



AUDIT AGENDA

**WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.30 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 2 - THE FORUM**

Membership

Councillor Terry Douris
Councillor Graeme Elliot
Councillor Sadie Hobson

Councillor Paul Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Robert Stewart (Chair)

For further information, please contact Corporate and Democratic Support or 01442 228209

AGENDA

11 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER UPDATE Q4 2023/24

(Pages 2 - 25)



Report for:	Audit Committee
Title of report:	Strategic Risk Register Q4 2023-24
Date:	18 th September
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Michela Capozzi, Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Commercial Services
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	
Appendices:	Appendix A- Strategic Risk Register Update Q4 2023-24 Appendix B- Risk scoring methodology
Background papers:	Audit Committee March 2024 Strategic Risk Register Update Q3 2023-24
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report and appendices:	CEE- Climate and Ecological Emergency CLT- Corporate Leadership Team DLUHC- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. HRA – Housing Revenue Account. The Council’s Housing Landlord function. HTIP- Housing Transformation and Improvement Programme. A review of operational practices within the Housing service. SLT- Strategic Leadership Team. VCS- Voluntary and Community Sector. VFM- Value for Money.

Report Author / Responsible Officer

Fiona Jump, Head of Financial Services



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Corporate Priorities	Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
Wards affected	All

Purpose of the report:	1. To provide committee with an update against the risks identified in the Council's Strategic Risk Register as at Q3 2023-24.
Recommendation to the decision maker:	1. To provide comments and feedback on the report for consideration by Cabinet when they review the Q3 2023-24 update on the Strategic Risk Register.
Period for post policy/project review:	An update on the Council's Strategic Risk Register is provided to Audit Committee and Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

1 Background

Robust risk management supports the delivery of the Council's corporate plan objectives. The Council has a legal obligation to ensure that it has sound risk management arrangements in place.

A review of the significant strategic risks impacting the delivery of the Council's six key corporate plan priorities was undertaken during 2022-23. This review involved Members, the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and the Council's internal auditors. A revised set of strategic risks were produced as follows, to be reported on from quarter 4, 2022-23:

Risk	Risk Owner
Failure to ensure compliance with statutory and legislative requirements.	Chief Executive
Failure to work with Strategic Partners to deliver Corporate priorities	Chief Executive
The Council is subject to a successful cyber- attack and/ or data breach.	Strategic Director (People and Transformation)
We are unable to deliver effective services to residents due to an inability to retain and recruit sufficient competent and skilled resources.	Strategic Director (People and Transformation)
We do not plan in or deliver action early enough to ensure achievement of the CEE statement.	Strategic Director (People and Transformation)
Inability to manage and deliver safe and good quality affordable homes	Strategic Director (Housing and Property)
Weakening of the Council's Financial Resilience.	Strategic Director (Corporate and Commercial Services) / Chief Finance Officer
Failure to Deliver Place Shaping and Regeneration ambitions.	Strategic Director (Place)

Each risk is owned by a member of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team. Each quarter, they will provide an assessment of the current likelihood and impact/ consequence associated with each risk, together with narrative context. This is explained further below.

2 Strategic Risk Register Update Q4 2023-24

Appendix A provides a detailed update on the Council's strategic risks as at Q4 2023-24.

Between Q3 2023-24 and Q4 2023-24, there have been no movements in the current risk score for any of the Council's strategic risks.

The last internal audit report on the Council's risk management arrangements issue during 2023/24 made recommendations for the inclusion of an action plan against each strategic risk. This will be implemented during 2024/25.

3 Risk scoring and current risk status

Appendix B provides an explanation of the scoring system used by the Council to provide a numerical assessment of the status of each strategic risk.

The Council uses a 4x4 risk scoring matrix. The likelihood that a risk will occur is scored from 1 to 4 (1 being very unlikely, 4 being almost certain). Likewise, the impact/ consequence of a risk is also scored from 1 to 4, (1 being low impact, 4 being significant impact). Both scores are then multiplied together to give an overall score.

For example: likelihood (4) x impact (4) gives an overall risk score of 16.

An overall risk score of 1 indicates low likelihood/ impact of a risk; a score of 16 indicates high likelihood/ impact of a risk.

The Council provides and assessment of three different types of risk score:

- 1) Inherent risk score. This is the risk score if no controls to manage the risk impact or likelihood were in place. It is expected that the inherent score would be relatively high for all strategic risks.
- 2) Target risk score or risk appetite score. This is the risk score that this organisation is prepared to accept, to be achieved by the controls that the Council puts in place to manage the impact and likelihood of each risk.
- 3) Current risk score. This is the risk score that gives an assessment of the current position.

4 Revised Corporate Plan and associated updates to the Council's associated strategic risks.

At the time of writing, Cabinet are scheduled to approve a revised Corporate Plan for the Council on 10th September 2024. An organisation's strategic risks link directly to its corporate plan priorities. The identification and formal adoption of the Council's revised strategic risks will begin upon approval of the revised Corporate Plan. The Council will be supported through this process by its internal auditors TIAA.

5 Financial and value for money implications:

Proper risk management arrangements support delivery of value for money and helps secure the Council's financial resources.

6 Legal Implications

The Council is required by law to make proper risk management arrangements.

7 Risk implications:

Contained in the body of the report.

8 Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights

None arising directly from the report.

9 Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and wellbeing, community safety)

None arising directly from the report.

