	District Councils are required to provide rest centres for the Public during a Civil Emergency. If staff are unwilling to come forward and volunteer with the running of a rest centre, there is a risk that the Council will be unable to fulfil its duty in providing a safe rest centre. If the Council is unable to provide a sustained response to a major civil emergency, the Council would be failing in fulfilling its statutory duty to assist and care for those affected.	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	1/1/2021	BM for Emergency Planning (CS)	Major	Possible	12	Emergency planning team in place. Emergency Planning Process in place, with defined roles and responsibilities. Staff trained in their roles. 24/7 callout in place. Ongoing work with the Local Resilience Forum.	Major	Possible	12	Major	Probable	4	16	0	WoDC Coordination Team and Rest Centres teams now in place, which is then supported by wider shared resource across Publica. Refresh Training setup for Coordination Team, Rest Centre Team and Duty Officers and Managers. All documentation being updated and transferred to 365. Plans tested during recent floods when Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) and Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) stood up. Transition of services is impacting on the 365 emergency cover arrangements. The risk has been increased to reflect potential risk to our emergency response. Proposals are being reviewed for current and future mitigation.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction	Difficult to reduce as likely to be caused by natural disaster e.g., flooding or major incident. Therefore, it is about our ability to respond and meet obligations under Civil Emergencies Act. Risk increased as response is being impacted by transition, through loss of critical staff.	Open	
SR2	Climate Emergency	The Council has declared a climate and ecological emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030. Failure to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 would result in the Council not meeting this commitment. Some carbon reduction may require significant investment, particularly if the UK Government does not provide sufficient funding to support project delivery. Increasing cost of investment and capital expenditure is likely to make business cases difficult.	Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency	1/6/2023	CEO (GH)	Moderate	Probable	12	The Council has approved the Carbon Action Plan 2024-2030. External funding will be secured as far as possible to deliver carbon reduction projects.	moderate	possible	9	moderate	possible	3	9	0	Progress against carbon projects is reported through the Councils Project Governance Process	Mar-25	Risk Reduction		Open	
Partnership Risks																							
PR1	Partnership deliverables (Ubico waste provider)	If the 'Waste' contractor does not meet their obligations under key contracts then it could lead to a fall in service standards, reduced customer service, a failure to meet legal requirements or an increase in costs to the Council and reputational impact Waste and Recycling - shortage of qualified HGV drivers, lack of loaders, along with the impact of future Covid variants could result in the Waste Contractor being unable to meet its obligations for waste and recycling collections.	Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency	15/6/2023	AD Commercial Services (B.O)	Major	Possible	12	WODC is a shareholder of Ubico, with significant control and influence over the company ensuring ongoing financial viability and affordability for the Council. Contract Management in place to ensure Ubico deliver the service in-line with agreed specification and standards. Performance reports presented to Council.	Major	possible	12	Major	possible	3	12	0		Ongoing	Risk Reduction		Open	
PR2	Failure of Leisure provider and partnership deliverables (GLL)	If the current leisure provider continues to face national financial difficulties, there is a risk to the council in the delivery of leisure services, resulting in increased costs, and reputational damage. Whilst mitigations can be put in place to increase leisure provision locally, WODC cannot influence the overall GLL financial difficulties / pressures.	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	15/6/2923	AD Communities (AB)	Major	Probable	16	Work continues with GLL to make the service sustainable and affordable in the medium term.	Major	possible	12	Major	possible	3	12	0	Working collaboratively to market services. Funding secured through Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund.	Ongoing	Risk Reduction		Open	
PR3	Partnership Deliverables (Publica)	If Publica do not deliver the Future Publica Savings, this will add additional financial pressure on the Council, also if delivered as a cutting exercise, it could impact on service delivery. If Publica are unable to recruit/retain suitably qualified staff - impact on quality of services delivered, financial impact Services are not able to adequately discharge their (legal) obligations leading to failure - this may not be reported through the quarterly performance reports	Working Together for West Oxfordshire	15/6/2023	CEO (GH)	Major	Possible	12	Financial incentives (market force supplement scheme) Review of pay and benefits package. Introduction of career grade structures in Planning and Project Management Recruitment improvement plan in place Investors in People HR programme in place Shareholder Forum in place to hold Publica to account.	Moderate	Probable	12	Moderate	Probable	4	12	0	The recommendation to in-source the majority of services from Publica back into the Council has been approved by Cabinet. All partner Councils have also had the recommendation improved. This is subject a Detailed Transition Plan which is now complete and is being presented to Executive, Council & Overview and Scrutiny during July 2024. Governance arrangements for the partnership will be reviewed as part of new model. Publica has met its savings target for 23/24 and this will be reflected in the end of year accounts, plus additional in year savings achieved. Interim MD in place and new Board Chair. See R5 for more detail.	March 2024 for first efficiency savings	Risk Reduction	Update on what has been committed to under Future Publica	Open	

MR1	Failure to deliver WODC programme of major projects	If the Council does deliver on it's major projects, this could result in non delivery of Council priorities , cost increases, financial pressures and reputational damage	Working Together for West Oxfordshire		CEO (GH)	Major	Possible	12	All projects require a detailed business case and sign off before proceeding. Project Manager appointed to manage all major projects Project reporting in place, including risk reporting on a monthly basis.	Moderate	Possible	9	Moderate	Possible	9	0	Due to inflation, project costs are increasing for major projects and the cost of borrowing is impacting, in some cases on the viability of businesses cases. This is being monitored on a case by case basis	Risk Reduction		Open	
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