



City of Wolverhampton Council – Strategic Risk Register

Risks reviewed by risk owners as reported to the Audit and Risk Committee

| Risk Ref | Risk title and description | | Previous Risk Score | Current Risk and Target Score | Direction of Travel | Update position and further actions to take to mitigate risks | Sources of Assurance |
|----------|--|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 | <p>Impact on the Council services due to Businesses Closing</p> <p>Loss of businesses within the City, potentially impacting on employer support programmes, the regeneration and the achievement of the Council Plan.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Richard Lawrence Cabinet Member: Cllr S Simkins</p> | Thriving economy in all parts of the city | 8 Amber | 8 Amber Target 4 Amber |  | <p>The ratio of businesses opening to closing for quarter 1 2023 is showing that, for the first time since Q1 2020, there have been more closures than new businesses opeing during the last 3 quarters of 2022. This is likely linked to Russia's invasion of Ukraine at the beginning of 2022 and rising inflation and interest rates which have contributed to an increased cost of living for both businesses and consumers.</p> <p>Ongoing challenges in the global economy continue to affect businesses in the city. The council continues to work closely with WMCA to develop new packages to assist the city's business support in different sectors. This includes the development of the Wolverhampton Employer Support scheme, utilising the UK Shared Prosperity Funds to target specific support activities at different business sectors in the City.</p> <p>The number of business closures has seen a huge rise – 170% during quarter 1 2023 compared to those reported in quarter 4 2022.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>The council continues to work in partnership with the University of Wolverhampton and the Black County Chamber of Commerce to offer support to new and young businesses at Ignite. This is a free to use business and enterprise hub which offers professional environment and business advice and guidance working with partners and private sector.</p> | <p>Work is underway with partners and other stakeholders to identify current business support programmes to help the city economy The activity and programmes will be informed by, and seek to align to, city strategic objectives including the emerging Strategic Economic Plan</p> <p>IGNITE: An internal audit review of the business and enterprise hub is planned for later in 2023 with a future options appraisal being developed ahead of this.</p> <p>Ongoing liaison with other local and regional partners such as the West Midlands Growth Company, Chamber of Commerce and University of Wolverhampton to develop and respond to specific sector support opportunities.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Safeguarding Children</p> <p>Failure to safeguard the City's most vulnerable children.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Emma Bennett Cabinet Member: Cllr C Burden</p> | Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their potential | 8 Amber | 8 Amber Target 8 Amber |  | <p>Referrals into MASH 24 remain at a consistent level. However, there has been a month on month increase in rereferrals over the last 18 months, now placing Wolverhampton above national and statistical neighbours in this area.</p> <p>There continues to be an increase in social work turnover, although the annual turnover rate still remains below national levels. Additionally, in line with the national and regional position there is a shortage of suitable agency social workers to back fill temporary vacancies we have created by secondment opportunities, and maternity leave. This does mean that we have seen an increase in the number of children social workers are working with, particularly in the Disabled Children and Young People's team and in the Strengthening Families Services.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>The deep dive into rereferrals in to the MASH24 has provided reassurance re the safeguarding of children in the city .There are some changes to process and practice as recommendations from this report which are being implemented. This area will continue to be subject to close scrutiny and raised with Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together (WST) to deep dive offered reassurances regarding consistent application of threshold.</p> <p>Actions are being taken to try to attract experienced agency workers locally and regionally to cover short term vacancies whilst we also recruit to vacant permanent posts. Actions to support this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The regional memorandum of understanding regarding the use of agency workers within the West Midlands has been updated and implemented• Recruitment is ongoing to recruit permanent social workers, both newly qualified and experienced social workers. Recruitment processes have been adapted to speed up start dates for new employees.• Rebranding of recruitment material has been developed• A review of progression opportunities for experienced social workers has taken place with the creation of senior social work roles for experienced child protection social workers.• A review of pay and incentives offered by neighbouring authorities has been taken to ensure Wolverhampton remain competitive in the market. Subject to approval it is proposed that the City of Wolverhampton Council will reimburse social workers for their annual registration fees with the regulating body Social Work England, in line with other councils regionally and nationally <p>There is a risk that the Council is unable to identify suitable placements registered with Ofsted for children in care with highly complex needs who are subject to a court authorised Deprivation of Liberty (DoL) Order, due to insufficient placement options both internally and externally being available.