10 Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)

None arising directly from the report.

11 Conclusion

This report provides an update on the Council's Strategic Register as at Q4 2023-24.

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Risk Register Summary Table

		31 Mar 2024	
Risk Name	Risk Owner	Status	
		Actual	Update
The Council is subject to a successful cyber attack and/ or data breach.	Aidan Wilkie	6.00	- We have successfully secured PSN accreditation; - We are working towards cyber essentials + accreditation with a view to securing it in the summer. - We have run a Council wide cyber resilience exercise which will form the basis of cross-Council improvements. - All staff and councillors have undertaken cyber related training; - We have updated our patching and update processes to ensure these are always done the most timely and efficient manner
Failure to ensure compliance with statutory and legislative requirements.	Claire Hamilton	4.00	Robust programme of internal and external audit assessment. Findings of these programmes supporting legal compliance on areas of Council activity. Quarterly audit actions report comes to SLT. Review of Council statutory responsibilities has been fed into the annual service planning process. Housing Transformation & Improvement Programme (HTIP) underway. Favourable outcomes achieved and improvement programme still progressing. Target Operating Model in final stages of development. Preparation for Regulator of Social Housing Inspection is underway. Self assessment being completed and independent support on requirements is being commissioned. Monthly report on GF and HRA compliance presented to SLT. Monthly H&S Chief Executive briefing by Head of Corporate H&S and Resilience takes place. Formal Statutory Officer meeting takes place on a monthly basis. Dacorum Assurance Framework is nearing completion. SLT meeting takes place weekly- attended by all Statutory Officers or their deputies. Chief Executive and senior officers attend briefings on statutory requirements and changes in legislation. Legislative requirements in relation to the Elections Act 2022 are being met and monitored through meetings with the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive.

Risk Name	Risk Owner	31 Mar 2024	
		Status	
		Actual	Update
Inability to manage and deliver safe and good quality homes.	Darren Welsh	8.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan has been reviewed, in consultation with residents, as part of the Council's financial budget setting cycle and refresh of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. • In January 2024, Cabinet approved the new Housing Strategy for 2024-29 and it also approved the Repairs and Maintenance Recommissioning Strategy. • In February 2024, Cabinet approved the Council's Building Safety Policy for its Council housing stock, the HRA Business Plan for 2024, and the interim Housing Asset Management Strategy. • Compliance reporting on health and safety management is reviewed by the Council's Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis. • Quarterly performance reports to the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been reviewed to provide more information on customer insight and service improvement actions. • In March 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing announced that the Council would be in Wave 1 of Council housing inspections in 2024, with the inspection to commence in April 2024.
We do not plan in or deliver action early enough to ensure achievement of the CEE statement.	Aidan Wilkie	4.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We now have an agreed programme of work, governance and impact/ monitoring approach; - Key delivery risks are identified and work prioritised; - Fleet and housing decarbonisation remain big challenges but big steps forward have been made on both. The latter is a nationwide challenge. - The Council holds £1.16m in reserves to help progress our programme/ augment it with additional activity – we have developed a proposed programme of spend which we will take through the clearance protocols.

		31 Mar 2024	
Risk Name	Risk Owner	Status	
		Actual	Update
Page 8	Weakening of the Council's Financial Resilience. Catherine Silva Donayre/ Nigel Howcutt	4.00	There has been no change in the risk score quarter on quarter. Inherent risk likelihood 4; inherent risk consequence/ impact 4. Overall inherent risk score is 16. Target risk likelihood 2; target risk consequence/ impact 3. Overall target risk score is 6. Actual Risk Score; Impact 2 likelihood 2. Overall Qtr 4 risk score is 4. During 2023/24 the 3-year financial projections for the general fund have projected an overall surplus in comparison to approved budgets, and at year end the projected surplus was crystallized. The General fund short term financial position looks strong given the increased performance of cash investments. This has come about due to slippage in the capital spend programme increasing cash balances, and higher and more sustained levels of interest rates than previously forecasted. In addition to this the 2024 Medium Term financial Strategy (MTFS) and 2024/25 budget has been approved by cabinet and is projecting a balanced budget position for 24/25. A total unidentified savings requirement of £2.1m is remaining to be achieved over the MTFS period. The level of reserves at the end of 23/24 are expected to exceed reserve levels achieved in recent years and feel appropriate to support any short and medium term difficulties that could arise. The HRA financial projections worsened in quarter 4 of 22/23 and the financial pressures within the service have maintained throughout 2023/24 with a year end pressure supported by reserve draw downs for 23/24. The HRA is impacted significantly by inflationary cost pressures and increased demand relating to repairs and maintenance. The HRA is being closely monitored and mitigation measures are being implemented and assessed as the impact of wider inflationary cost pressures has a greater impact on the housing service than the general fund. In terms of medium term financial sustainability the HRA 30 year business plan has been approved by cabinet and details how the HRA plans to ensure it is both affordable and sustainable in the medium term. Mitigations/Actions importance. 1. Delivering to budget in year. 2. Approval of a sustainable and achievable MTFS 3. Approval of a balanced budget for the next financial year.
		6.00	New Local Plan has completed Regulation 18 consultation in December 2023; work progressing in Q4 towards next statutory stage, Regulation 19 by the autumn of 2024.
	Failure to deliver Place Shaping and Regeneration ambitions. James Doe		

