WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

19th September 2012

Subject :	**WILTSHIRE COUNCIL STRATEGIC RISK UPDATE**
Cabinet Member:	**John Brady – Finance, Performance and Risk**
Key Decision:	**No**

Purpose of Report

1.   Risk Management plays a key part in the Corporate Governance of the council and the Risk Management Strategy clearly endorses the importance placed on good governance by the Council.

2.   The Risk Management and Assurance Team have completed a quarterly review of the operational and strategic risks identified facing Wiltshire Council. This report is to update Members on the current position of these risks, Health & Safety Occupational Health and Business Continuity/Emergency Planning.

Background

3.   A key component of the Council's Risk Management Strategy is the regular review of the strategic risks which affect the Council corporately. The review is carried out by senior officers, supported by members of the Corporate Risk Management Group (CRMG), and gives consideration to any changes which may have affected the risk and any opportunities that can benefit the council and its partners and stakeholders from the proper management of those risks.

4.   A review of service risks reported has also been undertaken by the CRMG to assess whether any of the existing risks within service areas need closer focus upon their progress that could have strategic implications and require escalation. **Appendix A** indicates these Operational Risks that could influence the overarching Strategic Risks.

5.   As part of continual improvement to the reporting process, financial risks are reported separately in the budget monitoring and decision making reports and not repeated here. The report endeavours to concentrate on the overall corporate/strategic risks, rather than individual operational risks These are still collated in operational risk registers for individual service areas. The risk around the budget setting and monitoring processes is however monitored through this process.

Main Considerations for the Council

6. Following a review of the strategic risks facing the Council the Corporate Risk Management Group (CRMG) have identified the following:

    - 0 High
    - 9 Medium
    - 7 Low

7. These have been identified and scored by officers using the Councils agreed risk scoring criteria. The changes from the last report to this Committee are:

    7.1 There has been an increased risk in **one** of the Medium risks - *1186 - Violence and aggression to employees from members of the public.* This is an operational issue that has far reaching strategic implications for the Council. A Risk Action Plan is included (**Appendix B**) that highlights the issue and the steps taken to mitigate the risk from rising further and ultimately reduce it.

    7.2 Risk *1173 - Failure to implement the Safeguarding Improvement Plan* has been reduced from High to Medium as a result of progress and resourcing of the current plan.

    7.3 Due to improved awareness and training the risk - *1175 - Inability to adequately fulfil the requirements as a Category 1 responder in the event of an incident or training* has been subsequently reduced.

    7.4 Risk *1063 - Ability to corporately control the maintenance and monitoring of contracts* has been further reduced as the Contract Regulations and new rules for entering contracts have been approved are now live. There may be further reduction in this risk once the standard contracts are put on a centralised database and training for contract officers is complete.

    7.5 The remaining risks have sustained their current status based on the following factors – *agreed tolerance within resources available; awaiting further measures to mitigate risk down*. These risks will continue to receive the appropriate level of oversight from the Risk & Assurance Team and CRMG.

Service Update

Emergency Planning

8. The revised Major Incident Plan has been approved by Cabinet and will be recommended to Council for adoption. The revised plan reflects the current structure of the Council and has been enhanced to assist officers in unfamiliar circumstances by the inclusion of "action cards" for all major roles.

9. Cabinet has also recognised and supported the need for ongoing training and exercising, which is planned.

10. Experience of participating in the Jubilee visit by the Queen, the Olympic torch relay and evening celebration has enhanced officers' knowledge of the dynamics in major event planning.

Business Continuity Management (BCM)

11. The Senior Emergency Planning Officer who led the co-ordination of BCM has left the authority. The vacant post has been successfully recruited to. There are plans to undertake a systems thinking approach to BCM. The opportunity has also been taken to review the approach to BCM with the assistance of external consultants; with the intention of introducing a more streamlined approach that is focussed on critical services.