</p> <p>If suitable placements registered with Ofsted are not identified, it is necessary to set up bespoke caring arrangements for children in care with complex needs subject to a DoL Order. It is an offence under section 11 of the Care Standards Act 2000 to carry on or manage a children's home without registration and these bespoke arrangements are regarded as children's homes by Ofsted. Ofsted may carry out an investigation into whether an offence has been and/or is continuing to be committed. If the evidence meets the test for prosecution, they may instigate a prosecution against the company and/or any individual director, manager or secretary of the company. The City of</p> | <p>Internal Quality Assurance report, alongside monthly analysis of performance information offers Senior Leadership Team reassurance regarding practice.</p> <p>Rereferrals into MASH 24 is regularly monitored and a deep dive into this area has taken place</p> <p>Quality assurance and performance information is shared with SEB, Cabinet Member and the Leader regularly, together with Ofsted on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Senior leaders have regular oversight of the number of children that social workers are working with.</p> <p>Positive outcome of Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services (21 March - 1 April 2022) with services rated overall as Good offering external reassurance that children and families are supported and safeguarded well in Wolverhampton.</p> <p>Assurance provided to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Partnership through a number of mechanisms including scrutiny of practice through priority groups and specific activity such as the Covid response group and Multi-agency casefile audits and external scrutineer report. Reviews of the impact of learning from Children's Safeguarding Practice Reviews is also assured through the One Panel.</p> <p>Appropriate serious incident referrals are made to the Safeguarding Partnership to consider if a learning review needs to be undertaken into specific incidents. This ensures where appropriate, practice is independently scrutinised and lessons learned.</p> <p>The Leader/Cabinet Member/SEB and CYP Scrutiny panel are briefed every 6 months to offer reassurance regarding safeguarding of the children in the city.</p> <p>A multi-agency response is in place to work with young people to reduce potential of further violent crimes within the city. This response includes universal responses and more targeted approaches with individuals most at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two reports (Phase One:Exploitation thematic and Phase Two Knife Crime thematic) commissioned by Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together in response to three incidents of serious youth violence which culminated in death or serious injury between April and June2022 to gain additional assurance of efficacy and robustness of current systems .• These will help gain further insights from stakeholders including parents• Deep dive of rapid review sample to understand commonalities and themes• Gain insight into perpetrators and victims <p>Regular oversight by senior leadership team of children placed in unregulated settings.</p> <p>Children are represented by advocates.</p> <p>Independent Reviewing Officers review the child ensuring the care provision continues to meet need and utilises escalation processes where needed to SLT.</p> <p>The care provision is monitored through partnership External Placement Panel (EPP).</p> <p>Oversight by court of placements where children are subject to Deprivation of Liberty Orders</p> |

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| | | | | | | <p>Wolverhampton Council has received two such warning letters in response to two bespoke temporary care arrangements.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate notification to Ofsted if children are placed in unregulated settings followed by regular updates to Ofsted. 3-5 times a week multi-agency meeting with the provider chaired by Head of Service to ensure ongoing care arrangements continue to meet child's needs where bespoke arrangements are in place Continued search for alternative registered provision. (neither bespoke provisions are currently operating) Approval by Cabinet Resources Panel to establish 2 small family homes run by CWC that will be registered with Ofsted to care for up to 2 children with highly complex need in each of the homes. | |
| 3 | <p>Safeguarding Adults Failure to safeguard the City's most vulnerable adults.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Becky Wilkinson Cabinet Member: Cllr J Jaspal</p> | Fulfilled lives for all with quality care for those that need it | 12 Amber | 12 Amber Target 8 Amber | ↔ | <p>There continues to be an increase in Safeguarding referrals which impacts on the ability to ensure a timely response.</p> <p>There are a significant number of referrals that are inappropriate and do not meet the criteria for a safeguarding enquiry.</p> <p>The nature of referrals being received are more complex meaning they take longer to review and conclude.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>The long-term plan to manage the increase in demand is being considered through the Adult Social Care redesign. Workstream set up to review Family Front door and MASH responses.</p> <p>A peripatetic team will be considered as part of our redesign – better able to respond as needed.</p> <p>Updated recruitment adverts and templates are now available for recruiting managers to use. The benefits of working for our Council are highlighted, demonstrating our strengths-based approach to social work and the vibrancy and diversity of our city.</p> <p>Electronic Multi Agency Referral Form in development, this will enable inappropriate safeguarding referrals to be screened and appropriately sign posted/responded to.</p> | <p>Additional social work and management resource in the MASH.</p> <p>Implementation of the electronic multi-agency referral form (EMARF) and launch of local practice guidance to improve the appropriateness of referrals.</p> <p>Development of new pathways to provide a more timely response from the right team.</p> <p>Monthly Information Sharing meetings take place with Care Quality Commission and partner agencies to share concerns and plan actions.