		31 Mar 2024	
		Actual	Statement
			<p>Programme on track. • Likely General Election in 2024 and change of national government leading to changes in planning policy/legislation • UKSPF Investment Plan of £1.763m progressing; some projects to be reassigned to ensure full retention and spend of the funds. • Draft Hemel Place Strategy now likely to come in Q4 24/25 given failure to recruit new Head of Place and Enterprise; this post has now been made permanent and appointment made. • Hemel Town Centre Vision approved by Cabinet 18 July 23; currently handling major investment enquiries • Hemel Health Campus project being initiated with NHS partners during Q4; move to formal governance and initial PID by Q1 24/25 • Hemel Place Board continues to meet; move to action planning stage by Q4. • Corporate Place Board continuing to progress the Chiltern Beechwoods Mitigation Strategy and roll-out of e-bikes for Hemel Hempstead. Corporate SANG group formed to deliver new SANG on Council-owned sites • Dacorum Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan being developed with Herts CC and consultation closed 26 Feb 24, plan now progressing for completion by mid-2025. • Sustainable Transport Plans for Berkhamsted and Tring, and Hemel Hempstead started by appointed consultants AECOM with input from HCC. • Berkhamsted and Tring Town Councils taking the lead on respective place strategies with support from DBC. • Review of town centre assets underway through Strategic Asset Review • New Dacorum Investment Framework to facilitate inward investment – to be progressed in 24/25 by new Head of Place and Enterprise • Infrastructure Delivery Plan being kept up to date to support Local Plan – work ongoing with HCC fully engaged; work on track • Work continues on revising CIL spend and governance • Economic Recovery Board progressing with reporting on 6 separate workstreams; will be superseded by new suite of business engagement proposals to be rolled out in 24/25, aiming for launch Sept 24 • New Maylands Masterplan consultants appointed and work has progressed with draft plan produced, engagement with stakeholders continuing into Q4. Work all on track with approval of the Masterplan by DBC and partners in Q2 24/25 • Attendance at UKREiiF in Leeds, May 2024, confirmed as part of wider Hertfordshire delegation. • Hemel Garden Communities programme continuing well with work with major landowner to</p>

		31 Mar	
		Actual	Sta
			commencing initial planning work in Q1 2024/25. Work programme focused on supporting evidence for both Dacorum and St Albans Local Plans. • Continual partner liaison with The Crown Estate over the HGC plans and working with it to support planning proposals for the first phases of the development at East Hemel mainly in the St Albans district. • VCS recommissioning proposals agreed by Cabinet, now in place with new SLAs agree with four key VCS delivery partners. • Regeneration proposals to follow Strategic Asset Review, currently being procured, to involve General Fund and HRA assets with view to place making. Implementation of outcomes likely to be progressed from Q1 24/25 • Long lease at Riverside shopping centre has been reassigned; planning discussions and pre-application arrangements under discussion and are progressing to submission of planning application by end of Q3 24/25 • Place Communities and Enterprise Heads of Service Posts selection took place in Q3, with appointments to Head of Communities and Leisure and Head of Arts and Culture. Head of Place and Enterprise post has now been made permanent and appointment now made. • Long term planning for SW Herts through the Joint Strategic Plan is moving towards strategic growth location selection by members during Q4 and Q1 of 24/25 • National economy confirmed as in recession which may be a risk to investment proposals over the coming 12 months
We are unable to deliver effective services to residents due to an inability to retain and recruit sufficient competent and skilled resources.	Aidan Wilkie	4.00	- Turnover and vacancy rate data have improved significantly despite the market remaining challenging. - Evidence that the market forces policy is helping to tackle longstanding recruitment challenges eg planning; - Work programme in place to improve Dacorum offer and branding - Starting to look at alternative banding/ pay approaches for specialist roles

Risk Name	Risk Owner	31 Mar 2024	
		Status	
		Actual	Update
Failure to work with Strategic Partners to deliver corporate priorities.	Claire Hamilton	4.00	Key joint working groups established and operating (e.g. Hemel Place Board, SW Herts Joint Strategic Partnership, Hemel Garden Communities Board). Key Delivery Partnerships have the appropriate strategic and operational governance boards in place to monitor delivery. Hertfordshire wide delivery groups are supported and monitored. Strategic partners are assigned lead officers for relationship management and communications. Senior officers liaise with Government departments and agencies in relation to the Council's strategic plans and activity. Meetings with DLUHC and Home Office officials have been held and preparations are underway for future visits from Government departments in 2024. Hemel Health Campus project has been launched and a project team with health partners has been established. Strategic Partners are engaged in the production of new strategies and plans for Dacorum, such as the new Housing Strategy. CVS Grant funding proposals are being implemented following Cabinet approval.

