STRATEGIC RISK

Strategic Risk Register Q2 21/22

Strategic Risk scoring matrix and key:

Score out of 5 for both likelihood and impact (example 4 x 2 = 8 = Amber):

RED (R): Risk x Impact = 15 to 25

AMBER (A): Risk x Impact = 8 to 15

GREEN (G): Risk x Impact = 1 to 7
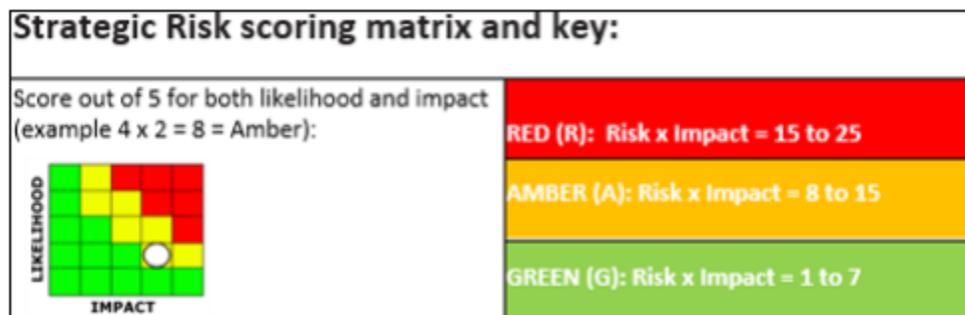
Theme/Short name	Risk description	Cause	Impact	Likelihood *(input 1-5)*	Impact *(input 1-5)*	Q2 21/21 RAG *(Automated)*	Mitigation/Internal control (update Q1 narrative if necessary)
The focus of our resources is not planned or prioritised effectively.	Resources are not organised effectively to deliver against the Council's priorities.	Covid 19 pandemic outbreak Workforce development does not meet priorities and challenges Failure to recruit and / or retain	Services not provided at the correct level and standard Residents' needs not met Change programmes not delivered	2	4	8	Resource Planning and Prioritisation (RPP) is in place to prioritise and focus on available resources. Small number of staffing reductions in non-priority areas transacted in late 2020. Investment, as part of RPP and budget setting, into Planning Service and further digital adoption. The wider leadership team have plans in place to ensure that resources can be directed to areas of need in emergencies. Integrated reporting in place covering finance, performance, and risk. Ongoing communication with staff groups (Wider ELT, Team meetings). Staff surveys undertaken. A regular Covid-19 Issues and Risk Group is in place to ensure the Council is coordinating and prioritising

		Competing priorities are not managed	Financial targets not met				resources and managing risk. This is constantly being reviewed and focuses on key risks arising which can affect service delivery of 20 critical services. Any concerns and escalating risks to be escalated to CLT / ELT. Taking Stock document, the Ten Point Economic Recovery Plan, and the Living with COVID document all support the Council's approach.

The Council's Workforce development strategy includes measures to address recruitment & retention risks. The workforce development and transformation programme in place has been adapted to account for greater hybrid working to maximise the Community Hub and our virtual working technology. Our training programme has been updated to focus on priority areas and reflect our new ways of working. 'Agile Working' guidance / principles have been developed for staff alongside our Wellbeing Strategy. Sessions held with Managers and all Staff to ensure that the Workforce Development Strategy and new ways of working are highlighted and embedded. |
| | | (Ageing) staff profiles are not managed / succession planning not in place | Reputational impact regarding ability to deliver (with partners)

Impact on commercial credibility | | | | |
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| Budget pressures, increased income volatility and uncertainty as to the future of local government finance. | The budget, the MTFS and the financial stability of the Council is severely impacted by reductions and/or changes in the way in which local government is financed. | Impact of major national and/or international factors on income streams and finances (e.g., recession, Brexit, Covid 19 pandemic outbreak) | The Council's projected financial position is worse than anticipated. | 3 | 3 | 9 | The potential longer term financial impacts of Covid-19 are uncertain. Provision has been made within the authority's finances to support recovery post the pandemic. In addition, the authority has in place a transformation programme which has delivered significant savings to date. The Q2 Finance Report (included in the IPM) provides assurance that at this stage in the year.