</p> <p>Regular safeguarding updates, quality assurance and performance data shared with SEB, Cabinet Member, Council Leader.</p> <p>CQC readiness review took place in February 2023, with positive feedback received with respect to Waiting Lists and Safeguarding Approach.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Reputation / Loss of Public Trust There is a risk that the Council loses public trust and confidence by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> failing to respond to the needs of local people, especially those most vulnerable failure to inform the public about delivery of key City priorities. <p>Risk Owner: Ian Fegan Cabinet Member: Leader's Portfolio</p> | Our Council | 10 Amber | 10 Amber Target 10 Amber | ↔ | <p>Maintaining public trust and confidence is essential to the effective and efficient operation of public services. The way in which the Council delivers upon local people's priorities and how it deals with old, new and emerging challenges e.g. finances, the pandemic, cost of living crisis, helps determine levels of trust and confidence which are essential to measuring reputation. The Council is delivering a number of key city priorities that need to be delivered efficiently and effectively including delivering opportunities for young people, regeneration and investment projects, a high-quality events programme and tackling health inequalities.</p> <p>SEB and Cabinet are aware of the issues and challenges facing local people and developed Our City: Our Plan – the Council plan, which was launched last year and provides a framework on how we will deliver our objectives to ensure Wulfrunians live longer, healthier lives.</p> <p>The plan aims to demonstrate that we are dealing with the things that matter to local residents and businesses. Keeping stakeholders informed through proactive and sustained communication will help to demonstrate that we are dealing with the things that matter, thereby building trust and confidence in, as well as support for the Council's work.</p> <p>The corporate communications team will continue to support service leads to provide timely, relevant and accurate information on council services in order to build and maintain public trust and confidence in the council.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>The council has prioritised connecting residents with support to help tackle the cost of living crisis. Following the launch of the Council's Financial Wellbeing Strategy last year, a bespoke communications strategy and plan was developed and is being delivered. All other interventions for those in need, including financial support, is included in the plan.</p> <p>A Cost of Living public information campaign was launched early this year to ensure residents are aware of what support is available and how to access it.</p> | <p>Data provided by Insight and Performance team relating to key city challenges.</p> <p>Monitoring of local media.</p> <p>Monitoring of social media channels.</p> <p>Monitoring of external stakeholder environment.</p> <p>Data via the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system on customer calls and issues logged.</p> <p>Councillor Enquiry Unit data issues logged.</p> <p>Engagement with residents to shape services e.g. Lifestyle Survey and LGBT+ consultation Reviewing data for those accessing Cost of Living (COL) support</p> <p>The support content is currently under review and will be updated as appropriate.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Social Care Providers Adults There is a risk that we may lose service providers and not be able to maintain adequate service provision.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Becky Wilkinson</p> | Fulfilled lives for all with quality care for those that need it | 12 Amber | 12 Amber Target 9 | ↔ | <p>The factors contributing to the risks to our providers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market pressures – fragility of the care market and increased risk of provider failure/sufficiency of provision. Risk of Providers being rated as inadequate following inspection post Covid. Cost of living crisis (inflation and increase in fuel prices) Workforce pressures - challenges with recruitment and retention of staff. Retention of experienced Registered Managers. | <p>Fee uplift agreed at CRP February 2023 which has ensured Wolverhampton is paying a competitive rate for placements and addresses cost pressures highlighted by the sector.</p> <p>With respect to quality, work is underway with OneWolverhampton to produce a Quality Assurance Framework, which will be adopted by all partners and cover all aspects of residential care. This work will also seek to ensure a package of support and training is available for Registered Managers, particularly those new to role.</p> |

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| | Cabinet Member: Cllr J Jaspal | | | | | <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>Risks to sustainability are being mitigated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust outbreak management processes and robust Quality Assurance Check (QAC) visits Use of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Capacity tracker for updates from provider organisations Exploring interim financial support measures for providers to mitigate against key risks to care delivery <p>Risk is amber due to resource and cost of living pressures. Provider support call has been stood up due to these challenges.</p> | Robust provider failure process, which ensures co-ordinated response and that people remain safe whilst alternative care arrangements are made. |