Risk Name	Detail	31 Mar 2024
		Status
#RM000000001	Risk Owner	Aidan Wilkie
	Portfolio	People and Transformation
	Risk Description	The Council is subject to a successful cyber attack and/ or data breach.
	Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Risk Register March 2023 Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
	Inherent Score	16 ▲
	Mitigated Score	6.00 ●
	Risk Appetite	4.00
	Comments	- We have successfully secured PSN accreditation; - We are working towards cyber essentials + accreditation with a view to securing it in the summer. - We have run a Council wide cyber resilience exercise which will form the basis of cross-Council improvements. - All staff and councillors have undertaken cyber related training; - We have updated our patching and update processes to ensure these are always done the most timely and efficient manner
	Controls & Assurances	The Council has implemented a number of measures to manage this risk including use of firewalls, security patching and staff training. Regular back- ups are undertaken. The Council has a robust independently assessed technical infrastructure and security function which is constantly tested against best practice.
	Evidence Risk is being managed	The Council has implemented a number of measures to manage this risk. Due to evidence that those looking to carry out cyber-attacks specifically look for public facing documents outlining control measures in place, these measures are not provided in detail here and are available to Members on request. The Council has a robust independently assessed technical infrastructure and security function which is constantly tested against best practice.
Consequences / Impacts	Financial loss through inability to deliver business as usual activity. Financial and human resource cost of recovering from the event. Data breach resulting in fines/ penalties. Reputational damage and loss of trust in the Council. Regulator/ government intervention. Inability to deliver frontline services and associated impact on residents.	
#RM000000007	Risk Owner	Claire Hamilton
	Portfolio	Leader of the Council
	Risk Description	Failure to ensure compliance with statutory and legislative requirements.
	Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Risk Register March 2023 Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

		31 Mar 2024
Detail		Status
	Inherent Score	16 ▲
	Mitigated Score	4.00 ★
	Risk Appetite	2.00
	Comments	Robust programme of internal and external audit assessment. Findings of these programmes supporting legal compliance on areas of Council activity. Quarterly audit actions report comes to SLT. Review of Council statutory responsibilities has been fed into the annual service planning process. Housing Transformation & Improvement Programme (HTIP) underway. Favourable outcomes achieved and improvement programme still progressing. Target Operating Model in final stages of development. Preparation for Regulator of Social Housing Inspection is underway. Self assessment being completed and independent support on requirements is being commissioned. Monthly report on GF and HRA compliance presented to SLT. Monthly H&S Chief Executive briefing by Head of Corporate H&S and Resilience takes place. Formal Statutory Officer meeting takes place on a monthly basis. Dacorum Assurance Framework is nearing completion. SLT meeting takes place weekly- attended by all Statutory Officers or their deputies. Chief Executive and senior officers attend briefings on statutory requirements and changes in legislation. Legislative requirements in relation to the Elections Act 2022 are being met and monitored through meetings with the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive.
	Controls & Assurances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal, regulatory and financial frameworks regularly reviewed and considerations imbedded in key policies, processes and decision-making process. - Rigorous framework of Health and Safety monitoring, reporting and escalation. - Developed 3 year rolling Internal Audit programme that challenges statutory and legislative requirements. - External audit reporting annually. - Ombudsman annual assessment and reporting.
	Evidence Risk is being managed	<p>Statutory deadlines met on key deliverables (including and not limited to Council Tax setting, delivery of a balanced budget, publication of final accounts).</p> <p>Robust programme of internal and external audit assessment. Findings of these programmes supporting legal compliance on areas of Council activity.</p> <p>Housing Transformation & Improvement Programme (HTIP) instigated and progressed during 2022-23. Favourable outcomes achieved and improvement programme still progressing.</p> <p>Monthly compliance report on General Fund and Housing Revenue Account assets presented to the Council's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT).</p>
	Consequences / Impacts	<p>Intervention by sector regulators, including but not limited to HM Treasury, Regulator of Social Housing, and Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>Intervention by central government including the Office for Local Government.</p> <p>Increase in complaint and escalation to Local Government Ombudsman.</p> <p>Increase in litigation against the Council.</p> <p>Imposition of fines and penalties against the Council.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p>
#RM00000015	Risk Owner	Darren Welsh
	Portfolio	Housing and Property Services

		31 Mar 2024
Detail		Status
Risk Description	Inability to manage and deliver safe and good quality affordable homes	
Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategic Risk Register March 2023 ■ Providing good quality affordable homes 	
Inherent Score	16 ▲	
Mitigated Score	8.00 ●	
Risk Appetite	8.00	
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan has been reviewed, in consultation with residents, as part of the Council's financial budget setting cycle and refresh of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. • In January 2024, Cabinet approved the new Housing Strategy for 2024-29 and it also approved the Repairs and Maintenance Recommissioning Strategy. • In February 2024, Cabinet approved the Council's Building Safety Policy for its Council housing stock, the HRA Business Plan for 2024, and the interim Housing Asset Management Strategy. • Compliance reporting on health and safety management is reviewed by the Council's Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis. • Quarterly performance reports to the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been reviewed to provide more information on customer insight and service improvement actions. • In March 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing announced that the Council would be in Wave 1 of Council housing inspections in 2024, with the inspection to commence in April 2024. 	
Controls & Assurances	<p>Housing Transformation and Improvement Programme in place to transform the housing service. Strong focus on compliance activity and regular reporting to SLT, Scrutiny and Cabinet. New management structure developed and in place for Housing Services to create capacity and deliver strong leadership. Strategic housing function created to drive affordable housing supply and enable, monitor and report on housing needs and delivery. A programme of grant support is in place to Registered Providers to support affordable housing delivery. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan refreshed to reflect all housing priorities. Housing delivery is a key part of the developing 2023 Local Plan.</p>	
Evidence Risk is being managed	<p>Housing Transformation and Improvement Programme (HTIP) - baseline report for HTIP. HTIP is a review of current operating practices within the Housing services, the purpose of which is to identify areas and actions for improvement and change. Safeguarding improvement plan identifies where more effective controls could be applied. New service structure to support service objectives. Monitoring and management of compliance in place. HRA Business Plan annually refreshed. Improved governance across Housing and also corporately. Preparatory work on new regulatory requirements to be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	
Consequences / Impacts	<p>Regulatory intervention. Funding withdrawal. Loss of life/ injury to tenants/ leasehold occupant. Reputational damage. Increased homelessness. Failure to appropriately safeguard households. Failure to maintain assets.</p>	
#RM00000024	Risk Owner	Aidan Wilkie

