

West Oxfordshire District Council - Corporate Risk Register 2021-22 Q1

Risk Code	Description	Risk Factors	Internal Controls	Current Impact	Current Likelihood	Current Rating	Last Review Date	Latest Note	Assigned To
W-CRR-005	If the Council does not deliver a balanced medium term financial strategy then it may need to cut services or make additional savings	Financial Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings with Members and Cabinet MTFS and budget process CT/SMT discussions and lead Vision 2020 programme 	4	5	20	25-May-21	The MTFS was updated in February 2021 and showed a steady decline of our reserves over the next few years caused by the removal of New Homes bonus and the expected rates reset. The plan is to slow this down as much as possible by finding income generating projects that the Council can invest £75m in over the next few years but these are still to be found and with the tightening of allowable borrowing through PWLB and the amount of alternative funding through things like pension funds in the current market, these are proving difficult to find. The situation is constantly under review.	Chief Finance Officer
W-CRR-017	If unavoidable budget pressures exceed provision within the MTFS then the Council may need to use its reserves, or there may be pressures on services or tax levels and agreed budget targets will not be achieved	Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Delivery Planning. Budgetary control system. CT/HoS consider financial pressures, in particular arising out of cost shunting Key variances report. 	4	5	20	25-May-21	Covid has brought a multitude of additional pressures to the budget, not only in expenditure but also in loss of income. These pressures are likely to continue for some time and in some cases worsen. The budget has been reviewed this year and savings found where possible. This should allow some buffer to be carried forward into the 21/22 budget and the MTFS. The budget for 21/22 incorporates these pressures as does the MTFS which means that the budget target is likely to be achieved but this does include the use of reserves and does not lessen the problem.	Chief Finance Officer

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W-CRR-030 (new)	If the Council does not have the necessary resources to manage its trees and vegetation within public open spaces and country parks, then it may result in complaints/damage to adjoining property or injury	Financial, Reputational Community Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree officer in post who is responsible for reviewing trees and progressing works • Areas of Oxfordshire clay have been mapped • Necessary mitigation action being taken as necessary including thinning 	4	5	20	26-May-21	No change in rating. Due to the location of trees on Oxfordshire Clay, the hot weather, and historic lack of maintenance of sites, the number of claims is increasing, as is awareness of subsidence issues among property owners in the area. Further claims are anticipated. We are taking pre-emptive action where possible. In order to address the issue and to ensure that our insurance cover is retained, a subsidence "strategy" is required. Reports are being prepared to draw down on funding for open space sites from initial s106 contributions to provide additional support in tree management in relation to this issue together with management of open spaces and country parks.	Executive Director Commissioning; Group Manager - Commissioning
W-CRR-010	If contractors do 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	Financial Reputational	Robust and effective contract management approach including regular meetings with key contractors	5	4	20	18-May-21	<p>The impact of Covid 19 on our leisure provider has been very significant and fully reported elsewhere within the Council. Agreement with the Provider is set to end at the end of March 2021, which will reduce the risk to provision of leisure services.</p> <p>The Council has been partially recompensed by the government for the loss of some of this income but the ongoing impact remains a financial risk to the council.</p> <p>An agreement has been reached to compensate the Council for wheeled bin failures previously reported on this item. With the vaccine rollout and lower infection rate the risks to the frontline contracted services are reducing however, it is too early to say what affect another variant of the virus would have.</p>	Group Manager - Commercial and Contracts

