

Appendix A

Strategic Risk Register – March 2022

North Northamptonshire Council				
5x5 Numerical Likelihood x Impact				
	Risk / Aim Title	Score	Comments	Risk Owner
1	Assurance the Children's Trust is delivering to the agreed standards (Intelligent Client)	15 3x5	<p>Intelligent Client Function (ICF) is in place and clear governance arrangements set out in the contract with monitoring of performance and financial plans via operations board and strategic board.</p> <p>Improved Performance is recognised by DfE in replacing commissioner with an improvement advisor and in the change of formal relationship with improvement partner de-escalated to peer support. Continued scrutiny of social care improvement board will provide routine assurance.</p> <p>Regular Ofsted monitoring visits will provide independent performance feedback at regular intervals</p>	Director of Children's Services
2	Statutory Compliance across all services	15 3x5	<p>Assurances for statutory compliance across all services / activities and monitoring of legal action taken against the Council.</p> <p>Score reflects that services are experts in each area, supported by legal services, and the Unitary 'safe and legal' preparations.</p>	Director of Legal and Democratic
3	Robust protections in respect of Cyber Security Confidential Risk		<p>This risk is confidential to protect system resilience. Its presence on the Register reflects the importance of this issue. It does NOT represent that weaknesses are evident.</p> <p>Controls in this area include critical software being kept up to date through regular patching and updates and acting quickly upon reports of issues and on feedback from specialist IT auditors / penetration testers.</p>	
4	That key services have robust and effective resilience arrangements in	16 4x4	Scoring reflects controls in place including Emergency Planning capability and capacity, which is currently mitigated by additional Covid-19 capacity, and the business continuity programme.	Executive Director of Place and Economy

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	place (including Emergency Planning and Business Continuity)			
5	That Capital and Revenue projects apply good project management standards and practices.	16 4x4	Score reflects project management controls are long standing established concepts but not yet assessed as a single 'programme' of coordination.	Director of Transformation / Executive Director of Place and Economy
6	Safeguarding vulnerable people	20 4x5	<p>(Linked to Children's Trust) but also those provisions that give assurance Council processes are effective in safeguarding all vulnerable people that are known to us.</p> <p>Overall score. There are a number of areas that impact on this risk:</p> <p><b>Deprivation of liberty safeguards (DoLS)</b> are a national challenge following the Cheshire West judgement that led to a 10-fold increase in the volume of DoLS referrals. Whilst this remains a challenge the service applies the Association of Directors of Adult Services risk prioritisation tool in order to prioritise how local referrals are dealt with.</p> <p><b>The availability of Approved Mental Health Practitioners</b> with the necessary qualifications that enable them to undertake Mental Health Act assessments is a national challenge that is replicated in North Northamptonshire. This creates challenges in ensuring that out of hours AMHP rotas are adequately covered.</p> <p><b>Availability of social care provision</b> both as internal provision and externally commissioned provision is again a national challenge that has been well publicised but is replicated locally. This lack of provider availability means that vulnerable people may spend time they do not need to in e.g. acute hospitals that places them at greater risk of exacerbated illness or increased frailty.</p>	Executive Director of Adults, Communities & Wellbeing

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			Score reflects the complexity and ability of the council to independently address these challenges. All of these challenges are recognised nationally as risks and require cross-party agreements to deliver a sustainable social care system.	
7	Sustainable Finances (medium Term)	12 3x4	<p>The financial settlement and spending review for Local Government is now known for 2022/23 and a balanced budget has been set. The position from 2023/24 remains uncertain due to changes in Local Government funding regimes from April 2023 which have yet to be consulted on from central government. There remain risks from COVID-19 in some form, general demographic changes and continuing LGR/transformation related changes. This risk score reflects this uncertainty and the forecast level of savings which need to be addressed.</p> <p>There are controls in place including ongoing intelligence and lobbying alongside working to ensure robustness of the budgets; financial planning and budget proposals and savings / income generation options based on prudent assumptions; and effective challenge of budget proposals. The risk can be reassessed when further information is received on future funding proposals including exemplars.</p> <p>Significant work is linked to future transformation programme across all aspects of the Council. Transformation and specific working groups are operating to address specific budget areas and Directors are seeking efficiencies through redesign of services. Also potential external funding opportunities are being sought to meet service priorities.</p>	Executive Director of Finance
8	Sustainable Finances (2021/22)	4 2x2	Score reflects the controls in place for ongoing monitoring and scrutiny; reserves and contingency to offset in year pressures; and robust governance arrangements for approval of any new/unplanned spend or proposals. However, risk remains as the Council moves into new arrangements including issues arising from aggregation/disaggregation and lead/host arrangements and including the future disaggregation of those arrangements where applicable.	Executive Director of Finance

