

Strategic Risk Register – July 2017

Risk Description	Owner	Controls	I	L	S
Community Consultation and Engagement Failure to properly consult customers in line with legislative and regulatory requirements (as appropriate to relevant service areas). Failure to involve communities when planning services. Consequences: Intervention by regulatory bodies, legal challenge, reputational damage and additional costs. Services will not be shaped around the needs of people in the community.	Simone Chinman-Russell – Executive Director Ka Ng Executive Director Tony Kingsbury - Executive Member for Policy & Culture	Tenant Involvement Strategy (Housing) Appropriate policies and procedures in place for all services Borough Panel Tenants' Panel Alliance Strategy Regular consultation exercises carried out by services	High	Low	8
A more joined up approach is being developed between housing services and the corporate centre, which is why the risk rating has been recently reduced. Detailed consultation on the proposed Local Plan has also now ended prior to its submission, although an Examination in Public exercise is expected to commence in September ahead of its likely adoption in 2018.					
Equality and Diversity The council failing to comply with its legal and moral obligations to customers, staff, partners, Members and the wider community. Consequences: Litigation (and associated financial impacts) and reputational damage.	Simone Chinman-Russell – Executive Director Tony Kingsbury - Executive Member for Policy & Culture	Corporate equality group with clear aims and relevant membership Training for staff, Members and Tenants' Panel Appropriate HR policies in place and implemented Equalities Impact Assessment process in place	High	Low	8
Having held two facilitated workshops in March and May this year, the E&D Steering Group met in June to revise and agree a new Action Plan with both short and medium to long term targets. A Teamtalk Special is proposed for the end of August to help raise awareness of equalities among all officers and members, with update training to follow on from this. The risk rating remains unchanged at this time.					
Management of Council owned property assets Failure to provide and maintain council property assets, including housing and non-housing property. Taking opportunities to invest in assets. Consequences: Increased homelessness in the borough and detrimental impact on the community. Economic development may be stifled.	Ka Ng - Executive Director Simone Chinman-Russell – Executive Director Roger Trigg -	Housing and Homelessness Strategy Asset Management Plan HRA Asset Strategy/Business Plan Proactive approach to taking opportunities for increasing our property portfolio (social and commercial properties)	Very High High	Low Low	10

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Possibility of assets becoming unsafe or unfit.	Executive Member for Governance, Community Safety, Police and Crime Commissioner and Corporate Property				
<p>Training currently underway to improve the interrogation of the K2 data base.</p> <p>KPI production being refreshed as Corporate Property staffing moves towards full compliment.</p>					
Safeguarding Failure to meet obligations in respect of children, vulnerable adults and persons vulnerable to radicalisation. Consequences: Abuse may remain unreported or undetected, resulting in harm to a vulnerable child or adult. Possible litigation and reputational damage.	Simone Chinman-Russell – Executive Director Tony Kingsbury - Executive Member for Policy & Culture	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy/Safeguarding Children Policy being developed to replace existing council policy– following re-integration of the housing service. Safeguarding audit and action plan – updated regularly by Safeguarding Steering Group	High	Low	8
<p>The revised Safeguarding Group has met quarterly in March and June this year to discuss and agree a joined up approach across all council services following the reintegration of Housing Services.</p> <p>It next meets in September and the risk rating remains unchanged at this time.</p>					
Change Management There continues to be immense change in the council’s operations, services and senior management. The ending of the Housing Trust and consequent reabsorption of the housing service back into the council has been a catalyst for complete change at the top. We now have three new directors, and a new Chief Executive will start in May 2017. The next twelve months will see these major changes bedding in and have the potential to be very challenging, both politically and managerially. It is critical that we continue deploying all our skills in managing these changes, both at managerial and political levels if we are to obtain optimum value for money and efficiency. We will need to keep a continuous and close watch on all external developments and adapt to the changing requirements. In doing this, we will work closely with partners and use all of our contacts to keep ourselves fully informed,	Rob Bridge – Chief Executive John Dean – Leader of the council	Appropriately skilled and experienced staff Awareness of change Client roles Communication Management Development Use links with local MP to influence and shape the future Use of consultants Working groups	High	Low	8