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W-CRR-016	If Publica does not deliver the agreed objectives in accordance with its business plan then the planned savings for the Council would not be delivered and consequently there would be a risk that services could not be delivered within budget	Financial Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Board • Local Political Support • National Political Support • Early Engagement with employees and Unions • Funding provided to develop detailed business case 	2	2	4	25-May-21	Impact risk reduced from 3 (moderate) to 2(minor). After a successful 2020/21 where the preliminary outturn suggests the overall savings target of £0.5m was delivered Publica has now largely delivered its business case targets. The target for 21/22 is a further £0.5m and steps are in place to deliver the bulk of this. Any risk of under delivery against the West Oxon share of the target is low and falls within the definition of minor in the policy (less than £100k).	Chief Executive: Managing Director
W-CRR-004	If local transport infrastructure deteriorates then access to services and employment will also be reduced	Reputational Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the County Council to plan and enable infrastructure improvements • Lobby to ensure that the improvements for A40 and surrounding area are delivered as proposed 	3	2	6	07-Jun-21	Likelihood reduced from 3 (possible) to 2 (remote). In November 1999 the Government confirmed £102 million of Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) money is to be invested in major improvements to the A40. The package would fund further transport improvements to the A40, including development of the public transport facilities, additional highway capacity, and improvements to walking and cycling. This is additional to the funding provided by the Government through the Housing and Growth Deal with Oxfordshire, and the Local Growth Fund. A single, full planning application for the A40 improvement works, with an accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be submitted in September 2021.	Group Manager - Strategic Support; Chief Executive

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W-CRR-012	If the Council does not comply with relevant Information Management legislation including the new GDPR and Transparency Agenda then the government may intervene which could have a reputational impact on the Council	Financial Reputational Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements reviewed in light of new legislation • Quarterly monitoring of FOI return rate to SMT 	3	3	9	17-May-21	<p>No change in risk rating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on the UK-GDPR Action Plan & GDPR Risk Register is being reported to the Council and Publica on a regular basis. • Mandatory refresher Information Security / Data Protection on-going , target completion date Oct 2021. <p>Increase internal communications on portal to raise staff awareness on data security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid Information Sharing Protocols internal and externally with NHS and OCC continually updated • Conducting a Data (applications) audit • Implement new UK – GDPR changes to Council systems • Introduction of new Data Security Portal page for staff 	Data Protection Officer; Chief Executive
W-CRR-013	If the Government imposes legislative changes that are not expected then it could have an impact on the Council's finances and other resources	Financial Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon scanning, awareness via professional publications • Respond to government consultations • Monitor potential changes in planning rules and their consequences e.g. penalties for not determining smaller applications on time, and failure to produce a Local 	3	3	9	25-May-21	<p>No change in rating. The Council responded to the consultation on Defra's Waste and Resources strategy. The Strategy suggests that garden waste collection should be free which if imposed would have a significant financial impact on the Council. Defra has since published its consultations response which acknowledges the strong opposition from LAs and states this will need to be reconsidered. There are likely to be further developments with Statute once Brexit is concluded. Any financial implications will be considered as part of the update to the Council's MTFS</p>	Chief Finance Officer

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W-CRR-028	If Publica or the Council is unable to recruit suitable staff and retain them, particularly in some key service areas then the level of service delivery could be reduced which would impact on residents/communities	Performance Financial Reputational Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial incentives (market force supplement scheme) Work with partners to address skill shortages 	3	3	9	17-May-21	No change in rating. Quarterly performance reports are shared with Joint Management Team so any necessary mitigation to maintain service delivery levels can be discussed. A review of recruitment has recently been established and feedback from managers, staff (both Publica and Retained), clients and Councillors is being collated to help ensure the service meets users' needs and is both flexible and modern going forward. Work is also underway to develop career graded roles to assist with retention and development of staff in key areas.	Chief Executive; Managing Director
W-CRR-034	If Health and Safety procedures and risk assessments are not in place /being followed then staff could be injured undertaking Council duties which would impact on their health and wellbeing, affect their ability to work and create liability issues for the Council	Legal Financial Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety procedures Access to weather forecasts Lone workers policy Business Continuity Plans 	4	2	8	17-May-21	No change in rating. All H&S policies & guidance notes have been updated and signed of by the Chief Executive / Managing Director for sign off. A new Local H&S Committee which comprises of the H&S Team, HR, Chief Execs and union reps meet on a quarterly basis to review risk assessment and policies to ensure ongoing compliance.	Chief Executive; Managing Director

