Wiltshire Council Strategic Risk and Issues Summary - 2023/24

This summary gives details of issues the council is dealing with, the strategic risk register and emerging risks that may need to be quantified in the future. A guide to reading the risk register is included below.

Issues

Obstacles and Challenges that are now present and being managed as issues by Wiltshire Council

Unable to meet demand for special educational needs or disability (SEND)	The Council was invited to take part in the DfE's Safety Valve programme in July 2023 due to the cumulative deficit in the High Needs Budget from DSG. Following consultation with stakeholders, including parent/carers, the Council's Safety Valve management plan was approved by the DfE in March 2024, with funding of £67m from 2023/24 to 2028/29. The Safety Valve (SEND transformation) funding will be paid in six tranches and, should the agreed actions prevent costs escalating, the cumulative deficit would be reduced to £70m by 2028/29. The Council's intention is that this remaining deficit will be met by the Council's own high needs earmarked reserve. However, if the statutory override is removed by government in 2025/26 then this reserve would not be sufficient to meet the projected HNB DSG deficit at that point in time (£92.9m).

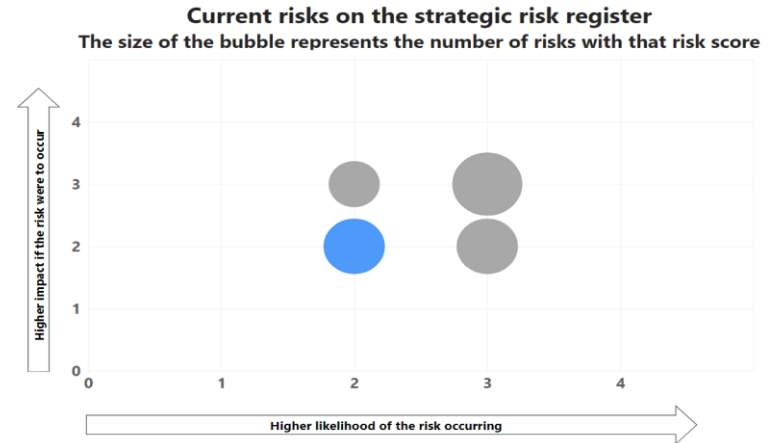|	
Staff Capacity: Recruitment and retention	Some, but not all, service areas have identified that this has now become an issue, with there being a range of factors at play in different labour markets. These include: - A smaller national workforce (less European immigration, earlier retirement/semi-retirement following the pandemic, increased numbers of those on out of work benefits) and closer to full employment. - Specific skills shortages. - Competition from the private sector and from other public sector organisations. - The impact of the increase in the cost of living making higher wages more important. - The cost increase of driving for those who have to travel in their role. The result is that some services are now impacted by insufficient staffing.

How to read the Strategic Risk Register

There are significant challenges for Wiltshire Council as it looks to empower people, build stronger communities, grow the county's economy and lead the way in tackling climate change. The Strategic Risk Register reflects these challenges. Information that has significance across the council as a whole is displayed in two categories on the Strategic Risk Register:

1. Critical service risks: significant risks that sit in a single service but which, should they become an issue, will have a significant impact on the council as a whole.
2. Composite strategic risks: where similar risks exist in a number of different services which would not have a significant impact on the organisation on their own but put together represent a significant impact. These risks are compiled into a single strategic composite risk and included within the strategic risk register.

Each risk is fully defined by the responsible service (who assess the cause, event and effect that make up the identified risk) and is reviewed quarterly. Each risk is scored for likelihood and impact to give an overall score. A risk is initially scored as the original, untreated (inherent) risk without any mitigations in place, and then again as the current, treated (residual) risk with existing mitigation actions on place. The confidence in the current implementation of these mitigating actions is assessed as high, moderate or low. The current risk as it is now is used to assess where the risk is relative to the appetite set, and is used for the graph.