| 6 | <p>Employee Wellbeing There is a potential impact on the health and wellbeing of the Council's staff due to unprecedented levels of service demand and changes to working practices.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Laura Phillips Cabinet Member: Cllr P Brookfield</p> | Our Council | 12 Amber | 12 Amber Target 8 Amber | ↔ | <p>Employee well-being continues to be a Council priority, a number of initiatives have been embedded for employees which include (but are not limited to) the Council's Our People Portal, access to mental health first aiders, access to face to face well-being checks and work-outs led by WV-Active, the introduction of Council wide wellbeing leads and the creation of wellbeing pledges.</p> <p>Organisational Development (OD) are continuing to work with Human Resources and Health and Safety to monitor, analyse and proactively respond to sickness absence data to ensure appropriate support is provided for employee health and wellbeing.</p> <p>We continue to monitor the health and wellbeing of our employees and the effectiveness of Our People support offer. Targeted work is continuing with our frontline workers and there has been increased engagement initiatives and communications regarding health and wellbeing across the organisation.</p> <p>The OD team have carried out site visits to provide support information and signpost the current offer around health and wellbeing for our employees. The Wellbeing@work pages on the Our People portal are updated weekly to ensure employees have access to the most up to date wellbeing information.</p> <p>We continue to support employees with the cost-of-living crisis by providing resources and support on financial wellbeing. We promote the support and resources available on a regular basis through a range of communication channels, including City People, toolbox talks, site visits and employee forums to ensure people are signposted to the support available.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>A new Head for Health programme has been launched to support mental and physical health, we will monitor the impact and outcomes of this.</p> <p>We have completed an employee Mental Health survey, analysed the results and prepared an action plan to respond to our employees needs in terms of support, advice and guidance as mental health sickness absence continues to be on the increase within the Council and nationally.</p> <p>Our Employee Assistance Programme is being reviewed – the results of the mental health survey will help inform the procurement exercise for this and the content of the Our People Portal is under review in response to the mental health survey outcomes.</p> | <p>Operational Health and Wellbeing Group</p> <p>Our People Board</p> <p>Employee Surveys</p> <p>Professional Conversations which include discussions around well-being</p> <p>SafeSpace Reporting Line</p> <p>Mental Health Support App for employees (My Possible Self)</p> <p>Regular employee communications and engagement digitally and physically (OD Wellbeing Roadshows – 17 to date) to ensure all employees have the resources/support available.</p> |
| 8 | <p>City Centres – Council Led Development Projects</p> <p>There is a potential impact on the City if the Council do not take effective action to regenerate and repurpose. In addition, there are risks to ongoing Council managed and operated capital projects and programmes in terms of costs, timings and ensuring that original business cases continue to align with the Council's strategic aims.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Richard Lawrence Cabinet Member: Cllr S Simkins</p> | <p>Thriving economy in all parts of the city</p> <p>Good homes in well connected neighbourhoods</p> | 12 Amber | 12 Amber Target 8 Amber | ↔ | <p>The Levelling Up Board continues to monitor the City-wide regeneration and Levelling Up agenda to Our City Our Plan objectives as part continuous engagement with DLUHC, Homes England and West Midlands Combined Authority.</p> <p>The Regeneration Capital Project Board provides a clear mandate and cross directorate decision making forum that will have a read across existing corporate assurance decision making processes. This will provide continued assurance and escalation processes for key capital programmes.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A resource plan is being developed to review externally funded programmes over the next 18-24 months of programme. The Council continues to work with partners and stakeholders to mitigate risk and continue operations in accordance with Government guidelines. Engagement and the progress of grant funding request to deliver programmes continue with WMCA, Homes England and DLUHC. Inflationary pressures provide an increase in project risk and viability by both the Public and Private Sector on the delivery of Capital Programmes and the Council ensure sufficient contingency budgets are in place (both inflation and construction related) and a review of output realisation are regularly reviewed in light of these pressures. | <p>The Regeneration Capital Project Board is supported by the Regeneration Capital Project Advisors Group made up of key officers in their particular areas of specialism to undertake robust assurance and due diligence of recommendations submitted to Board. Decisions will be subject to audit and provide clear visibility and scrutiny.</p> <p>Internal audit review planned for key capital schemes (CLQ) and funding bids (Levelling Up Round 2 bid process).</p> |
| 9 | <p>High Unemployment There is a risk that high levels of unemployment caused by historic trends and more recently the impact of Covid will persist and the gap</p> | <p>Thriving Economy in all parts of the city</p> <p>More local people into</p> | 16 Red | 16 Red Target 12 Amber | ↔ | <p>Unemployment levels continue to be high within Wolverhampton, a summary of the December 2022 provisional data is provided below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 12,415 (7.5%) claimants in the working age group (16+) in December 2022, which is down from 7.95% for December 2021. However, the city still has the 2nd highest unemployment claimant rate in England. | The Insights team provide detailed monthly analysis of the unemployment data in the City and have provided comprehensive analysis of the historical picture and present trends – which show a general improvement from pandemic peaks. This data monitoring work is now firmly embedded into the ongoing Wolves at Work 18-24 Programme arrangements. Although it is important to this the analysis is undertaken, and reported against, all age groups. |

