

**Report of the Head of Internal Audit,
Anti-Fraud and Assurance**

Audit and Governance Committee – 28th July 2021

STRATEGIC CONCERNS / RISK REGISTER

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 As agreed at the Audit and Governance Committee meeting in March 2021 the committee will have a regular opportunity for a “deep dive review” of some of the strategic risks with the appropriate Executive Director in attendance to update and assure the Committee on the management of their risks
- 1.2 The Executive Director Children Services will provide the committee with a review of two strategic risks:
 - SEND
 - Potential death of a child/safeguarding failure in children’s services

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the update.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 The Strategic Risk Register currently contains 13 risks. Using the new system of risk assessment, SMT have determined that 1 risk be classified as **high** (red rating) 10 risk be classified as **medium** (amber rating) and 2 risks be classified as **low** (green rating) in relation to the level of response and intervention required.
- 3.2 All strategic risks have a number of actions identified to minimise/mitigate the risks. All actions have review/completion dates, status updates, progress RAG ratings and identified Action Owners.
- 3.3 The risk register system will be shown in the meeting.

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Appendix 1

Current Strategic Risks / Concerns – July 2021

No.	Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating	SMT Owner
1	Health Protection Emergency	Need to ensure that robust arrangements in place, are understood by all stakeholders and complied with, to deal with any health protection emergencies which may arise, and which require a Business Continuity response e.g. Covid 19 Pandemic.	Actual	Actual	High	ED Public Health
2	Glassworks	<p>As a key strategic investment for the Council there is a need to ensure the successful delivery of the Glassworks. There are clear financial and reputational implications should the project not be delivered on time, to budget and fail to have the intended economic and social outcomes.</p> <p>The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic will exacerbate the challenges to the High Street/town centre retail sector which could impact on the uptake of retail lettings.</p>	Potential	Actual	Medium	ED Place
3	Serious Economic Downturn in the Local Economy	<p>The impact of Covid 19 will have a significant impact on the local economy with the potential for reduced NDR and CT collection. There is likely to be a continued or accelerated downturn in the retail and visitor economy sector and the collapse of businesses adding to the pressure on the Council and partners' services.</p> <p>As well as the potential impact on the Glassworks and the town centre there are wider community implications for Barnsley, its principal towns and other urban centres</p>	Actual	Actual	Medium	ED Place
4	Potential death of a child/safeguarding failure in children's services	<p>A need to continually appraise the controls to minimise the potential for death of a child or safeguarding failure in children's services - need to be able to identify any changes which may weaken current levels of assurance.</p> <p>Factors which may impact should be assessed include: the impact of Covid 19 upon both families and workforce capacity, increasing poverty which could impact on demands for services and increases in caseloads, future financial settlements which could impact on service provision, awareness of system pressures e.g. workload. If systems break down there is potential for huge reputational damage - seen across a number of UK authorities - including removal of Director of Children's Services, and government imposition of Commissioners to run services until improvements are made.</p>	Potential	Potential	Medium	ED Children's Services

No.	Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating	SMT Owner
5	Educational outcomes progress	Concerns that educational outcomes progress for all children across Barnsley may not be sufficient, with particular concern around improving outcomes for vulnerable groups and boys	Potential	Potential	Medium	ED Children's Services
6	Financial sustainability	The Comprehensive Spending Review (CRS), Fair Funding Review, and Business Rates Retention all take place in the national policy context of significantly impaired national finances which present challenges to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and to the certainty and level of financial resources available to the Council with the loss of funding streams. Additional pressures from Business Continuity events e.g. Covid 19, plus the added impact of the year on year reduction in funding available to the Authority which inevitably creates pressures on the financial position which can undermine the Council's ability to fulfil its strategic priorities and longer-term aspirations	Actual	Actual	Medium	SD Finance
7	Organisational resilience	There is a need to ensure that at the Council's core we have robust mechanisms in place to deal with external issues such as; Brexit, Cyber Security, Terrorism or any other external impact requiring a Business Continuity response.	Actual	Potential	Medium	ED Core
9	Partnership and Collaboration Governance	Many public services are delivered through partnerships or collaboration as well as emerging devolution arrangements; these must be robust, well governed but flexible and responsive to ensure objectives are met. Weak partnerships or collaborative working can lead to the failure of services, significant financial difficulties and reputational damage. Key partnerships are: Integrated Care Partnership Board, Barnsley FC, BCVS, SCRMCA.	Potential	Potential	Medium	ED Core
9	Potential for a safeguarding failure in vulnerable adults service	Whilst we are confident that controls are in place to minimise the potential for safeguarding failures there remains a need to continually appraise these and be able to identify any changes which may weaken current levels of assurance. Factors which may impact and should be assessed include; the impact of Covid 19 upon families and workforce capacity which could increase workload pressures, increasing incidence of poverty which could impact on demands for services and lead to increases in caseloads, future financial settlements could impact on service provision, awareness of pressures in the system e.g. workload pressures leading to decrease in staff attendance at meetings etc. If the system breaks down potential for huge reputational damage.	Potential	Potential	Medium	ED Adults & Communities

No.	Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating	SMT Owner
10	External market provision in Adult Social Care provision	<p>Concerns exist regarding the capacity and sustainability of the external market in adult social care provision. There remains a continuing decline in the ability to recruit into the external care market and sustain safe levels of care.</p> <p>There is no clear market shaping plan and limited capacity to develop it with the potential consequences of people being placed in inappropriate settings with the wrong services. High levels of voids in the market will also significantly threaten capacity and longer-term financial sustainability.</p> <p>The impact of Covid 19 has and will continue to significantly influence the external market and must be fully understood and assessed.</p>	Actual	Actual	Medium	ED Adults & Communities
11	Community cohesion	This remains a key area of focus to ensure that we build and support a tolerant and inclusive community across the Borough.	Potential	Potential	Medium	ED Adults & Communities
12	SEND	Although a new set of controls are in place and the Oversight Board has been developed to ensure that issues identified in the Peer Review Challenge are in place - there remains a need to focus on whether the systems established will be able to support improvements at pace and to the satisfaction of service users and reduce the need to send children out of area which is very expensive and attracts poor satisfaction rates	Potential	Potential	Low	ED Children's Services
13	Consistency of decision-making process	<p>In the current climate of needing to take effective and often urgent decisions (particularly relating to Covid 19) it is essential that the decision-making arrangements across the Authority are clear, robust but flexible, transparent and consistently complied with.</p> <p>Consideration is needed to balance the need for effective decision making with the information required to support it to ensure that the decision-making process is efficient. This must also incorporate the need for effective consultations, whether that is within the Council or with external partners and stakeholders.</p> <p>There also needs to be an appropriate and effective scheme of delegation where Service Directors and Heads of Service are able to take decisions through a simple governance framework but that provides assurances to SMT.</p>	Potential	Potential	Low	ED Core