Detail

Status

Portfolio	Climate Change
Risk Description	We do not plan in or deliver action early enough to ensure achievement of the CEE statement.
Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategic Risk Register March 2023 ■ Climate and ecological emergency
Inherent Score	16 ▲
Mitigated Score	4.00 ★
Risk Appetite	4.00
Comments	- We now have an agreed programme of work, governance and impact/ monitoring approach; - Key delivery risks are identified and work prioritised; - Fleet and housing decarbonisation remain big challenges but big steps forward have been made on both. The latter is a nationwide challenge. - The Council holds £1.16m in reserves to help progress our programme/ augment it with additional activity – we have developed a proposed programme of spend which we will take through the clearance protocols.
Controls & Assurances	- Climate and Ecological Strategy and action plan created and implemented. - A renewed programmatic approach including analysis of potential and impact of individual and collective intervention. This includes ownership of delivery spread throughout the Council and renewed governance. - All key strategic decision making includes an assessment of the impact on carbon footprint.
Evidence Risk is being managed	Climate and Ecological Strategy and action plan created and implemented. A renewed programmatic approach including analysis of potential and impact of individual and collective intervention. This includes ownership of delivery spread throughout the Council and renewed governance. All key strategic decision making includes an assessment of the impact on carbon footprint.
Consequences / Impacts	Adverse impact on local biodiversity. Adverse impact on health and wellbeing of the population of the borough. Reputational damage.

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#RM00000068

Risk Owner	Catherine SilvaDonayre
Portfolio	Corporate and Commercial Services
Risk Description	Weakening of the Council's Financial Resilience.
Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategic Risk Register March 2023 ■ Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
Inherent Score	16 ▲
Mitigated Score	4.00 ★
Risk Appetite	6.00

Comments

There has been no change in the risk score quarter on quarter. Inherent risk likelihood 4; inherent risk consequence/ impact 4. Overall inherent risk score is 16. Target risk likelihood 2; target risk consequence/ impact 3. Overall target risk score is 6. Actual Risk Score; Impact 2 likelihood 2. Overall Qtr 4 risk score is 4. During 2023/24 the in-year financial projections for the general fund have projected an overall surplus in comparison to approved budgets, and at year end the projected surplus was crystallized. The General fund short term financial position looks strong given the increased performance of cash investments. This has come about due to slippage in the capital spend programme increasing cash balances, and higher and more sustained levels of interest rates than previously forecasted. In addition to this the 2024 Medium Term financial Strategy (MTFS) and 2024/25 budget has been approved by cabinet and is projecting a balanced budget position for 24/25. A total unidentified savings requirement of £2.1m is remaining to be achieved over the MTFS period. The level of reserves at the end of 23/24 are expected to exceed reserve levels achieved in recent years and feel appropriate to support any short and medium term difficulties that could arise. The HRA financial projections worsened in quarter 4 of 22/23 and the financial pressures within the service have maintained throughout 2023/24 with a year end pressure supported by reserve draw downs for 23/24. The HRA is impacted significantly by inflationary cost pressures and increased demand relating to repairs and maintenance. The HRA is being closely monitored and mitigation measures are being implemented and assessed as the impact of wider inflationary cost pressures has a greater impact on the housing service than the general fund. In terms of medium term financial sustainability the HRA 30 year business plan has been approved by cabinet and details how the HRA plans to ensure it is both affordable and sustainable in the medium term. Mitigations/Actions importance. 1. Delivering to budget in year. 2. Approval of a sustainable and achievable MTFS 3. Approval of a balanced budget for the next financial year.

Controls & Assurances

- Clear financial governance processes in place and adhered to.
- Annual independent assessment of VFM and sustainability.
- Strategic decision making assesses the financial sustainability of strategies.
- Medium term financial sustainability assessed as part of the council approved MTFS and annual budget.
- Delivery of a robust annual Internal Audit programme and annual approval by IA of risks and controls processes.
- Development and implementation of Transformation and Commercial programmes to support financial resilience.

Evidence Risk is being managed

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the HRA Business Plan are controls that mitigate the likelihood of this risk crystallizing through the effective modelling of the future financial environment.

Sound financial planning maximizes the opportunity for the Council to identify funding risks in advance, and therefore grants more time for it to plan to provide its services differently in order to continue delivering its corporate priorities.

The Council's sound financial planning processes, have resulted in a residual likelihood score is 3, It is likely that the Council's financial resilience will weaken from a position of strength; given current macroeconomic factors that contribute to financial pressures, despite the sound financial control framework in place.

The residual impact score is 2, given the financial planning and reserves policy in place to reduce/finance the impact of any financial downturn. If the economic outlook was to be ongoing for significant period of time the impact score would increase as resources are diminished.

The MTFS details the financial implications of the Corporate Plan over a five-year period. It ensures that the Council is able to forecast likely income pressures in the medium-term, and optimise the balance between its financial resources and the delivery of its priorities. The MTFS is reviewed annually and is approved by Full Council, thereby providing the opportunity for Members to make informed amendments to the Corporate Plan on the basis of likely funding constraints.