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| | <p>between Wolverhampton and other areas will continue to grow without focused action.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Emma Bennett Cabinet Member: Cllr L Miles</p> | good jobs and training | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">There are 2,970 (6.1%) claimants in the 50+ age group, up slightly from 3,110 (6.4%) in December 2021. This is the 9th highest claimant rate in England for this cohort.There are 2,150 (10.1%) claimants in the 18-24 age group in December, which is the second highest claimant rate in England. <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>Wolves at Work continues to offer its employment support service for job seekers of all ages. Regular “Let’s Talk Jobs” sessions are held, focusing on either vacancies in a particular sector or for specific employer, to which all those organisations who advise job seekers are invited, to hear about the opportunities in detail.</p> <p>Drop-in information/screening sessions, to support Strategic Employers and other large scale vacancies operate weekly/bi-weekly dependent on employer need.</p> <p>The Council £3 million Wolves at Work 18-24 Programme is well underway, with a number of initiatives, including the City Ideas Fund, which has awarded over £212,000 to local organisations to implement a wide range of activities, to help young people access the world of work. The Youth Summits continue to take place across the city, bringing young people together with employers and training providers to understand the barriers facing the young people, and to find ways to collectively work together to create opportunities. Vacancies are being promoted to a wider audience via Wolves Workbox and its regular newsletters, whereby job seekers are able to apply for jobs directly.</p> <p>Black Country Impact (BCI) continues to deliver support to those aged 16-29 across Wolverhampton and will continue to do so until the funding ends in mid-2023. Currently there is £1.31 million available to support this age group, with a heavy focus on upskilling the workforce via vocational and L3 upwards qualifications in order to provide sustainability. Activity to date has seen 749 BCI participants offered employment, with a view to this increasing to 1,200 in the next 11 months (the remainder of contract).</p> <p>The Restart Scheme was rolled out in June 2021, and referrals to programme will continue until June 2024 at the earliest. Currently the council has £1.64 million in funding to support residents, for up to 12 months, across Wolverhampton. The council is one of four Restart Scheme providers in the city. Since the start of the programme, Wolves at Work have worked (or continue to work) with over 600 people, and have supported residents into 250 local jobs.</p> <p>There will be additional resource in the Connexions team to provide 121 careers advice and guidance to young people with SEND; a new Supported Employment service for residents with learning disabilities started in September 2022 and targeted SEND Education, Employment and Training support workers are being employed.</p> <p>More intensive work with DWP is being undertaken to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the claimant groups and their needs for employment and skills supportUnderstand the current provision and to identify gaps that are preventing residents from securing sustainable employment. <p>Planning for Shared Prosperity Fund programme to ensure all interventions meet local employment and skills needs.</p> <p>Submission of funding application for year 2 of the Youth Hub after a successful first year of operation.</p> <p>The Black Country Impact programme has been extended until 31 October 2023, and the team are working with the City of Wolverhampton College at the new Youth Hub, which has opened on its Bilston campus.</p> <p>April 2023 Planning underway for commonwealth games legacy fund programmes around employment support and careers.</p> | <p>The Wolves at Work 18-24 Programme has been established and there is a pipeline of planned activity with a focus on partnership collaboration and actively engaging with those directly impacted. This is all regularly reported to SEB, the Leader and the Cabinet Member.</p> <p>Internal audit review of the Wolves at Work 18-24 Programme (Youth Employment Scheme) has been completed and was given a substantial assurance opinion.</p> <p>A review of post 16 provision is underway, to ensure that it is fit for purpose, and meets the needs of both learner and employer.</p> |
| 10 | <p>Information Governance If the Council does not put in place appropriate policies, procedures and technologies to ensure the handling and protection of its data is undertaken in a secure manner and consistent with relevant legislation then it may be subject to regulatory action, financial penalties, reputational damage and the loss of confidential information.</p> <p>Risk Owner: David Pattison Cabinet Member: Cllr P Brookfield</p> | Our Council | 6 Amber | 6 Amber Target 4 Green | | <p>Work on the IG Policy Framework has progressed - 26 internal procedure and guidance documents that underpin the policies have been written and are live for employees to access. Mandatory training levels are being monitored; a new dashboard has been produced with support from Data & Analytics which will produce up to date statistics both on an adhoc basis and at individual Leadership teams in their scheduled quarterly update meetings. In addition, a new Data Breach management dashboard has also been developed and will be used from April 2023. This will provide more trend and targeted reporting of breaches. Collaborative working between IG and Digital and IT continues; a series of system demos have been viewed to support Cyber awareness raising across the council. Work continues cyber risk and compliance. Incidents reported during the period have been contained, investigated with mitigating actions put in place locally with relevant teams.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to collaborate with Digital and IT to progress the implementation of the remaining level two procedures and guidance documents – a reset of meetings is being scheduled in July to align road maps and joint priorities for 23/24 | <p>E-learning take up and ongoing training development</p> <p>Privacy by design – DPIA, IG Impact Assessments</p> <p>Quarterly updates and regular touch points with Leadership teams</p> <p>Robust breach management procedures in place with assessment and monitoring at service level (leadership feedback)</p> <p>SEB/IG Board and Caldicott function to continue to monitor, challenge, support and champion IG compliance initiatives</p> <p>A detailed annual report on Information Governance was taken to the Council’s Governance and Ethics Committee in September 2023.</p> |