Health and Safety (H&S)

12. The audit of corporate management of health and safety is well underway. All but four senior managers at time of writing have completed the attitude survey. Over 30 other managers have provided evidence regarding the management practices within their team. An external peer reviewer has met with three Corporate Directors, Business Services Service Director and one elected member. The Head of Occupational Health and Safety will report the findings of the audit in October 2012.

Occupational Health (OH)

13. Increased demand for management referrals coupled with significant staff absences from within the small OH team itself has meant that agency nurse cover has been needed to keep clinic waiting times down to a reasonable level. The brief respite in the numbers of referrals being received, provided by the peak holiday season, should enable normal services to be resumed by September. The increase in management referrals is seen as a positive response to the recent Managers' Workshops on dealing with sickness/absence thus increasing awareness of the services provided.

14. A new pilot is now set up which will fast-track employees, seen by OH with stress-related health issues, onto a half day workshop for coping strategies.

15. Two cases of whooping cough have been confirmed in employees based at Bradley Road. General advice was issued to the workforce via Public Health.

Risk Management Arrangements

16. The CRMG is continuing its work to ensure that the Council's risk management arrangements are working well, that appropriate action is being taken, and that good quality information is being made available to managers and members as appropriate.

17. Neighbourhood services are currently undertaking a review of their service risk register, and the risks will be discussed in the next Management Team meeting. Particular focus will be on safeguarding.

18. The risks are being considered on the resilience of key service areas. As a pilot a full review of risks in Human Resources, Operations are being looked at to include their business continuity plan.

19. A quarterly risk update specifically for Service Directors is being considered. The update would inform Service Directors of risks in their service, highlight any cross cutting risks found in other areas and report issues of risk management within their service. It could also form part of one to one discussions with their Corporate Director on service business arrangements.

Risk Assessment

20. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Equality and Diversity Impact of the Proposal

21. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

22. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Financial Implications

23. None

Legal Implications

24. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Recommendations

25. To note the latest position regarding the Council's Strategic Risks as detailed in **Appendix A** and to support the continued monitoring of these risks.

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Unpublished documents relied upon in the preparation of this Report: None

APPENDIX A
KEY: S = Strategic; O = Operational

Ref	Direction Of Travel	Risk	Current Impact	Current Likelihood	Current Score	Current Risk Rating
1	↔	1014 - Inability to assess, manage / monitor fraud and corruption activity (S)	2	3	6	**Medium**
2	↔	1018 - Launch of Workforce Planning across the organization (S)	2	3	6	**Medium**
3	↔	1026 - Inability to deliver and implement the People Strategy (S)	2	3	6	**Medium**
4	↔	1027 - Ability to ensure the Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing of the organization (S)	3	2	6	**Medium**
5	↔	1037 - Poor quality data used by the Council and associated Partners/Contractors (O)	3	2	6	**Medium**
6	↓	1173 - Failure to implement the Safeguarding Improvement Plan (O)	4	2	8	**Medium**
7	↔	1174 - Failure to maintain an up to date and accurate Partnerships Register (S)	3	3	9	**Medium**
8	↓	1175 - Inability to adequately fulfill the requirements as a Category 1 responder in the event of an incident or training (S)	4	2	8	**Medium**
9	↑	1186 - Violence and aggression to employees from members of the public (O)	3	3	9	**Medium**

Ref	Direction Of Travel	Risk	Current Impact	Current Likelihood	Current Score	Current Risk Rating
1	↔	1045 - Managing the volatile nature of care placement requirements within the resources available – Adult (O)	2	2	4	**Low**
2	↓	1063 - Ability to corporately control the maintenance and monitoring of contracts (S)	2	2	4	**Low**
3	↔	Failure of Transformation Programme to deliver expected savings (S)	2	2	4	**Low**
4	↔	Significant Public Health Incident (S)	4	1	4	**Low**
5	↔	Severe weather incident (O)	4	1	4	**Low**
6	↔	1180 - Transfer of Public Health function to Wiltshire Council (S)	2	2	4	**Low**
7	↔	1182 - Inability of Private/Voluntary sector to deliver services effectively/efficiently (S)	4	1	4	**Low**