The 21/22 Budget and MTFS models general fund balances remaining above minimum levels for 4 years. Earmarked reserves increased to mitigate collection rate risks also. |

	Indications are at this stage that the Fair Funding Review will redistribute funding away from District Councils to councils with Adult, Social Care and Children's duties.	Uncertainty re future of LG financial framework Costs passed on by other public authorities The fair funding review and funding baseline reset (both of which have been delayed) could significantly impact on the Council's finances. Collection rates (council tax, business rates, sundry debt, rental incomes) reduce as a result of an economic downturn.	Our financial position becomes unsustainable The Council's reserves position becomes inadequate Residents' needs not met Services levels and / or quality are reduced			The Council is part of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent business rates pool which mitigate some of the financial risk associated with appeals and revaluations. Capital Strategy and Commercial Asset Strategy in place, supported by due diligence which balances risk/reward. Resource Planning and Prioritisation in place to focus available resources and integrated reporting in place which considers Finance, performance, and risk. The wider leadership team are looking to ensure that impacts from the Environment Bill and Waste pressures can be identified and mitigated as the implications become clear. Taking stock of finances to take place at each quarter. Income receipt at Hilton Cross to provide opportunity for allocation. The Council has updated its contingency plans (inc for Covid-19) and is also monitoring any impact on business in the district, and this is being managed through the I&R group on a monthly basis with risks highlighted to ELT and CLT.

Failure to deliver against the change, transformation, efficiency and savings agenda.	Plans to deliver further Efficiencies and Income and associated change programmes, transformation plans, commercial targets and/or other large projects are not delivered.	Covid 19 pandemic outbreak

Workforce not equipped/lack of capacity.

Project management failures.

Digital shift fails to reduce cost base.

Inflexible work arrangements.

Over optimistic projections within business cases

Assets Strategy is not delivered / costs are higher than anticipated / income is lower than anticipated | Savings not achieved

Resident needs not met

Project timetables not achieved

Outcomes not delivered

Poor staff morale

Our financial position becomes unsustainable

The Council's reserves position becomes inadequate | 2 | 3 | 6 | Transformation Programme in place focussed on digital, flexible working and IT infrastructure. While Covid-19 has tested these arrangements, it has validated the steps taken and also accelerated the pace of change. Transformation related staffing savings and the success of the charging for green waste project have achieved a saving of £0.6m in year.

Resource Planning and Prioritisation process in place to identify savings and efficiency opportunities. Commercial Asset Strategy and commercial and marketing plans in place.

Key projects are progressing well (despite Covid-19) and being monitored in relation to costs, schedules and timeframes. The first major phase of the Community Hub project (re refurbishment) is approaching completion in Spring 2021.

Commercial Asset Strategy in place supported by robust due diligence arrangements to balance risk and reward.

Workforce development strategy and programme in place.

Work ongoing with the County and parishes to develop options for stronger three tier working. Locality sessions being planned for Autumn 2021 to continue the progress made on the plans. |

						<td style="background-color:green"></td>	The scope of the Transformation Programme is being revisited in response to Covid-19 and the 'new norm'. The RPP process invested in further Digital Adoption and supported development of a business case for 'Digital Phase 2'.
Cyber security attack	Cyber Security – risk of cyber security attack and ransomware type attacks	Failure to maintain a high level of cyber security (technology, processes and awareness) throughout the Council Covid 19 pandemic outbreak (and related accelerated change) Phishing attacks, scam emails and texts pretending to provide information from authorities re Covid 19 Increased use of Home Wi-Fi networks / connected	May result in theft or loss of confidential data May lead to denial of service and inability to access key systems for some time both for the Council, its partners and its communities. In turn may lead to financial penalties, reputational damage and a loss in public confidence May lead to loss of all ICT services for weeks	3	5	15	In recognition of the success of agile working (but also the additional associated risk) investment has been made (from earmarked reserves) into an additional data security and compliance package from the Council's software suppliers. This is part of the second phase of the Agile Working Project which is focused on the: • classification and labelling of council documents and emails • effective threat management and defensive mechanisms (layered to protect valuable data and information through "Defence in Depth") • creation of a "zero-trust architecture" to ensure that data and access across our technology environment remain secure. Clear policies on ICT security. Enforcing of policies on ICT security including implementing latest software updates/virus protection and firewalls. Staff training and communications are also being issued frequently to maintain and increase awareness, including warnings re Covid-19 specific phishing and spam emails. PSN validation check undertaken to ensure security. Council has in place specialist insurance to cover the impact in the unlikely event that an attack does succeed. Positive Internal Audit reports on Cyber Security, Agile

		devices and more staff registering with cloud service providers. Supply chain attacks bypassing traditional cyber security defences	(specialist resources from the National Cyber Security Centre unlikely to be available). Home working severely disrupted Software suppliers' security compromised facilitating the distribution and installation of dormant viruses as part of regular software maintenance update cycles				& Mobile arrangements, and Office 365 have both provided positive assurance of the controls in place. Monitor national and regional notification/alerting mechanisms for new cyber scams and attacks. Council data to be backed-up to the Cloud using 'write once, read many times' approach to facilitate complete recovery of the Council's data following a potential successful Ransomware attack.
Partner volatility	Partner volatility results in service	Financial failure/pressures on key partner	Negative impact on service provision	4	4	16	The Extended Leadership Team is meeting weekly to manage the Council's response to the Covid 19 outbreak. Business and Service delivery (including key partner contracts) are standing agenda items.

delivery failure	National / International economic factors (including Covid 19 pandemic outbreak)	Failure to meet legal duties Residents needs not met Risk of reputational and legal liability to the Council			Monitoring of delivery of existing contracts in place, and in light of Covid-19, made more regular for key contracts including Biffa and Capita. Performance in relation to driver shortages and COVID impacts are affecting service and being managed. Appropriate financial due diligence takes place in entering long term contracts for key service delivery. The appointed contractor for the Community Hub has been subject to 'Experian' and other checks and due diligence. Effective Business Continuity Plans are regularly updated and reviewed (including in relation to Covid-19). The Council continues to monitor the progress of 'Brexit' – liaising with regional and national groups as appropriate. The Four Ashes Industrial Estate contractor has been reappointed successfully (the original contractor going into administration), and work has re-commenced with planned completion imminent.

						　	
Information Governance Failure	Failure to comply with Information Governance requirements – in particular Data Protection	Failing to put in place appropriate policies, procedures and technologies to ensure that the handling and protection of its data is undertaken in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations Covid 19 pandemic outbreak	May result in regulatory action including financial penalties May also lead to reputational damage and the loss of confidential information May also lead to legal liabilities as result of breaches	2	5	10	In light of Covid 19, additional communications have been issued to reiterate the requirements and principles of GDPR and Information Governance. Data protection and retention procedures updated following previous changes in the legislation. Programme of review and refresh underway. Information Governance audit undertaken giving substantial assurance rating. A rolling programme of mandatory training for all staff is in place with focused training on key areas of risk including development management, customer services and management of Revenues and Benefits. A programme of training for members on the new duties as a result of changes in the legislation has taken place and the Constitution changed to make Data Protection training mandatory for members. Report drafted (from the Monitoring Officer) to the Standards and Resources Committee (November 2021) confirms the Council's compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation. The Council's Policy has been reviewed and refreshed to ensure it remains fit for purpose. As part of the e-learning training, HR Services will be launching refresher training for employees in 2022.