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| | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robustly monitor the mandatory training levels via new dashboard to ensure above 95% take up in any given period. Further discussion arranged with OD to finalise and rollout of Level 2 and level 3 training for specialist roles Progress collaborative working; formulate and agree combined deliverables alignment with strategic roadmaps, particularly around the digital arena in relation to data and records management - Reset scheduled in July with Digital and IT; in addition, an element of records management will be picked up in the audit review scope too Progress the collaboration with Audit Services to support the DPO reporting function and ongoing corporate compliance assurance – as at June 23 - work has been scoped with Audit and timeframes will be confirmed | |
| 11 | Medium Term Financial Strategy If the Council does not manage the risks associated with the successful delivery of its in year budget and medium term financial strategy then this may exhaust reserves, result in the potential loss of democratic control and the inability of the Council to deliver essential services and discharge its statutory duties. Specific risks include the impact of Covid-19, rising inflation, demand pressures and the effective management of the key MTFS programmes. Risk Owner: Claire Nye Cabinet Member: Cllr O Ahmed | Our Council | 20 Red | 20 Red Target 12 Amber | ↔ | <p>The 2023-2024 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 report (Cabinet 22 February and Council 1 March) presents a balanced budget for 2023-2024 without the use of general reserves.</p> <p>The level of deficit is anticipated to be £16.4 m in 2024-2025 rising to £22.9m in 2045-2026. Work will be undertaken to identify ways to close the budget gap and updates will be presented to Cabinet throughout the year.</p> <p>At the time of writing the financial settlement for 2024-2025 and future years is unknown. The level of uncertainty regarding funding and economic factors results in the level of risk associated with the MTFS remaining as red despite the strong financial management within the council.</p> <p>Overall, the revenue position for 2022-2023 was within budget, after meeting the net costs of redundancy and pension strain and contributions to essential earmarked reserves.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>The assumptions underpinning the MTFS will continue to be reviewed throughout 2023-2024 and updates will be reported to Cabinet.</p> <p>Benchmarking is used to validate assumptions</p> <p>External advice will be sought where appropriate to support financial modelling as an when further information is available on a 2-year settlement and or fair funding review.</p> <p>Regular monitoring of the delivery of MTFS programmes is undertaken and reported to Strategic Executive Board</p> | <p>Regular budget monitoring at all levels.</p> <p>A local more detailed risk register is maintained within Finance.</p> <p>Consideration by scrutiny panels during November and December 2022 and Scrutiny Board In February 2023</p> <p>Recent and upcoming meetings:</p> <p>Reserves Working Group here</p> <p>Scrutiny Board, February 2023 here</p> <p>External Audit Annual Report – Full Council here</p> <p>Performance and Budget Outturn 2022-2023, Cabinet July 2023 here</p> <p>Reserves and Provisions, Cabinet July 2023 here</p> |
| 12 | Cyber Security Failure to maintain a high level of cyber security (technology, processes and awareness) throughout the Council may result in cyber-attacks and theft or loss of confidential data leading to financial penalties, reputational damage and a loss in public confidence. Risk Owner: Charlotte Johns Cabinet Member: Cllr O Ahmed | Our Council / Driven by Digital | 12 Amber | 12 Amber Target 6 Amber | ↔ | <p>Nationally there continues to be cyber security threats to local government and the wider public sector, with high profile cyber incidents impacting on some local authorities and other agencies.</p> <p>Cyber security at the Council is externally verified though both PSN accreditation and Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation.</p> <p>Digital and IT continue to deploy enhancements to further improve security, the detail of this is protected and not in the public domain. However, a summary of key activity includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy and strategy – including ongoing review of existing and development of new policies to support improved cyber security, such as the Information and Cyber Security Policy, Acceptable Use of IT Assets and Social Media Policy and a new Bring Your Own Device policy. Training and development – including a new mandatory cyber security course and bespoke training and awareness sessions dependent on role in development. Technology and digital solutions – including roll out of new technology solutions to further tighten security. <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>There is a continued work programme to address cyber threats which continue to evolve.</p> | <p>The Council has achieved external accreditation of its cyber security, through achievement of Cyber Essentials Plus and PSN compliance. Cyber Essentials Plus reaccreditation for the year was achieved again in December 2022. PSN compliance was achieved again in March 2023.</p> <p>Internal Audit review of Cyber Security and Disaster Recovery gave satisfactory assurance.</p> <p>Quarterly updates provided to SEB and Cabinet Member.</p> <p>A detailed update was provided to Audit and Risk Committee in July 2022 , a link to the meeting papers and minutes is available here.</p> |