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including the offices of the local MP.					
<p>Since the previous update the Housing service transfer back to the council continues to embed and the new executive directors and chief executive are successfully settling into their new roles. Further service and operational changes are likely to continue during the year and the next twelve months will see these major changes bedding in and have the potential to be very challenging, both politically and managerially. It is critical that we continue deploying all our skills in managing these changes, both at managerial and political levels if we are to obtain optimum value for money and efficiency. We will need to keep a continuous and close watch on all external developments and adapt to the changing requirements. In doing this, we will work closely with partners and use all of our contacts to keep ourselves fully informed, including the offices of the local MP.</p>					
Staff/Workforce Failure to recruit or retain staff with key skills. Lack of resources due to high levels of sickness, turnover or industrial action. Failure to develop and train existing staff. Breach of legislation or failure to follow our HR policies. Impact of Council's decision to review the Housing Trust.	Nick Long – Executive Director Bernard Sarson - Executive Member for Business, Partnerships and Public Health	Workforce Development Strategy in progress. Apprentice scheme in progress. Training and awareness of HR staff. Head of Service Management Assurance statement. Departmental training plans/CPD. Robust recruitment and selection process. Use of agency staff. New sickness absence monitoring process.	High	Medium	12
<p>We have high staff turnover at present with the potential loss of key skills & experience.</p> <p>In some services, we are experiencing difficulty in attracting and recruiting to certain roles (e.g. finance, planning)</p> <p>When going through periods of change, we usually see an increase in sickness absence, grievances and or claims of harassment and bullying so this risk continues to be monitored.</p>					
Housing Trust reintegration Merging two organisations enables the exploitation of opportunities for integration, efficiency and value for money. There are however areas where there is potential for failure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to successfully merge cultures, leading to a 'them and us' mentality among staff and therefore losing the benefits of joint working; Failure to integrate the safety management system; Failure to have a consistent approach to customer services, including complaints management Failure to maintain quality of the service to residents/meet statutory obligations as a result of de-motivation/dis-engagement of staff and inconsistent corporate processes; 	All Mandy Perkins – Deputy Leader	Joint staff newsletter and employee events to encourage sharing information on services and to embed a shared corporate culture New corporate Customer Services Strategy in development to ensure a consistent approach across all services in the council, including the housing service – this includes managing customer feedback, complaints and Members Enquiries All services benefit from the support of the council's H&S Officer and all staff are required to adhere to a revised joint Health and Safety Policy – the policy is currently under	High	Low	8

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to implement appropriate governance arrangements, including those for tenant and Member engagement. <p>Consequences: Workforce morale may suffer, there may be reputational damage, increased financial impacts through inefficiencies, tenant discontent and potential for litigation or regulatory intervention.</p>		<p>development following collaboration between council and former Trust staff.</p> <p>A new Cabinet Housing Panel will operate from June 2017 – a Members’ Housing Training event is taking place in June 2017 to share information the service</p>			
Work continues in this regard to help manage the risks, although it is recognised that changing culture is always a challenge.					
<p>Elections</p> <p>Failure to ensure sufficient continuity and handover of electoral expertise between outgoing and incoming Returning Officers.</p>	<p>Nick Long – Executive Director</p> <p>Roger Trigg - Executive Member for Governance, Community Safety, Police and Crime Commissioner and Corporate Property</p>	<p>Experienced staff remain.</p> <p>Project plan.</p> <p>Separate risk register.</p> <p>Training.</p> <p>New Chief Executive has some election experience.</p> <p>Handover process is in place.</p>	High	Low	8
The risks have been properly mitigated resulting in the smooth running of the recent local elections and snap general elections.					
<p>Prevent</p> <p>Not properly implementing the government’s ‘Prevent’ agenda to address the risks of radicalisation.</p> <p>Consequences: Staff may lack the awareness to detect signs of radicalisation and the steps to take if they do. This could lead to lack of cross working with partners, delayed referral to ‘Channel’ and ultimately the propagation of extremist ideologies and the commission of related acts.</p>	<p>Nick Long – Executive Director</p> <p>Bernard Sarson - Executive Member for Business, Partnerships and Public Health</p>	<p>WRAP sessions mandatory for all frontline staff and encouraged for others.</p> <p>In depth training on ideological extremism undertaken by Designated Safeguarding Officers.</p> <p>Nominated lead officer for Prevent.</p> <p>Prevent matters discussed at Safeguarding meetings.</p> <p>Council officers attend Channel meetings where appropriate.</p> <p>Venue manager guidance issued to all council and Finesse venue managers.</p> <p>Council hire and lease agreements contain catch all clauses for ‘inappropriate’ activities or uses, enabling extremist users to have agreements terminated.</p>	Very High	Medium	15
We are keeping a watching brief as the government agenda may change with regard to prevent. We are also checking our representation mechanism for the county prevent board.					