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9	Effective Information Governance across the Council including compliance with all legislative requirements	16 4x4	<p>Data Protection Act and GDPR provisions as well as security provisions regarding data processing, retention and disclosure (eg FOI). The collection, storage and retention of data is being considered particularly with regard to legacy contractual provisions and systems.</p> <p>Score reflects application of these concepts within individual councils and their consolidation within NNC for 2021/22.</p>	Director of Legal and Democratic
10	Effective and robust contract management (including accurate contracts register, contract manager responsibilities and the procurement cycle)	6 2x3	<p>Scoring reflects professional Procurement teams in place to support services in effective management of procurement lifecycle; including supplier due diligence. Includes involving all directorates.</p> <p>Control environment includes: contract management register and risk assessment in place; Bankruptcy / Liquidation Policy to enable consistent response to supplier failure; and enhanced due diligence arrangements developed and Due Diligence working group in place.</p> <p>Risk reduced but maintained at medium due to wider risks of supplier resilience outside of control of the Council and acute given ongoing impacts of Covid19 and of agreeing post EU trade deals. Reporting to: Commercial Board, CLT and Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee.</p>	Executive Director of Finance
11	Organisational Capacity	25 5x5	<p>As a new authority, there is increased turnover of staff and skills audits highlight that the structures reflect predecessor authority needs/skill requirements rather than the new authority. An initial focus on effective HR provisions to recruit and retain needed skills across the Council as well as learning and development for current staff is required. The risk is however wider than simply HR issues e.g. enabling wider capacity – IT etc, transformation. The Council recognises that a pay and grading structure for the new authority will provide additional assurance to staff and will improve its recruitment and retention of staff and will also reduce the risk of legal challenge.</p>	Director of Legal and Democratic

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			<p>Disaggregation of services will present a risk in terms of skills required to deliver services and in terms of the wider enabling capacity to deliver.</p> <p>Score reflects the strong HR presence and compliance needed to ensure organisational memory and skills are maintained in first few years.</p>	
12	The Council's dependency on hosted and shared services provided to NNC by WNC.	25 5x5	Whilst there are contractual requirements in place between the Authorities, these need to be robustly managed to ensure that services are delivered in an effective and efficient way. Control and oversight of services provided by another authority is important; the score reflects that the arrangements are new and untested, including those measures allowing NNC to secure improvements if required.	Director of Legal and Democratic
13	Legacy issues	25 5x5	Historic and Legal issues that the Council inherits from predecessor Councils. Score reflects that some issues are already known (and being managed) with a probability that new issues will emerge within the first 1-3 years of the Council.	Director of Legal and Democratic
14	Consolidation (and/or disaggregation) of all services into the new Unitary delivery.	25 5x5	This risk reflects both the known consolidation and transformational work identified and also the migration over time to transform and improve services as a new Unitary Council.	Chief Executive
15	Pandemic Impacts across all services	20 4x5	A recognition that the impacts of the Pandemic across services managed by predecessor Councils and its continued impacts requires CLT oversight. This is a 'place holder' risk for CLT to develop and manage this issue within the Risk cycle to determine whether it needs to be a separate Strategic Risk or is better managed within operational risk management in services.	CLT
16	Health and safety	15 3x5	Reflects risks associated with health and safety of staff, tenants (housing and commercial leases) and high risk services, such as waste collection. The hybrid working arrangements as a result of the pandemic (whilst temporary at the current time) are being considered in terms of health and safety moving forward.	Executive Director of Place and Economy

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			Scoring reflects controls in place in those areas including inspection and audit regimes; and safe methods of working.	
17	Good governance and lawful decision making within organisation	15 3x5	<p>The authority has a new system of governance which many officers/members have not used before. The Council must ensure that all officers/members are aware of governance requirements and the essentials to lawful decision making. Whilst training is ongoing and guidance/advice is being provided, there is increased need to ensure that processes are followed by the entire council.</p> <p>Score reflects the impact of the risk and the ongoing challenge to raise awareness and knowledge.</p>	Director of Legal and Democratic
18	Transformation Plan not delivered as endorsed by Executive, affecting the ability to deliver savings.	12 3x4	<p>There is potential for external (corporate wide or external to organisation) pressures to impact upon the delivery of the Transformation team and, therefore, the delivery of planned outcomes. This could also arise due to an increase in service demand for Transformation – leading to the service being overwhelmed by competing demands on resources and disappointment amongst customer base with pace achieved.</p> <p>An Enabler Working Group has been set up to review competing priorities / resource demands and there will be regular reviews of gateway process to evaluate urgency/criticality of new project proposals.</p> <p>A clear Transformation Plan will be produced to reflect corporate objectives, along with costed contingency plans.</p>	Director of Transformation