

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

Audit and Governance Committee – 19th January 2022

STRATEGIC CONCERNS / RISK REGISTER

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 It was agreed at the Audit and Governance Committee meeting in March 2021 that 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 - Adults and Communities will provide the committee with a review of two strategic risks:
 - Potential for a safeguarding failure in Adult Social Care
 - Meeting our statutory responsibilities under the Care Act 2014

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the update.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 The Strategic Risk Register currently contains 16 risks. Using the new system of risk assessment, SMT have determined that 6 risks be classified as **high** (red response rating*) 9 risks be classified as **medium** (amber rating) and 1 risk be classified as **low** (green rating) in relation to the level of response and intervention required.

* The response rating reflects the degree of urgency and importance of the interventions and management rather than the inherent risk.

- 3.2 SMT have reviewed the previous ‘risks’ and made a number of changes reflecting the change in circumstances. Three new risks / areas of strategic focus have been added which are described in the appendix:

Organisational Resilience
Threat of fraud
Zero Carbon, climate, and wider environmental commitments

- 3.3 All strategic risks have several actions identified to minimise/mitigate the risks. All actions have review/completion dates, status updates, progress RAG ratings and identified Action Owners, all of which have been reviewed and updated where necessary.
- 3.4 The actions associated with the 2 risks to be considered in the meeting are included in the attached summary in Appendix 1.

3.5 Appendix 2 provides a high-level summary of all the other strategic risks which includes the high-level risk description, risk impact, status, and response ratings.

3.6 The risk register system will be shown in the meeting.

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Date: 6th January 2022

Strategic Risks to be reviewed in the meeting – January 2022

Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating	SMT Owner
<p>Potential for a safeguarding failure in vulnerable adults service</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Action 1 Assurance regarding the suite of policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed (schedule of review in place)</p> <p>RAG rating – Amber Completion/review dates – review quarterly</p> <p>Action 2 Suite of metrics, indicators and data exists to be able to monitor risks</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review dates – review monthly</p> <p>Action 3 Staff workloads are adequately monitored to ensure consistency and the adherence to good practice</p> <p>RAG rating – Amber Completion/review dates – review monthly</p> <p>Action 4 Changes in working arrangements due to Covid 19 are fully assessed to ensure the continuity of services and that they remain effective</p>	Potential	Potential	Medium	ED Adults & Communities

Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating	SMT Owner
	<p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review dates – review quarterly</p> <p>Action 5 Multi-agency arrangements are robust, adequately governed, and effective and the Safeguarding Board arrangements overseeing the arrangements are fit for purpose and regularly reviewed</p> <p>RAG rating - Green Completion/review dates – review quarterly</p> <p>Action 6 Staffing levels within the Council and care homes are being closely monitored (options for monitoring care home absences are being looked at) at daily SITREP meeting. If these breach agreed levels within the contingency plan, mitigation measures will be recommended for consideration by managers at the appropriate governance forum.</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review date – 11 February 2022</p> <p>Action 7 Case numbers within social care teams are being monitored on a daily basis. These will be broken down into safeguarding/non safeguarding related casework. If there are teams who are struggling with stacked cases, contingency measures will be recommended for consideration by managers at the appropriate governance forum.</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review date – daily reviews via SITREP</p> <p>Action 8 The number of delayed discharges, the situation at the hospital and the number of unsecured packages of homecare are reported at the daily SITREP meeting and other forums.</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review date – daily reviews via SITREP</p>				

Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating	SMT Owner
Meeting our statutory responsibilities under the Care Act 2014	<p>Adult social care is experiencing higher demand on resources as a consequence of level of need arising from discharges from hospital, impact of the pandemic. This is compounded by pressure on the NHS to recover faster, recruitment and retention issues in the care sector and the inadequacy of funding from national government. This may result in long waiting times for assessments and care packages, people in the wrong service for the wrong reason. This could also result in an inability to provide day services for people with a learning disability as resources are redirected to home care.</p> <p>Action 1 Ensure issues, concerns and approaches are escalated, shared and supported.</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review dates – review quarterly</p> <p>Action 2 Collaborating with NHS providers in Barnsley alongside VCSE partners to use resource flexibly to meet need</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review dates – review quarterly</p> <p>Action 3 Influence and Lobbying – ensuring appropriate lobbying regionally via CEX and Leaders Forum and NE&Y NHS England/Improvement</p> <p>RAG rating – Amber Completion/review dates – review quarterly</p> <p>Action 4 Managing expectations – ensuring open dialogue and communication with individuals who receive services, providers of services and carers</p> <p>RAG rating – Amber Completion/review dates – 29 September 2022</p>	Actual	Actual	High	ED Adults & Communities

Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating	SMT Owner
	<p>Action 5 Ensure that data regarding future needs and demands are factored into the MTFS</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review dates – 31 January 2022</p> <p>Action 6 Assurances regarding the current and predicted status of Adult Social Care provision in the Borough</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review dates – 31 January 2022</p> <p>Action 7 Engage with the market to explore options and build appropriate plans to address capacity and quality issues and concerns</p> <p>RAG rating – Green Completion/review dates – 31 January 2022</p>				

All Other Strategic Risks – High Level Summary - January 2022

Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating *	SMT Owner
Potential death of a child/safeguarding failure in children's services	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. 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.	Potential	Potential	High	ED Children's Services
Organisational Resilience	Need to ensure that we understand issues around leadership, general workforce capacity and welfare (exhaustion, fragility) to recognise that organisational resilience is not as high as it was pre-pandemic and therefore continue to find ways for the organisation to recover post pandemic.	Actual	Actual	High	ED Core Services
Threat of fraud	There is a need to ensure that all services are aware of and constantly assess fraud threats and that employee understanding and awareness of potential fraud is good and constantly reviewed.	Actual	Actual	High	ED Core Services
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	High	SD Finance

Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating *	SMT Owner
Zero Carbon, Climate, and wider environmental commitments	Ensuring we have constant regard to our zero carbon, climate, and environmental commitments in how we deliver services and act as a community leader.	Actual	Actual	Medium	ED Place
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	Medium	ED Public Health
Glassworks	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. 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.	Potential	Actual	Medium	ED Place
Inclusive Economy	The impact of Covid 19 has had a significant impact on the local economy with the potential for reduced NDR and CT collection. There has been a continued or accelerated downturn in the retail and visitor economy sector and the collapse of businesses has added to the pressure on the Council and partners' services. As well as the potential impact on the Glassworks and the town centred there are wider community implications for Barnsley, its principal towns, and other urban centres with the risk of increased unemployment, redundancies, and low levels of job opportunities for young people and those furthest from the labour market.	Actual	Actual	Medium	ED Place
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
Emergency Resilience	There is a need to ensure that the Council has robust mechanisms in place to prepare for, respond to and recover from civil emergencies and business interruptions, and comply with the Council's statutory duties as a Category One responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.	Actual	Potential	Medium	ED Core Services

Risk Title	Risk Description	Impact	Status	Response Rating *	SMT Owner
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 Services
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	Medium	ED Children's Services
Consistency of decision-making process	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. 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. 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.	Potential	Potential	Medium	ED Core
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	Low	ED Children's Services

* The Response Rating reflects the urgency and importance of the intervention and management of the 'risk' rather than any inherent risk.