The 2022 MTFS outlines the continuation of the ongoing two-pronged approach to combine the Council's need to;

- 1 Continue driving the efficiencies required to ensure underlying sustainability; and,
- 2 To protect frontline service provision.

The updated 2022 MTFS can be viewed on the October 2022 Cabinet Agenda, at www.dacorum.gov.uk.

Internal Audit

In recent years, the Council has received independent, third-party audit reviews of the financial processes that contribute to the management of this risk:

The 'Budgetary Control' process is audited by the Council's Internal Auditors annually and in 2022, and 2023 has received the substantial assurance.

The 'Core Financial Systems and Budgetary Control' which have in recent years also achieved substantial assurance with limited recommendations for improvement.

External Audit

The 2022 "Annual Auditors Report and 'Value for Money' opinion issued by Grant Thornton in June 2023 outlined no risks of significant weakness identified in relation to Financial Sustainability, Governance and Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This report was based on evaluation of the MTFS; the budget setting process; the reserves policy and use; and, the Council's financial performance reporting

The Council has a sustainable 2022 MTFS and a balanced budget set for 2023/24 following a financial performance in 2022/23 that followed expectations, and included a significant net contribution to reserves, and hence, it has meant that the Council is able to protect the delivery of its frontline services into the medium-term.

Consequences / Impacts

The Council is currently facing two fronts of significant financial uncertainty that both hamper planning and risk deliverability of the objectives within the Corporate Plan into the medium-term:

1. The ongoing uncertainty around future Government funding of local authorities.
2. The financial implications of the wider economic downturn and uncertainty.

Government Funding

The Council is currently operating on a one-year Finance Settlement from Government, the fourth in succession, following the conclusion of the 4- year settlement ending in April 2019. One-year settlements, and the planning challenges that accompany them, are expected to continue until after the next general election, expected in October 2024. At this point it is expected that a new Local Government funding allocation model will be implemented following historical work Funding Review work undertaken.

As yet there is no certainty over the level of funding that Dacorum or any other authority can expect in the future.

However, there is a strong belief across the sector that the new model will divert funding away from lower tier authorities in favour of those authorities with responsibility for the provision of Public Health, Social Care and Education. The Council must ensure that it's in a position to adapt to significant funding reductions at potentially short notice when the new model is announced.

Economic Downturn and Inflationary Pressures.

The Council faces significant expenditure pressures as a result of unusually high inflation impacting on contract values, pay awards and utilities.

The current cost of living crisis created by record inflation levels is putting an additional strain on household incomes, this is likely to impact on council income generation.

Income pressures could be brought about by a significant long-term recessionary impact on the Council's primary income generating services, e.g. commercial property, parking and garages.

The magnitude of the potential ongoing economic uncertainty and severity of the economic recovery period creates a significant financial threat to the Council's in-year and medium term budget.

#RM00000082

Risk Owner

James Doe

Portfolio

Place

Risk Description

Failure to Deliver Place Shaping and Regeneration ambitions

Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities

- Strategic Risk Register March 2023
- Building strong and vibrant communities

Inherent Score

12 ▲

Mitigated Score

6.00 ●

Risk Appetite

4.00

Comments

• New Local Plan has completed Regulation 18 consultation in December 2023; work progressing in Q4 towards next statutory stage, Regulation 19 by the autumn of 2024. Programme on track. • Likely General Election in 2024 and change of national government leading to changes in planning policy/legislation • UKSPF Investment Plan of £1.763m progressing; some projects to be reassigned to ensure full retention and spend of the funds. • Draft Hemel Place Strategy now likely to come in Q4 24/25 given failure to recruit new Head of Place and Enterprise; this post has now been made permanent and appointment made. • Hemel Town Centre Vision approved by Cabinet 18 July 23; currently handling major investment enquiries • Hemel Health Campus project being initiated with NHS partners during Q4; move to formal governance and initial PID by Q1 24/25 • Hemel Place Board continues to meet; move to action planning stage by Q4. • Corporate Place Board continuing to progress the Chiltern Beechwoods Mitigation Strategy and roll-out of e-bikes for Hemel Hempstead. Corporate SANG group formed to deliver new SANG on Council-owned sites • Dacorum Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan being developed with Herts CC and consultation closed 26 Feb 24, plan now progressing for completion by mid-2025. • Sustainable Transport Plans for Berkhamsted and Tring, and Hemel Hempstead started by appointed consultants AECOM with input from HCC. • Berkhamsted and Tring Town Councils taking the lead on respective place strategies with support from DBC. • Review of town centre assets underway through Strategic Asset Review • New Dacorum Investment Framework to facilitate inward investment – to be progressed in 24/25 by new Head of Place and Enterprise • Infrastructure Delivery Plan being kept up to date to support Local Plan – work ongoing with HCC fully engaged; work on track • Work continues on revising CIL spend and governance • Economic Recovery Board progressing with reporting on 6 separate workstreams; will be superseded by new suite of business engagement proposals to be rolled out in 24/25, aiming for launch Sept 24 • New Maylands Masterplan consultants appointed and work has progressed with draft plan produced, engagement with stakeholders continuing into Q4. Work all on track with approval of the Masterplan by DBC and partners in Q2 24/25 • Attendance at UKREiIF in Leeds, May 2024, confirmed as part of wider Hertfordshire delegation. • Hemel Garden Communities programme continuing well with work with major landowner to commencing initial planning work in Q1 2024/25. Work programme focused on supporting evidence for both Dacorum and St Albans Local Plans. • Continual partner liaison with The Crown Estate over the HGC plans and working with it to support planning proposals for the first phases of the development at East Hemel mainly in the St Albans district. • VCS recommissioning proposals agreed by Cabinet, now in place with new SLAs agree with four key VCS delivery partners. • Regeneration proposals to follow Strategic Asset Review, currently being procured, to involve General Fund and HRA assets with view to place making. Implementation of outcomes likely to be progressed from Q1 24/25 • Long lease at Riverside shopping centre has been reassigned; planning discussions and pre-application arrangements under discussion and are progressing to submission of planning application by end of Q3 24/25 • Place Communities and Enterprise Heads of Service Posts selection took place in Q3, with appointments to Head of Communities and Leisure and Head of Arts and Culture. Head of Place and Enterprise post has now been made permanent and appointment now made. • Long term planning for SW Herts through the Joint Strategic Plan is moving towards strategic growth location selection by members during Q4 and Q1 of 24/25 • National economy confirmed as in recession which may be a risk to investment proposals over the coming 12 months