Current risks on the strategic risk register
The size of the bubble represents the number of risks with that risk score

Strategic Risk Register - ranked by the current (residual) risk score - the risk as it is now with current mitigating actions in place

Risk ID	Risk short name	Cause	Event	Effect	Primary Risk Category	Secondary Risk Category	Owner	Risk Response	Original Likelihood * Impact	Original Risk Score	Mitigation Actions	Actions Confidence	Current Likelihood * Impact	Current Risk Score	Direction of travel	Current score vs. appetite
2 PC01	Limited capacity in the social care market	Changes in the local market (including recovery from the pandemic) means there is insufficient supply of Independent Fostering Agencies, Children's Homes, provision (Residential and Supported Living) for complex needs (including people with complex behavioural needs)	Too often provision has to be secured out of county, often in competition with other local authorities at a cost higher than the local market, on a spot purchase.	The right type of care and/or accommodation is not always available, budgetary pressure increases if people are in spot provision.	Service Delivery	Financial	Alison Elliott	Treat	4 * 4	16	Continue to monitor. Agreed to look at intervening in the market and piloting alternative support options.	Moderate	3 * 3	9	▶	Within
3 PL02	Failure to manage housing development	Lack of a 5 year land supply	Loss of control over the location of new development	Non-plan led housing development may be granted consent through the appeal process; Allowing development where we don't want it; Increase in costs - defending appeals; Pressure on staff.	Legal	Reputation	Nic Thomas	Treat	4 * 3	12	Updated our 5 year land supply in April. Development Management teams are seeking to approve applications where there are no major policy obstacles, Spatial Planning continue to support neighbourhood plans to bring forward housing sites, in addition to encouraging developers to bring forward allocated sites. We do have an improved position, but still short of the 5 years. Progress on the local plan is still being given a priority.	Moderate	3 * 3	9	▶	Within
4 PC02	Increasing cost of social care	Changes in regulation (including the cost of increased infection prevention, control measures, insurance costs), workforce pressures and inflationary pressures in the care market	Recommissoining of frameworks. Each individual care package cost increases for complex individuals.	Greater budgetary pressure to meet statuary requirements impacting on preventative and other spend	Financial	Service Delivery	Alison Elliott	Tolerate	3 * 3	9	Uplift process in place to monitor every request for an uplift, and joint work with operational colleagues to monitor risk.	Moderate	3 * 3	9	▶	Within
5 IT03	Cyber Resilience	Malicious attacks from either internal or external individuals or organisations with the intent of stealing data or impacting the council's ability to deliver services.	Wiltshire Council's security is compromised opening up access to councils systems and personal and corporate data for malicious activity.	Loss of personal or corporate information OR loss or interruption of some or all council services delivered to citizens of Wiltshire.	Service delivery	Reputation	Mark Tucker	Treat	3 * 3	9	Work continues around recovery plans. A new plan is in place with a phased delivery over the next two years supported by a new Cybersecurity Strategy that's currently in draft and will be issued once reviewed and agreed by all the relevant stakeholders..	High	3 * 3	9	▶	Within
6 FI23	Excessive Inflation	Inflation rates significantly increase or remain at sustained high rates	Inability to contain costs within budget set	Overspend, draw from reserves, inabiity to fund priorities	Financial	Service Delivery	Lizzie Watkin	Treat	3 * 4	12	Reserves strategy; robust budget assumptions; s25 assessment of risk, robustness and resilience (to this and other financial risks)	High	3 * 2	6	▶	Within

Strategic Risk Register - ranked by the current (residual) risk score - the risk as it is now with current mitigating actions in place