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Corporate Resilience Corporate Resilience Failure to meet the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, including the material failure or inadequacy of plans Failure to respond appropriately to a civil emergency or business continuity incident, including the duty of care to the community and statutory duty to respond with other agencies The effects of an incident on the day to day business of the Council and our ability to maintain "business as usual" Consequences: Financial costs of backlog management, compensation and litigation. Damage to Council reputation, including criticism at any subsequent inquiry, media interest and public criticism. Possible effects on human welfare.	Nick Long – Executive Director Bernard Sarson - Executive Member for Business, Partnerships and Public Health	Embedded partnership working with other agencies WHBC Emergency Plan Crisis Support Team Exercising and training Resilient telecoms, including RAYNET, MTPAS and Resilience Direct WHBC Business Continuity Plan EA Extended Floodline service	Very High	Low	10
The emergency plan is being reviewed. The council has arrangements in place which include being able to obtain mutual aid from other local authorities and the voluntary sector.					
Health and Safety Health and Safety Failure to maintain an adequate and effective safety management system within the Council, including structures, processes, control measures and allocations of responsibilities and ensuring competence of employees, contractors & service providers and compliance with safety laws and regulations. Consequences: serious injury, work-related ill health or fatalities leading to lost productivity, absence, litigation, external investigation by enforcing authorities, and possibly prosecution.	Nick Long – Executive Director Bernard Sarson - Executive Member for Business, Partnerships and Public Health	Collective Safety Responsibility of Executive Board Map of the extent of the undertaking Communication with Employees Inspection and Auditing Induction and Ongoing Training Periodic Inspection of Premises, Plant and Equipment Risk and Resilience Team with professional competence Risk Assessments & Associated Control Measures Safety Director Role and regular meetings Safety Policy Document	Very High	Medium	15
Work continues following the re-assimilation of the housing trust into the council. Work has been undertaken to “map the council’s undertaking” to ensure Heads of Service are clear about the areas for which they have control. The next step will be to check and audit a series of risk assessments.					
Local Plan Failure to have and deliver a sound Local Plan. Consequences: The local economy achieves less than its full potential; delivery of New Homes Bonus, future Council Tax and Business Rate receipts is adversely affected; investment proposals do not come to fruition; failure to provide sufficient affordable housing; local infrastructure projects may not be delivered; contribution towards funding new and improved local facilities does not happen; unplanned 'hostile' developments occur. Opportunities to bring in external funding	Nick Long – Executive Director Mandy Perkins – Deputy Leader	Extensive evidence will underpin the development of our Local Plan and inform our proposals Input from CHPP Project plan for the Local Plan is in place Public scrutiny, including a public examination led by an independent Planning Inspector S106/Community Infrastructure Levy is in place	Very High	Medium	15