Controls & Assurances

- Hemel Place Strategy in progress to set objectives of agenda
- Hemel Place Strategy to co-ordinate key areas of development and change including Hemel Garden Communities, Hemel Town Centre, Maylands Business Park and Two Waters/Apsley
- Place Implementation Plan to be worked up to govern priorities and delivery
- Governance through partnership Hemel Place Board and internal management and delivery through new Corporate Place Board
- Local communities engaged on new place strategies for Berkhamsted and Tring
- All projects to follow Corporate Project Management governance
- New Town Centre Strategy in progress to steer priorities
- Review of town centre assets underway to determine effective deployment of DBC land and property to deliver and catalyse place shaping, and to realise capital funds to support delivery
- New Local Plan to underpin whole agenda
- New Dacorum Investment Framework to facilitate inward investment
- Engagement in key Government Funding Streams eg Levelling Up Fund, UK Share Prosperity Fund, Investment Zones, Route Improvement Strategy
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan being kept up to date
- Policy on deployment of Community Infrastructure Levy Funds underway
- Cross-service work on HRA and General Fund assets to identify regeneration, place shaping and environmental improvement opportunities
- Economic Recovery Board formed and Plan being actively managed with partners
- Engagement of VCS to support place making
- Internal place project teams to support focused delivery and improvement, with Old Town team already formed and delivering

Evidence Risk is being managed

- Hemel Place Strategy in progress to set objectives of agenda
- Hemel Place Strategy co-ordinating key areas of development and change including Hemel Garden Communities, Hemel Town Centre, Maylands Business Park and Two Waters/Apsley
- Governance through partnership Hemel Place Board and internal management and delivery through new Corporate Place Board
- Local communities engaged on new place strategies for Berkhamsted and Tring.
- New Town Centre Strategy in progress to steer priorities
- Review of town centre assets underway to determine effective deployment of DBC land and property to deliver and catalyse place shaping, and to realise capital funds to support delivery
- New Local Plan to underpin whole agenda
- New Dacorum Investment Framework to facilitate inward investment
- Engagement in key Government Funding Streams e.g. Levelling Up Fund, UK Share Prosperity Fund, Investment Zones, Route Improvement Strategy
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan being kept up to date
- Policy on deployment of Community Infrastructure Levy Funds underway
- Cross-service work on HRA and General Fund assets to identify regeneration, place shaping and environmental improvement opportunities
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Consequences / Impacts

The borough does not reach its full economic potential.
Town centres fail to thrive, risking higher incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour
Local resident and business dissatisfaction increases, giving rise to higher volumes of complaints.

#RM00000084

Risk Owner

Aidan Wilkie

Detail

Status

Portfolio	People and Transformation
Risk Description	We are unable to deliver effective services to residents due to an inability to retain and recruit sufficient competent and skilled resources .
Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic Risk Register March 2023 ▪ Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
Inherent Score	16 ▲
Mitigated Score	4.00 ★
Risk Appetite	4.00
Comments	- Turnover and vacancy rate data have improved significantly despite the market remaining challenging. - Evidence that the market forces policy is helping to tackle longstanding recruitment challenges eg planning; - Work programme in place to improve Dacorum offer and branding - Starting to look at alternative banding/ pay approaches for specialist roles
Controls & Assurances	Ongoing Recruitment and Retention monitoring and reporting. A revised People Strategy developed with a focus on recruitment and retention. Delivery of a customer strategy which will create efficiencies (with the possibility of reinvestment) and a reduced reliance on human intervention. A revised market forces approach being implemented. Development of regional partnerships to review, and report on sector wide approach.
Evidence Risk is being managed	Ongoing Recruitment and Retention monitoring and reporting. A revised People Strategy developed with a focus on recruitment and retention. A revised market forces approach being implemented. Development of regional partnerships to review, and report on sector wide approach.
Consequences / Impacts	Increased levels of dissatisfaction from residents and businesses leading to higher volumes of complaints. Increase in financial cost through increased use of agency staff. Reputational damage. Intervention from central government/ regulatory bodies. Poor levels of service delivery.
#RM00000098	Risk Owner
	Claire Hamilton
	Portfolio
	Leader of the Council
	Risk Description
	Failure to work with Strategic Partners to deliver Corporate priorities
	Reference to Strategic Objectives / Priorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic Risk Register March 2023 ▪ Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
	Inherent Score
	12 ▲