| 14 | Climate Change Failure to achieve the Council's commitments in relation to Climate Change, including the pledge to make Council activities net-zero carbon by 2028 may result in significant reputational damage and a loss in public confidence. Risk Owner: John Roseblade Cabinet Member: Cllr C Collingswood | Climate conscious | 6 Amber | 6 Amber Target 3 Green | ↔ | <p>The Council's Climate Change Action Plan was approved by Cabinet in July 2021. The action plan clearly sets out all activity needed to meet the Council's net zero ambitions by 2028 as well as setting out the framework for the 2041 target for the whole City.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>A number of detailed actions are being developed in line with the Action Plan and will be coming forwards shortly and will be included in the SEB update with draft structure approved and supported.</p> <p>Funding for external resource identified to support delivering 2041 strategy. Training for Carbon Literacy course rolled out across organisation, opportunities for further training in 2023/24 being explored.</p> | <p>Governance and action plan monitoring arrangements in place.</p> <p>Quarterly update to Member reference panel (Climate Change Advisory Group).</p> <p>Internal audit review undertaken in March 2023 of the 2028 Climate Change Action Plan. Monthly Programme Board has been established – with full supporting team now in place to provide the necessary support to deliver.</p> <p>Regular reporting against action plan now taking place and will be brought through to Climate Change Advisory Group and paper reporting on substantial progress made will be brought to Cabinet in Autumn 2023</p> |

| Risk Ref | Risk title and description | | Previous Risk Score | Current Risk and Target Score | Direction of Travel | Update position and further actions to take to mitigate risks | Sources of Assurance |
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| 15 | <p>Related Parties The Council has a number of bodies that it either owns or has a potential liability for. There is a risk that poor performance of these bodies could adversely impact on the Council both financially and reputationally.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Claire Nye Cabinet Member: Cllr O Ahmed</p> | Our Council | 12 Amber | 12 Amber Target 8 Amber | ↔ | <p>Each of the Council's companies have filed audited Statement of Accounts with Companies House, each with an unqualified opinion.</p> <p>As part of the Value For Money review, the External Auditor undertook a detailed review of the governance arrangements of group companies and reported that they did not find any significant issues. They also concluded that there are appropriate agreements in place and coinciding monitoring arrangements for all group entities.</p> <p>A detailed financial review of each company was undertaken as part of the budget process and was detailed in the Final Budget Report to Cabinet on 22 February 2023. Regular monitoring is undertaken and there are no areas of concern.</p> <p>The Council is currently undertaking a review of Yoo Recruit Ltd which will in turn inform a refreshed business plan being prepared by the Company. The review was considered by the Resources and Equalities Scrutiny Panel in March. Further updates will be presented to the Scrutiny Panel in due course.</p> <p>In April 2023 Cabinet approved a refresh to the WV Living business plan.</p> <p>Wolverhampton Homes is drafting an updated Delivery Plan which was presented to Cabinet and Full Council and approved in March 2023.</p> <p>The Director of Finance has undertaken a year-end review of the companies, considering the most recent business plan information and draft outturn positions. In each case it has been concluded that the companies can each be considered a going concern and in the case of WV Living there is no impairment to the Council's equity investment. This review feeds into the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2022-2023 which will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee and subject to external audit.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>Regular monitoring of the related parties is undertaken, and monthly reports are provided to the Executive Team.</p> <p>Financial implications of our related parties will continue to be considered in budget reports</p> | <p>The Annual Governance Statement incorporates related parties.</p> <p>External audit of each related party.</p> <p>Scrutiny Review of governance arrangements in place to monitor linked bodies by Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel: here</p> <p>The External Auditor's Annual Report presented to Full Council in January 2023 can be found here</p> <p>Annual audited accounts:</p> <p>Yoo Recruit Ltd here</p> <p>WV Living – City of Wolverhampton Housing Company Ltd here</p> <p>Wolverhampton Homes Ltd here</p> <p>Yoo Recruit Review, Resources and Equalities Scrutiny Panel March 2023 here</p> <p>Updated plans:</p> <p>Wolverhampton Homes Delivery Plan, Full Council April 2023 here</p> <p>WVL Business Plan, Cabinet April 2023 here</p> |
| 17 | <p>Financial wellbeing and resilience</p> <p>Risk that without the council's plan to coordinate the partnership support across the city, residents will not receive support to mitigate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis</p> <p>Risk owner: Alison Hinds Cabinet members: Leader's portfolio</p> | <p>Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential</p> <p>Healthy, inclusive communities</p> | 9 Amber | 9 Amber Target 8 Amber | ↔ | <p>The Council's Financial Wellbeing Strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2022.</p> <p>The strategy details our partnership approach to tackling the cost-of-living crisis in the city though our graduated response offering essential support when required, responding to emerging need and offering an early intervention approach to support resilience in the city.