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Planning	Unsustainable development taking place contrary to existing Core Strategy - development being driven by opportunity (as a result of National Policy) rather than being planned. Failing to meet Government targets on quality/speed of planning decisions	Lack of a 5 Year Housing Land Supply – harder to establish a 5YR HLS as a result of National Planning Policy Framework changes and National planning policy practice guidance. In turn this leads to a "tilted balance" for non-Green Belt applications, meaning that objections must significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Covid 19 Impact on decision	Unsustainable and unplanned development Development taking place in the wrong place Lack of suitable infrastructure Risk of designation by Government which leads to applications being made directly to the Planning	3	3	9	The Council's Core Strategy was adopted in 2012. Adoption of Site Allocations Document took place in September 2018 to deliver on the Core Strategy and set out where development takes place. Work undertaken following the adoption of the SAD has resulted in confirmation that the Council has a 5-year housing land supply. Review of the Local Plan has reached the Preferred Options stage with consultation due to run through OCT/NOV 21 – this will ensure that any future development is sustainable. It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be submitted for examination in 2023. Regular Project Board meetings to ensure progress. Individual Locality sessions have been held with Members in relation to preparation of the preferred options. There are member meetings planned to discuss key items policy decisions during the next quarter and Members have continued to be engaged in the process through with external

		making – potential delay National Policy drivers including demand for National Infrastructure – including National Policy Statement on Networks Not having an up-to-date Local Plan in place – as National policy has changed the current plan is no longer designated as up to date White Paper on the future of Planning provides some challenges for the future planning strategy and the potential to interrupt the current timetable for the production	Inspectorate with loss of control and loss of fee income Delay in decision making due to COVID 19. Impact on engagement with partners on the emerging plan				speakers/experts being engaged in the process to support plan production. Discussions with key partners and Parishes and attendance of meetings with partners to maintain progress and dialogue on timetable. Utilising digital methods to deliver engagement methods. The Local Plan Review is supported by an infrastructure delivery plan ensuring that any development has the right infrastructure in place. Quality and speed targets set by Government are regularly reviewed and monitored including through the Council's Performance Management Framework – work is underway through the transformation team to improve the processes and procedures within the planning team. A review as recommended by the LGA Peer Review was completed into the way in which Planning Committee works. Following this the membership of the Committee was reduced to 21. The Planning Committee has now been running with the new committee structure for over 2 years.

		of the plan along with unintended consequences for spatial development in the district.					Work progresses on the plan however the planning reforms provide a level of uncertainty for the next stage of plan production which carries risk. This is being mitigated by the approach taken in preparing the strategy and the conversations and engagement with members with the strategy being to continue to progress the plan. The Government has made clear that they expect Local Authorities to progress plans and will intervene where necessary. The team have met with the Planning Advisory Service who have confirmed that progress is being made and are supportive of the approach taken. Offers of external scrutiny and support from critical partners is being exploited.
Our communities do not become more prosperous and vibrant	The Covid 19 pandemic outbreak results in poor outcomes for our residents and our businesses	Covid 19 pandemic outbreak (uncontrollable) Failure to respond to the Covid 19 pandemic outbreak Uncoordinated response to Covid 19	Council performance and core service delivery is not effective Poor health and well-being outcomes for residents Economic opportunities for our	4	3	12	The Extended Leadership Team is meeting weekly to manage the Council's response to the Covid 19 outbreak. Standing agenda items include a focus on Community, business, service delivery and communications. Processes in place to pay Covid grants as quickly as possible to eligible businesses in a way that minimises the risk of fraud. The first phase of COVID grants have been paid and the Council was successful in drawing down the third tranche of funding. Arrangements in place (post Covid) for tenants to defer an element of their bills and spread these costs over a period. This was prepared in 20/21 and is being rolled forward for 21/22.

| | | Lack of capacity, resources and or agility/flexibility results in core council services not being delivered

Internal business processes (including those relating to transactions which support residents and businesses) are not adapted to meet need

Potential for a 'no deal' Brexit | residents are reduced

Businesses do not receive the support they need | | | | Council has published the economic recovery ten-point plan and launched a business place partnership.

A coordinated response to emergency community issues in place including helpline, signposting, and coordinating emergency food deliveries. This has now been amalgamated into customer services call centre processes.

Additional resources put in place for high priority areas including Welfare, community, and finance (business grants).

Business Support methods and regular communications and business support webinars undertaken. Business Place Partnership is being set up to ensure businesses engage and can capitalise on the Council's connections to partners through our open door.

A number of COVID Support Officers have been employed to provide direct support for the Localities. High Streets Recovery Action Plans have been developed in conjunction with regional partners and Parishes. Locality Enablers and Environmental Health Officers providing ongoing support. |
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