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West Devon
Borough
Council

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Dear Councillor

WEST DEVON AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 14TH MARCH, 2023

I refer to the agenda for the above meeting and attach papers in connection with the following item(s).

Agenda No	Item
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- | | |
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| 12. | <u>Strategic Risk Update</u> (Pages 1 - 4) |
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Yours sincerely

Darryl White
Democratic Services Manager

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Report to: **Audit & Governance Committee**

Date: **13th March 2023**

Title: **Six-month strategic risk update**

Portfolio Area: **Councillor Neil Jory
Leader**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y / N**

Date next steps can be taken:

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Recommendations:

That the Audit & Governance Committee:

1. REVIEW the six-monthly strategic risk update as set out in Appendix A
2. NOTE the intention of officers to a review and update our Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy with a revised draft to be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council adopted a Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy in 2018 which sets out a requirement for the Audit and Governance Committee to consider the Strategic Risks to the Council and its ability to deliver on its corporate priorities.
- 1.2 The Strategic Risk profile of the Council is reviewed on a regular basis by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that mitigations are identified and progress is made in reducing the risks.
- 1.3 The Strategic Risk Profile of the Council as at March 2023 is set out in Appendix A.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council adopted its Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy in 2018 which sets out a framework for assessing and mitigating risks and opportunities for the Council.

- 2.2 The strategic risk register and the risk profile constantly evolves and as a result of assessment, two risks have de-escalated from the Strategic Risk register since the last update to Committee in October 2022.

Cost of Living – Ability for the Council to support residents.

- 2.3 It is important to highlight that this risk is about the ability for the council to respond to support our residents.
- 2.4 At the point of the last update being considered by Audit and Governance Committee in October 2022, the Council had no agreed and resourced plan for how we would respond to the Cost of Living impacts being experienced by residents across the Borough and it was therefore scored as a high risk.
- 2.5 Since that time, Council have agreed and implemented a cost of living response plan which has seen us working with partners such as Citizens Advice, providing funding to voluntary and community groups to support schemes such as warm banks, hot meal clubs and other actions directly supporting residents.
- 2.6 The Council project team continues to meet weekly to consider what further support and actions are needed to continue to support our residents.
- 2.7 As a result of having a clear response plan which is progressing as planned, this risk has reduced to a level that is managed within services and no longer reaches the threshold for consideration as a strategic risk and will be managed at an operational level.

Homes for Ukraine – Ability to deliver the scheme.

- 2.8 At the point of the previous risk update to this committee, the Homes for Ukraine scheme did not have guidance from government in respect of what, if any, support the Council could offer hosts and guests beyond the initial six months of the scheme. It was therefore escalated to the strategic risk register.
- 2.9 Since that update, we have received confirmation that the Homes for Ukraine scheme and financial support package would continue beyond the initial 6 months, significantly reducing the risk of host/guest placement breakdowns.
- 2.10 We have also been able to propose longer term solutions to mitigate the risk of placement breakdowns in the future, bringing forward proposals to Hub which will enable us to secure properties utilising the Homes for Ukraine funding which will provide affordable and safe temporary accommodation in the unfortunate event of a breakdown.
- 2.11 Finally, in order to ensure that we are resourced to support Ukrainians across the Borough, we have taken the decision to extend the three support workers for a further 18 months.
- 2.12 As a result of these actions, the strategic risk level for the Councils ability to deliver the Homes for Ukraine scheme has reduced to a level that no longer reaches the threshold as a strategic risk and will be managed at an operational level.

2.13 In order to ensure that our Strategic Risk and Opportunity Management strategy remains relevant, officers will be reviewing the strategy over the coming months with a view to bringing forward a revised strategy to the next meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee (after the Election).

2.14 A revised strategy will be accompanied by risk management training for Members and Heads of Service to ensure that we continue to actively monitor and manage risks at both an operational and strategic level.

3. Proposed Way Forward

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the Strategic Risk report as set out in Appendix A and make any recommendations on the assessments made.

3.2 It is also recommended that the Committee note the intention for a revision of the current risk and opportunity management strategy and for training to be provided to both Members and Officers following the election in May 2023.

4. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	Active monitoring and consideration of risk is a fundamental element of good governance.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	N	This report does not result in any financial impacts however it does include consideration of our approach to managing the risk to our future financial position.
Risk	Y	This report sets out the strategic risk profile of the Council.
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	All
Consultation & Engagement Strategy	N	NA
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	N	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		

Equality and Diversity		
Safeguarding		
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		
Other implications		

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Strategic Risk Register – March 2023

Background Papers:

Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy 2018

<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/article/5156/Risk-and-Opportunity-Management-Strategy>

Approval and clearance of report