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>Partnership approach to support coordinated by the council through the Financial Wellbeing Strategy</p> <p>Additional City of Wolverhampton Council investment</p> <p>Developing financial resilience in communities by promoting and supporting the development of sustainable models</p> <p>Utilisation of tools to support the partnership to understand and proactively respond to emerging need at a local level</p> | <p>Strong governance arrangements, with Health and Wellbeing Board being responsible for the implementation of the strategy, monitoring the progress of the partnership cost of living action plan</p> <p>Robust implementation plan with clear impact measures.</p> <p>Ongoing consultation and engagement with residents and the wider partnership to ensure the cost of living plan continues to address local and emerging issues.</p> <p>Regular reviews presented to Families Leadership team, SEB, and the Leader of the Council</p> <p>Risk reviewed by Audit Committee September 2022 to be reviewed again in 2023</p> |
| 19 | <p>Employee recruitment and retention</p> <p>Currently experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties that mirrors national issues. This is impacting a number of specialist roles in Adults and Children's Social Care, Procurement, IT and Digital etc</p> <p>Risk Owners: Laura Phillips Cabinet Member: Councillor P Brookfield</p> | Our Council | 9 Amber | 9 Amber Target 4 green | ↔ | <p>Recruitment and Retention is not only a local but national issue that we will continue to monitor and respond to - it is important we have robust recruitment and retention initiatives to enable the council to have resources to deliver our services.</p> <p>Our current turnover rate remains at 10.7% and continues to be monitored via KPI reports and Powerbi dashboards. Recent local government turnover information is not available. However, XPerTHR conducted a turnover survey in 2022 that shows total labour turnover for 2021 as 14.4% nationally amongst all organisations surveyed and 12.4% within the Public Sector.</p> <p>As an example of the issues being faced, the average turnover for Children's Services is 11.9% which is lower than the national average of 15.4% but the vacancy rate is 18.1% compared to national 16.7% which highlights the difficulties we face in recruiting to specialist roles.</p> <p>Further actions to mitigate risk:</p> <p>To support us to be an attractive employer 'employer of choice' we have created WV Jobs, this tool is used to promote jobs and careers at CWC including information for applicants and benefits for working for the council.</p> <p>We have reviewed employee benefits to ensure we have an attractive and competitive offer (changed to Vivup with increased promotion) and conducted a deep dive review of benefits in areas where the impact is high – e.g. social worker recruitment. – now offer re-imburement of costs for the blue card</p> | <p>Introduction of exit interview to understand why employees leave the employment of the council</p> <p>Market forces policy</p> <p>Structural changes within HR to improve the offer/ support for our people, candidates and the on-boarding experience for new starters and consider outcome of exit interviews to take targeted action.</p> <p>Our People Board</p> <p>Benchmarking against other Local Authorities</p> |

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|----------|----------------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| | | | | | | <p>scheme and payment of professional body membership that is a legal requirement to undertake certain roles.</p> <p>As per Our People strategy we continue to have a strong emphasis on employee development, progression and 'growing our own'.</p> <p>Removal of artificial barriers from job descriptions/person specifications. Updated advert template with employee benefits.</p> <p>National/local graduate programme, collaborative recruitment with Wolves at Work 18-24 year olds for specific posts.</p> <p>Recruited a Recruitment and Retention lead within People Services to lead on our response.</p> | |

Please note the following risks have been removed since the previous risk register update was presented the to the Councils Audit & Risk Committee on 6 March 2023:

- Risk 7 – Education Provision** – The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in significant disruption to learning which has affected some children and young people in respect of their academic progress, emotional health and wellbeing as well as social skills. The consequence has been higher number of referrals for assessments for SEN especially prevalent in the early years. This risk has been closed as schools are no longer affected by Covid-19 restrictions.
- Risk 13 – Civic Halls** – There is a significant reputational and financial risk to the Council and to the City's wider visitor economy if the revised Civic Halls Refurbishment programme is not effectively managed in terms of project timings, costs, and scope. This risk has been closed as the building is now operational and has been subject to a number of successful events.
- Risk 16 – Refugee and Asylum accommodation and support** – There is risk of increased numbers of emergency placements made by the Home Office of refugees and asylum seekers from various national schemes such as the Asylum and Afghan resettlement scheme. This risk has been closed as it is out of the Council's control as the Home Office manages the accommodation and support provided.
- Risk 18 – Charging Reform and Fair cost of care** – There are a number of uncertainties associated with how these reforms will impact upon the Council, both financially and resource wise. This risk has been removed as the government have delayed the reforms until October 2025.
- Risk 20 – Energy from Waste** – The contractual arrangements for the operation of the Energy from Waste Plant are complex. On the recent ending of the operation contract there is a risk that expensive and less environmentally sensitive contingency operations would need to be employed. This risk has been removed as there is a new two year management contract (with option to extend a further two years) in place for the incinerator. Also staff from the site have been subject to a successful TUPE.