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to assist the delivery of sustainable growth are lost; Reputational damage.					
<p>Inspector is currently asking questions of officers to help frame scope of public hearing part of examination.</p> <p>St Albans Council recently failed in judicial challenge to Government that their plan did not achieve legal duty to cooperate tests.</p> <p>This remains a risk for Welwyn-Hatfield Local Plan as housing target is lower than objective assessment of need, and this requires Council to cooperate with authorities in housing market area, to attempt to provide in their administrative areas.</p>					
Finance Plans for meeting the growing budget gap are not delivered on time to ensure continued sufficient resources to pay for services. Consequences: The Authority runs out of money, external criticism, Government intervention, loss of service to tax payers. Loss of income from fees and charges. Inability to cope with increasing demands on services.	Ka Ng – Executive Director Duncan Bell - Executive Member, Resources	Annual Governance Statement Asset Management Plan Budget Challenge Process Budget preparation process Budgetary control by managers Capital Programme External and internal audit Finance Procedure Rules Financial Information System (Agresso) HRA Business Plan Medium Term Financial Plan Treasury Management Policy Use and Control of Reserves and Balances	Very High	Medium	15
Work has commenced to close the budget gap in the medium term. In particular, the first Executive Board and Cabinet was held on 19 th July, which a number of budget proposals was considered. A further meeting was held on 24 th August.					
Communication Failure to communicate the Council's priorities to its communities and failure to actively manage the Council's reputation. Failure to manage the Council's messages. Failure to mainstream communications and build ownership and consensus across the organisation. Failure to consider communications implications and involve the Communications Team. Consequences; Loss of trust, loss of reputation, unable to manage key council messages and news	Ka Ng – Executive Director Tony Kingsbury - Executive Member for Policy & Culture	Communication plans are agreed for all significant projects/high priority issues Communications Strategy is embedded and reviewed with HoST Communications Team seeks to attend DMTs Media Trained Staff and Members Monitoring system for positive and negative news coverage Review and monitoring of Communications Strategy by Executive Board Skilled and Experienced Communications Team Undertaking perception and satisfaction based surveys Undertaking Perception Based Surveys	High	Low	8
The risk rating has been reduced as all internal and external council communications are now being managed by one team.					

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Previously the Housing Service delivered its own communications but this has changed following its reintegration into the Council.					
Media relations remain cordial but positive with the WH Times at this time, and members of the communications team regularly update and circulate the corporate PR Plan to Heads and Directors.					
ICT Failure ICT Failure Critical failure of ICT services, for example due to virus attack, and ransomware virus attacks, which target computers running Microsoft Windows encrypting the personal documents , lack of network capacity, hacking, hardware failure, etc. These attacks are more prevalent and there is a risk of critical IT failure resulting from these. This involves Consequences: Loss of ICT dependent services.	Ka Ng – Executive Director Duncan Bell - Executive Member, Resources	Blocking potential virus emails where common themes are detected. Alternative methods to update local and remote databases DR plan ICT - Temporary PSTN connection Infrastructure review to stabilise our virtual environment IT Strategy	Very High	Medium	15
We continue to be vigilant and apply fixes to prevent different forms of ransomware attacks. This includes regular liaison with our software security supplier. In addition to this we continue to be party to deployment of Windows security update patches which are key to preventing the spread of viruses across our network.					
ICT (Data Protection) The new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) will replace the current Data Protection Act from May 18. It contains some onerous obligations that will have an immediate impact. As we handle people's data we are responsible for keeping it safe and are bound by law to comply with data protection regulations.	Ka Ng – Executive Director Duncan Bell - Executive Member, Resources	Establishing policies and procedures. Arranging staff training, implementing protective measures corresponding to the level of risk of their data processing activities. Encrypt as much of our personal and business confidential data as is practicable and on a risk-based approach, paying particular attention to sensitive personal data, mobile devices and data transfers outside the business	Very High	Medium	15
We are in the process of drawing up our data protection policy which will incorporate the GDPR changes we need to make.					