Detail

Status

Mitigated Score	4.00 ★
Risk Appetite	4.00
Comments	Key joint working groups established and operating (e.g. Hemel Place Board, SW Herts Joint Strategic Partnership, Hemel Garden Communities Board). Key Delivery Partnerships have the appropriate strategic and operational governance boards in place to monitor delivery. Hertfordshire wide delivery groups are supported and monitored. Strategic partners are assigned lead officers for relationship management and communications. Senior officers liaise with Government departments and agencies in relation to the Council's strategic plans and activity. Meetings with DLUHC and Home Office officials have been held and preparations are underway for future visits from Government departments in 2024. Hemel Health Campus project has been launched and a project team with health partners has been established. Strategic Partners are engaged in the production of new strategies and plans for Dacorum, such as the new Housing Strategy. CVS Grant funding proposals are being implemented following Cabinet approval.
Controls & Assurances	Effective Strategic Partnership Boards set up to develop proposals and monitor delivery and outcomes. E.g. HGC, Hemel Place Board, Economic Recovery Board. Key Delivery Partnerships have the correct strategic and operational governance Boards in place to monitor delivery eg. SLM and Osbornes Herts- side delivery groups supported and monitored. Strategic partners assigned lead officer for relationship management and communications.
Evidence Risk is being managed	Failure to work with Strategic Partners to deliver Corporate priorities Key joint working groups established and operating (e.g. Hemel Place Board, SW Herts Joint Strategic Partnership). Key Delivery Partnerships have the correct strategic and operational governance boards in place to monitor delivery. Hertfordshire wide delivery groups supported and monitored. Strategic partners assigned lead officers for relationship management and communications.
Consequences / Impacts	Deterioration in service delivery to residents and businesses. Failure to deliver value for money and making best use of public funds. Failure to meet the needs of customers via joined- up working. Failure to deliver key strategic projects, including and not limited to Hemel Garden Communities and the SW Herts Joint Strategic Plan Reputational damage.

Risk Scoring Methodology

Impact Score

The following descriptions and definitions of impact are indicative and not exhaustive. They are a guide to assist you in assessing the impact of the risk **should** it occur.

Description	Factor	Score
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief disruption of service area – up to 1 day • No or insignificant environmental damage • Financial loss < £5,000 • Minor injury (first aid treatment) to an individual or several people • Complaint from member of public • Litigation/claims/fines up to £5,000 • No reputational damage – little or no local press interest 	Minor	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service disruption 2-3 days • Adverse effect on services in one or more areas for a period of several weeks • Financial loss < £25,000 • Adverse local publicity • Significant injury to an individual or several people – medical treatment required • Litigation/claims/fines up to £25,000 	Significant	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service disruption 3-5 days • Complete loss of service area for 3-5 days • Financial loss up to £50,000 • Adverse publicity in professional/municipal press • Adverse local publicity of a persistent nature • Major injury to an individual or several people • Litigation/claims/fines up to £50,000 	Serious	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service disruption 5+ days • Major loss of service, including several important areas, and/or for a protracted period • Financial loss >£50,000 • Adverse and persistent national media coverage • Adverse central government response, involving (threat of) removal of delegated powers • Officers and/or Members forced to resign • Loss of life • Litigation/claims/fines >£50,000 	Major	4

Likelihood Score

The following descriptions and definitions of likelihood of the risk occurring are intended as a guide to assist you in arriving at your risk score.

Description	Indicators	Factor	Score
Less than 10% chance of occurrence	Has happened rarely/never before	Very unlikely	1
10 – 40% chance of occurrence	Only likely to happen every 3 or more years	Unlikely	2
40-75% chance of occurrence	Likely to happen at some point within the next 1–2 years. Circumstances occasionally encountered – few times a year	Likely	3
More than 75% chance of occurrence	Regular occurrence Circumstances frequently encountered – daily, weekly, monthly	Very likely	4

Scoring the risk

The charts above are designed to help you score the risks in terms of likelihood and impact.

This is carried out in two stages:

- Multiply the likelihood and impact scores together, as if there were **no** controls in place. This will give you an inherent risk score.
- With the list of controls that are currently in place, re-score the risk, taking into account the effect of these controls.

These final scores will give you a risk profile of those risks that may need more immediate attention.

Risk Score	Overall Rating
12 - 16	HIGH
6 - 10	MEDIUM
1 - 4	LOW

Level of Risk / (Inherent Risk Score)	Managing the risk
High Risk (12-16)	<p>Requires active management High impact / High likelihood: risk requires active management to manage down and maintain exposure at an acceptable level</p> <p>Contingency Plans A robust contingency plan may suffice together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from profile</p>
Medium Risk (6-10)	<p>Good Housekeeping May require some risk mitigation to reduce likelihood if this can be done cost effectively, but good housekeeping to ensure the impact remains low should be adequate. Reassess frequently to ensure conditions remain same</p> <p>Contingency Plans A robust contingency plan may suffice together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from profile</p>
Low Risk (1-4)	<p>Review Periodically Only put mitigations in place if it's cost effective to do so</p>