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W-CRR-014	If the Council fails to successfully implement the Local Plan and new National Planning Framework then central government may intervene and/or speculative planning applications may increase	Financial Reputational	Project plan to deliver the Local Plan	4	2	8	07-Jun-21	The risk of speculative applications had previously been mitigated by the 3 year housing land supply figure which has been agreed by central government in the context of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal however that was rescinded in March 2021 and the situation is now more finely balanced. The District Council's current housing land supply statement demonstrates a 5.4 year supply of deliverable housing sites. There have been some delays with some of the larger strategic site allocations identified in the Local Plan and so the Council is working closely with the various site promoters to expedite development and ensure the Council remains able to demonstrate an adequate housing land supply.	Group Manager - Strategic Support; Chief Executive
W-CRR-003	If the services that are delivered by other public sector organisations are reduced then it may result in increased pressure on the Council to take action	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for continued service provision in rural areas by third parties e.g. Oxford County Council and NHS Work with Community organisations 	2	3	6	25-May-21	Risk reduced to likelihood of 3. No particular plans being put forward at the moment to diminish local service provision	Chief Executive; Managing Director
W-CRR-019	If contractors do not comply with health and safety requirements then there could be both financial and reputational implications for the Council	Financial Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract management in place to ensure appropriate measures such as risk assessments, appropriate policies, and training is in place. Health and Safety business partners provide advice and support Concerns can be escalated to contractors' senior management 	4	2	8	18-May-21	No change in rating	Group Manager - Commissioning

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W-CRR-027	If the number of appeals reaches the threshold then penalties / government intervention will be triggered with potential financial implications	Financial Reputational Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust and effective monitoring of appeal decisions • Potential intervention of Planning Committee if necessary 	3	2	6	18-May-21	No change in rating. The Council is currently well below the level for potential intervention	Group Manager – Customer Services; Business Manager – Development Management
W-CRR-007	If there is severe weather then the Council may be unable to deliver key services which could impact on residents	Performance Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent monitoring and evaluation of impact on service delivery at service level • Communications strategy • Relevant policies e.g. snow policy • Waste and Recycling severe weather plan • Laptops and home 	3	2	6	18-May-21	No change in rating. Business continuity plans have all been refreshed and the Covid-19 response demonstrates the ability to keep services operating normally with circa 80% of staff working from home.	Chief Executive; Managing Director
W-CRR-008	If the Council's IT System / infrastructure failed due to cyber attacks and/or virus then system performance could be reduced leading to poor service delivery/financial impact	Financial Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blocking of USB and other devices • PSN compliance • Revised policies • Staff awareness training • BCP in place, reviewed and tested • Enhanced encryption software 	3	2	6	18-May-21	<p>No change in Risk rating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All partner Councils achieved PSN accreditation in Oct 2020 • Publica to achieve Cyber Essentials re-accreditation in Sept 2021 • Ongoing network Internal & External Penetration checks • Regular review of User Privileges • Progress on the Cyber Security updates and Action Plan is being reported to the Council and Publica on a regular basis. • Continual update Information Asset Register • Additional Phishing awareness training to educate employees on how to spot and report suspected phishing attempts • Continual Password Audits across our network to evaluate weak passwords • Periodic reviews Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery Plans • Continual review of staff development 	Group Manager - Business Support Services

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W-CRR-009	If there is a loss of data (both on site and as a result of remote/mobile working) / security failure in our IT systems then it could lead to a reduced level of service and have a negative impact on the Council's reputation and finances	Reputational Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blocking of USB and other devices PSN compliance Revised policies Staff awareness training BCP in place, reviewed and tested Enhanced encryption software 	3	2	6	18-May-21	<p>No change in rating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Councils have PSN accreditation, which compliments the Cyber Essential Plus. The online training programme has now been completely rolled out which is helping to reinforce the need for staff to be aware of their responsibilities with regards to data security, passwords and GDPR. Additional Phishing awareness training to educate employees on how to spot and report suspected phishing attempts has also been provided. 	Group Manager - Business Support Services
W-CRR-025	If Superfast Broadband is not delivered within timescales then resident expectations will not be met and many communities will be left with inadequate broad coverage resulting in a reputational damage to the Council	Community Reputational	<p>Work closely with BDUK to ensure state aid regulations are complied with</p> <p>Commission specialised skills when required to provide expertise and capacity</p> <p>Work closely with the chosen supplier to ensure delivery is timely</p> <p>Provide regular communications to residents, communities and stakeholders</p>	3	1	3	17-May-21	Target figure for the project has now been achieved and the team are now working closely with the supplier and BDUK to begin the close down process.	Executive Director Finance; Chief Executive
W-CRR-011	If major public events/incidents are not adequately controlled or dealt with then it could have an impact on the community resulting in reputational /financial damage to the Council	Community Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular monitoring Plans in place for regular events Adequate covid risk assessments required from all event organisers 	3	2	6	03-Jun-21	No change in rating. The Safety Advisory Group meets every six months. Representatives from the Council, Health & Safety Executive, Police, Fire, Ambulance and Highways attend to review the year's events and identify any new risks/events for consideration in the forthcoming year. Blenheim, Wilderness and the OVO Cycle invited to attend meetings 2020 to provide an update on planned events and to respond to feedback from the SAG.	Chief Executive; Managing Director

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W-CRR-031	If the Government does not provide adequate funding to the Council to enable the Council to fulfil new expectations of the Council's role following the UK exit from the EU, there could be negative implications on the Council's reputation or the Council's finances	Financial Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Executive Director undertaking role of Brexit Lead Officer as per requirement from MHCLG Local Resilience Forum Support from the LGA Local Resilience Forum Government funding to support Councils 	3	2	6	02-Jun-21	A trade deal was agreed with the EU at the end of December. Even with this deal in place there will be changes to how communities, businesses and the Council will operate.: An updated Publica Brexit Risk Assessment (all risks reviewed and risk scores adjusted (4 Dec 2020)) remains in operation. Publica Brexit risk assessment group convened regularly and ongoing. Updated internal control commentaries sought where relevant. WODC has been linking to the Oxfordshire Brexit Coordinating Group (since September 2020) and through to the Local Resilience Forum. Joint ongoing work has included shared risk assessment work used to inform our own risk assesment; joint communications work; and work with Oxfordshire LEP to ensure appropriate business information and support.	Executive Director Commissioning; Chief Executive
W-CRR-006	If staff morale and motivation is low in Publica then the level of service delivered may be reduced in some services	Performance Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular reviews of change process Impact of change measured via Staff forum and staff sickness Comprehensive consultation and engagement process Change management training Joint Liaison Forum 	3	3	9	25-May-21	<p>Risk increase to impact 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the continued impact of Covid-19 on working arrangements and significant impact on workloads the resilience of staff has been remarkable. The last welfare surveys carried out in February showed that responses remained overall positive despite the impact of the 3rd lockdown. The welfare surveys being carried out on a regular basis point to broadly good levels of morale although some areas are struggling with the working arrangements. Staff turnover has increased in some areas which is giving a cause for concern and is being investigated. The launch of the broad based leadership programme should assist in the new year together with the Investors in People programme. 	Chief Executive; Managing Director

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W-CRR-035 (new)	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.	Legal Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Oxford County Council and the use of hotels as an alternative to rest centres. • Small team of volunteers established (although some have left Publica in recent months). • Training and support provided by the County Civil Protection Team. • New staff have emergency planning incorporated in Job Roles. 	3	3	9	18-May-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established a call out policy which will give staff the assurance that they will be compensated with a flat rate of pay for an emergency response. • Recruitment drive to replace volunteers who have since left the Council/Publica. • Rest Centre management adapted to incorporate precautions surrounding Covid infection 	Group Manager - Strategic Support
W-CRR-036 (new)	Without clear and robust procurement procedures, Publica and Partner Councils will not benefit from the most economically advantageous procurement opportunities and may fail to comply with the law governing Public Procurement Rules.	Financial Legal Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement rules approved Council. • Publica Procurement Team able to provide procurement advice and assistance on major procurements. 	3	2	6	18-May-21	<p>Reduced rating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mandatory procurement training was rolled out January 2021. As of today, 380 people have completed it but a total of 451 people have accessed it. We have also updated the Contract Rules, and will be shortly scheduling in the training once it has been finalised with the legal team. 	Executive Director: Commissioning