Risk ID	Risk short name	Cause	Event	Effect	Primary Risk Category	Secondary Risk Category	Owner	Risk Response	Original Likelihood * Impact	Original Risk Score	Mitigation Actions	Actions Confidence	Current Likelihood * Impact	Current Risk Score	Direction of travel	Current score vs. appetite
7 EN03	Increasing vulnerability to climate impacts	Inability to adapt key infrastructure and services to increasingly severe weather impacts from climate change.	Increased impacts from more frequent and intense weather events such as flooding, droughts, heatwaves and storms.	Direct impact on health, safety, environment, businesses, infrastructure and natural environment. Impact on service delivery, costs, insurance, vulnerable people, assets.	Health & Safety	Service Delivery	Sarah Valdus	Treat	3 * 4	12	The council's climate adaptation plan is currently being reviewed and will identify what measures can be put in place to prepare council services and the county for these climate impacts. Due to the costs associated with implementing some of these measures and the long term nature of these impacts, it is likely this risk will remain high even once a plan is in place.	Moderate	3 * 2	6	▼	Within
8 LG22	Impact of negative media/social media coverage on council	Potential negative reaction to council decision making and delivery of services.	Negative public reaction expressed via social media and through the media	Negative impact on council's reputation.	Reputation	Reputation	Ceri Tocock	Tolerate	2 * 3	6	Good controls in place include horizon scanning, working closely with directorate SMTs and trained members of staff ready to respond to incidents.	High	2 * 3	6	►	Within
9 LG08	Information Governance	Failure to manage corporate information effectively in keeping with Data Protection Act Principles, Freedom of Information legislation, cyber security requirements and the management of records under the Local Government Transparency code.	1) Personal Information not obtained and / or processed fairly. 2) Excessive information obtained and held beyond service purpose. 3) Information held for longer than purpose requires. 4) Information not accurately captured / maintained or kept current. 5) Information not protected by adequate technical measures. 6) Sensitive information inappropriately disclosed either verbally, on paper or electronically. 7) Failure to provide adequate resource to ensure the Council meets its requirements under data protection/GDPR, Freedom of Information, cyber security and record management requirements.	Reputational damage with potential of fine from the Information Commissoner's Office. Loss of strategic, corporate, sensitive and secure information. Untrained managers and staff, not familiar with basic awareness and responsibilities of good information management. Unlawful use and / or disclosure of personal data results in Risk and distress to individuals concerned. Lack of strategic and corporate understanding from Senior Leadership team can impact on service delivery, organisation reputation and may result in a loss of resource.	Legal	Financial	Jo Madeley	Treat	3 * 2	6	Good engagement and collabaration in place across the organisation. Policies and set processes in place that ensure audit trails around decision making are recorded. Annual e-learning in place which provides an overview of what staff should consider across the 4 key workstreams. IG pages regularly updated on EPIC hub, which highlights responsibilites, policies and process. Information Management and Governance Board which is attended by Senior Leadership to ensure a corporate and strategic overview.	Moderate	3 * 2	6	►	Within
10 FI12	Income Collection	Decrease in levels of income due to lower payment rates, take up of services or increase default rates	Failure to collect income as expected and budgeted for, complicated by the implications of moving from SAP to ORACLE	Increased financial pressure on other service areas in order to deliver a balanced budget across the Council as a whole which results in cuts to those other services spend.	Financial	Reputation	Lizzie Watkin	Treat	2 * 3	6	Additional budget monitoring with all heads of service, more training on Oracle, especially the production of invoices. More involvement with Finance who will steer the debt collection process	Moderate	2 * 3	6	►	Within
11 PH01	Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing	Inadequate or ineffective control strategy is established	Lack of application by managers and individuals of corporate policy and procedures	Likelihood of personal harm increases.	Health & Safety	Health & Safety	Sanjay Dhir	Tolerate	2 * 2	4	CLT paper commissioned to reassess levels of H&S compliance and governance thereof during 2024.	Moderate	2 * 2	4	►	Within
12 FI06	Budget management	New unfunded project, unforeseen demand or failure to make planned savings	Inability to deliver key statutory services within the service-level budget envelope	Increased financial pressure on other service areas in order to deliver a balanced budget across the authority as a whole which results in cuts to those other services spend.	Financial	Reputation	Lizzie Watkin	Treat	3 * 2	6	Being captured through budget monitoring process and RAG rated savings tracker will ensure savings are met	Moderate	2 * 2	4	►	Within

Strategic Risk Register - ranked by the current (residual) risk score - the risk as it is now with current mitigating actions in place

Risk ID	Risk short name	Cause	Event	Effect	Primary Risk Category	Secondary Risk Category	Owner	Risk Response	Original Likelihood * Impact	Original Risk Score	Mitigation Actions	Actions Confidence	Current Likelihood * Impact	Current Risk Score	Direction of travel	Current score vs. appetite
13 EN02	**Not on track for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030**	Lack of prioritisation for carbon reduction by other council departments	Financial considerations mean decisions are made not to undertake carbon reduction activity	Wiltshire Council fails to be carbon neutral by 2030	Service Delivery	Reputation	Sarah Valdus	Tolerate	2 * 2	**4**	The council continues to put in place carbon reduction and renewable energy projects	Moderate	2 * 2	**4**	▶	Within

Emerging Risks

Events that have the potential to interrupt the work of the Council but of which not enough is yet known to quantify the risk to the delivery of our services.

Continuing financial impact of global events	International capital and energy markets remain impacted by conflict and speculative investment are likely to sustain additional inflationary pressure in the UK. Although inflation is slowly coming down, this is not fast enough to be in line with our budget assumptions. Volatility in global markets and events still presents a risk to UK inflation. Disruption to global supply chains causing shortages, more inflation and potentially more demand for support of council services. A more uncertain world could mean a more insular economy and lower UK market sentiment meaning less investment in Wiltshire.
Additional service pressures	As the Council operates in a multi-agency environment with complex and intricate dependencies, it could be adversely impacted by the actions of others (including short term workforce pressures, greater service demand or budgetary constraints).