



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 30 JANUARY 2025
Subject	STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive. Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Cheryl Sloan, Business Manager for Governance, Risk and Business Continuity Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	The report brings to Members the current version of the Strategic Risk Register for information and assurance that risks to the Council are being managed and appropriate actions are being taken to mitigate risk.
Annexes	Annex A – Strategic Risk Register
Recommendation(s)	That the Audit and Governance Committee resolves to: I) Note the contents of the report and annex.
Corporate priorities	All
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Senior Leadership Team – the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Governance and Director of Place and Executive Members on a Monthly basis. Informal Executive on a quarterly basis.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The strategic risk register is presented to the Audit and Governance Committee ('the Committee') to provide assurance that risks to the Council are being managed and appropriate actions are being taken to mitigate risk.
- 1.2 Presentation of the risk register also provides an opportunity for members of the Committee to raise questions and highlight any risks which they feel should be referenced and mitigated.

2. RISK REGISTER

- 2.1 All updates to the commentary since November 2024 Audit and Governance Committee are shown in red, along with a direction of travel column, which shows if the risk has either increased / red (got worse), decreased / green (reduced in risk) or stayed the same since the last time it was reported to the Committee. It should be noted that whilst the Risk Register was on the agenda for the November 2024 Audit and Governance Committee, due to unforeseen circumstances, the paper was postponed to January 2025.

- 2.2 Below is a summary of some of the key changes / updates:

IR1 Financial Stability. Whilst this risk has not changed in direction of travel, it is worth noting the change in commentary. This risk remains red as it is scored on the council's MTF5 which takes a 5-year view of the council's financial position and this shows a deletion of funds over the MTF5. However, the council's 2025/26 budget is balanced, so the in-year risk is low demonstrating good financial management.

IR5 Phase 1 transition of services. The transition of services under phase 1 has now been completed, with services successfully transferring on 1/11/24. It is proposed to close this risk, and in its place to open new risks; IR6 Phase 2 transition of services and IR7 Embedding of services which have transitioned to council delivery.

IR6 Phase 2 transition of services. This is a new risk which will replace IR5. This captures the risk relating to the transition of phase 2 services, the detailed plans for which are scheduled to be presented to Executive in March 2025 for approval.

IR7 Embedding of services which have transitioned under council delivery. This is a new risk, which also replaced IR5, phase 1 transition. This is about the embedding of services which have transferred and the development of the council's culture and people strategy.

IR8 English Devolution White Paper. A new risk to cover the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) for two-tier areas which will see the amalgamation of councils into one Unitary Authority.

SR4 5 Year land supply. This risk has been updated and has been increased in risk. The risk has been increased following the publication of the new NPPF in December 2024 which has increased WODC's per annum requirement from 549 homes per year to 905 homes per year.

SR5 APSE Litigation Claim. This is a new risk to flag a litigation claim by Thurrock Council against Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) and a number of APSE Local Authority members. Thurrock Council is currently claiming £40m compensation over alleged "negligent" valuations provided by APSE in relation to solar farm assets. This has been highlighted as a risk as WODC is a member of APSE, however we believe that the risk to WODC is very low.

2.3 All other updates are shown in red, but do not impact on the risk scoring or significantly change the risk.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 This report relates to the Council's management of risk and identifies the current strategic risks, as such no separate risk assessment has been completed.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

6.1 An equalities impact assessment is not required for this report.

7. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no climate or ecological emergency implications arising directly from this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

- Previous version of the West Oxfordshire District Council Strategic Risk Register presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on November 2024.

8.2 These documents will be available for inspection online at www.westoxon.gov.uk or by contacting democratic services democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting.