

West Oxfordshire District Council Strategic Risk Register
 Reviewed: March 2024
 Next Review: May 2024

ID	Risk Title	Description of risk / opportunity / Impact	Corporate Objective	Date raised	Risk Owner	Responsible Officer	Initial Risk		Existing Control, Mitigation or Contingency	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	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	General Fund Reserves are currently healthy. 23/24 Budget updated to include known cost pressures. Budget monitoring in place throughout the year. Budget setting for 24/25 to identify additional opportunities and pressures. A Transformation Group has been established to drive further efficiencies forward.	Major	Probable	16	Major	Probable	16	0	Continued in year budget monitoring and reporting. The 24/25 Budget to be collated and an updated MTFS to be 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	Policies and procedures in place for Data Protection Compliance Data Protection Officer and team in place. ICT systems compliant with Data Protection with PSN accreditation / cyber essentials Mandatory training for all staff Data Protection Privacy notices in place. Data sharing agreements in place Data breach processes in place	Major	Possible	12	Major	Possible	12	0	All emails received from at risk location are quarantined and inspected by ICT staff before being released. See also risk P5 on cyber security. Currently rolling out new training programme for staff on data protection and cyber awareness. PSN accreditation achieved in June. Data Protection awareness currently being rolled out	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	Health & Safety business partner in place to monitor compliance for Publica, with H&S Board and audit / inspection process. New H&S policy in place for Publica. Ubico have specialist H&S Officers and hold ISO45001, the highest level of H&S compliance. Services delivered by Council and Publica are low risk, highest risk is services contracted to Ubico where H&S is paramount.	Major	Remote	8	Major	Remote	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	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.	Minor	Possible	6	Minor	Possible	6	0	Work ongoing to ensure we remain compliant with current legislation and future legislation.	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	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.	Moderate	Probable	12	Moderate	Probable	12	0	Email setup for staff to raise questions about the announcement. Frequently asked questions continue to be updated and reviewed . Work being undertaken on the data required to inform costings. Monitoring being undertaken to measure any impact to services / staffing impact. Officer working group established to deliver the transition plan. All staff briefing completed to update staff on the transition. Agreed that this will take place regularly. Governance arrangements agreed for transition project. Interim MD appointed for Publica. Transition Director appointed. Work being undertaken to establish workstreams and to develop detailed transition plan for Council approval. Work completed by Local Partnerships complete and will be presented in March / April	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	12	0	Cyber Ninja training currently being rolled out across the organisation, which 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. Recent Internal Audit completed. 20/02/24 training session on teams for Members / Group Leaders.	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	9	0	Watching brief should a further pandemic be predicted	Hold	Risk Acceptance & Retention	Risk replaces covid specific risks	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	9	0	CFEU currently developing service risk registers for fraud to further improve awareness and controls.	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 of 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	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	
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 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	Possible	12	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.	Dec-23	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.	Open	
SR2	Climate Emergency	The Council has made a commitment to achieve countywide carbon neutrality as well as a carbon neutrality for the Council's own services. Failure to achieve these targets could result in the Council not meeting its commitments, as well as risk in terms of cost of delivery if the Government does not provide funding for delivery of carbon targets	Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency	1/6/2023	CEO (GH)	Moderate	Probable	12	Desire of Council to become carbon neutral, however affordability and government funding to achieve this may not be in line with ambitions	moderate	possible	9	moderate	possible	9	0	Focused delivery of key projects will be embedded in refreshed Service Delivery Plans. To achieve the targets may require significant further investment.	Mar-23	Risk Reduction	Additional risk due to increasing costs of investment, making business cases difficult	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	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	15/6/2023	AD Communities (AB)		Major	Probable	16	Work continues with GLL to make the service sustainable and affordable in the medium term.	Major	possible	12	0	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	0	March 2024 for first efficiency savings	Risk Reduction		Open		
														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. Governance arrangements for the partnership will be reviewed as part of new model. Uncertainty around the delivery of savings targets through Future Publica with change in delivery model. Potential increase in risk around recruitment and retention during transition / change, which may impact on performance. Interim MD appointed and new Board Chair. See R5 for more detail.						
Major Project Risks																				
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	0		Risk Reduction		Open		
														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						

Likelihood

1	Improbable	Has not occurred before Has not occurred at other similar organisations Extremely unlikely to occur (less than 10% chance) but may do so in at least 10 years time
2	Remote	Remote risk but could happen within next 3 to 10 years Has not occurred in this company group but isolated cases have occurred elsewhere in similar organisations
3	Possible	Could happen at least once every 1 to 3 years New circumstances with little data to indicate likelihood of occurrence 50 / 50 chance of it happening
4	Probable	More likely to happen than not Could occur within next 3 – 12 months Has occurred in the last five years Has occurred at some other similar organisations
5	Almost certain	Has occurred in the last two years Has occurred at many other similar organisations More than an 80% chance of it happening Likely to happen within next three months or is occurring at present

Impact

1	Insignificant	Negligible impact on achievement of service objectives/delivery negligible impact on delivery of project – slight slippage or reduction in quality/scope with no overall impact Negligible financial impact Health and Safety of very small number of individuals affected Limited impact on staff and culture – a few individuals only affected Minor legal/regulatory impact – no sanction or legal action likely No damage to reputation or will not result un adverse media comment
2	Minor	moderate impact on service objectives/delivery – only partially achievable without additional time Some impact on project – slight slippage against published milestones/targets and some 'nice to have' elements not possible Minor injuries possible to relatively small number of individuals Likely to affect motivation of small groups of staff Some legal/regulatory impact – could lead to warnings/threats of sanctions/ legal action Some public embarrassment but no damage to reputation or standing in the community Financial impact can be contained within service budget
3	Moderate	Service objectives/delivery not achievable without considerable additional time / resources moderate effect on project timetable and significant elements of scope or functionality may not be available Moderate number of injuries possible – not life threatening Moderate impact on staff motivation within particular service(s) Significant legal/regulatory impact leading to reprimand, sanctions or legal action

		<p>Some public embarrassment leading to limited reputational damage (adverse local press) – short term impact</p> <p>Financial impact cannot be contained within budget and needs additional resourcing.</p>
4	Major	<p>Significant impact on achievement of service objectives/delivery even with additional resources</p> <p>Failure to / inability to project lead/ness of projects fails to meet needs of / reputation of stakeholders</p> <p>Possibility of serious injury or fatality to individuals</p> <p>Significant impact on employee motivation generally – possibly leading to poor quality services regarding safety / health leading to sanctions or legal action with significant costs to / credibility and public confidence in the service / company (of interest to the national press)</p> <p>Significant financial impact (>£250,000)</p>
5	Extreme	<p>Unable to achieve corporate objective or prolonged closure/withdrawal of service</p> <p>Major projects viability jeopardised through delay or level of quality makes it effectively unusable</p> <p>Possibility of multiple fatalities or serious injuries</p> <p>Severe impact on staff motivation generally, leading to dissatisfaction and industrial unrest</p> <p>Major legal/regulatory impact leading to sanctions or legal action with substantial financial or other consequences</p> <p>Highly damaging to reputation with immediate impact on public confidence</p> <p>Incident of interest to government agencies</p> <p>Incident potentially leading to resignation or dismissal of a Director</p> <p>Severe financial impact</p>

Likelihood	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
Impact						