APPENDIX B

Risk Ref: 1186	Risk: Violence and aggression to employees from members of the public	Date of Action Plan Update: August 2012

Current Risk Rating:	(High, Med,	Target Risk Rating:	(High, Med,	Progress on Risk
I = 3 L = 3 Current Score = 9	**Medium**	I = 2 L = 2 Target Score = 4	**Low**	**RAG = Amber**

Comment on Current Status of Risk (for use in risk management update reports)
The risk of violence and aggression to employees continues to be a source of concern. There is a significant difficulty in addressing this risk corporately given the very considerable number of different services, control strategies and communication systems being used to help counter the risk and the historical nature of such differences. The current H&S audit is specifically targeting this risk as one of its key considerations and will report its outcomes in October 2012.

Action Plan

Risk Owner	White, Jacqui	Key Officers	Collyer, Paul

Scope / Background to Risk
(Insert information about the risk that explains it further including any history, cause of risk and potential impact and likelihood evaluation information)

| **Cause:** Employees encounter and interact with members of the public (MOP) in a wide variety of circumstances. In some instances these points of contact can result in employees being physically or verbally assaulted or otherwise being subjected to unwanted and unpleasant anti-social behaviours. Such incidents may occur in council buildings, during visits to domestic or commercial premises, during community events and meetings or in a non-work environment where an employee is recognised by a member of the public.
Often incidents go unreported due to either being adjudged to be relatively minor or simply because it would be too time-consuming to report them.
All services where this risk exists have a control strategy in place but there are inconsistencies of approach, particularly in the use of technology and safety aids, and evidence that some employees are not engaging diligently in those strategies anyway.
An attempt to co-ordinate existing knowledge about members of the public known to present a risk to employees has also been less than completely successful. This misinformation has resulted in at least one serious incident which might otherwise have been avoided. Services continue to rely predominantly on their own parochial knowledge only.
Violence and aggression is often associated with lone working and a toolkit to guide managers in lone working arrangements has been available for some time.
Culturally, the tolerance of the risk of violence as being 'part of the job' still exists in some areas particularly in services working with young people and disaffected adults.
The latest annual statistics show that 167 of 638 reported incidents (26%) relate to violence or aggression to non-school employees.

Primary Impact: Personal safety of employees

Secondary Impact: Reputational impact; Legal enforcement |
|---|

Controls in place to manage risk
1. Corporate H&S Policy in respect of Violence and Aggression and Lone Working including a manager's toolkit with specific exemplar guidance.
2. Employee Safety Register provides details of MOP known to present a risk plus dangerous animals and unsafe premises.

3. Individual services maintain other local databases relating to known offenders.
4. Many employees will have had bespoke and generic training in skills relating to recognising signs of danger; defusing difficult situations, handling aggressive phone calls; breakaway techniques.
5. Services engage a variety of communication tools and techniques to record employee movements and escalate assistance in the event of an incident.
6. Some public access points in council premises are designed or set up to mitigate the risk of physical contact or to facilitate easy withdrawal and summon assistance.
7. All relevant services are expected to have local risk assessment and procedures specifically designed to reduce the potential for violence and aggression.

Actions to take to improve the management of this risk OR Contingency Arrangements	Responsibility for action	Date for completion	Progress / Status Report for Improvement Actions
Corporate Health & Safety Audit is examining the management of the risk in 10 specific services.	Collyer, Paul	31 October 2012	Underway
Establish project plan to promote a consistent and proportionate control strategy across all services.	Collyer, Paul	31 December 2012	Pending outcome of audit report and steer from CLT and CRMG
Legal and data Protection advice being sought regarding the scale and scope of information that can/should be held on a central database of MOP known to present a risk to employees.	Collyer, Paul	31 December 2012	Underway
Review if other local authorities have the equivalent of an Employee Safety Register and if they do; how it is managed and is it a successful tool.	Speller, Eden	31 October 2012	Underway
Review of reported incidents	Collyer, Paul	31 October 2012	Underway