

SUBJECT: Effectiveness of Strategic Risk Management Framework

MEETING: Governance and Audit Committee

DATE: 29th April 2024

DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide Governance and Audit Committee with the council's proposed updated strategic risk management policy
- 1.2 To provide the committee with an assessment of the implementation of the council's strategic risk management framework which is an integral part of the authority's corporate governance arrangements.
- 1.3 To provide members with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members review the updates proposed to the strategic risk management policy and recommend any changes to inform its further development.
- 2.2 That members use the assessment to seek assurance about the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements.
- 2.3 That members note the further corporate risk control policies identified that the Committee could review in more detail as part of its forward work programme.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Governance and Audit Committee has a specific role in providing independent assurance of the adequacy of the council's risk management framework. The committee also has a role in assessing the authority's corporate governance arrangements, of which risk management is an important part. An integral part of the strategic risk management arrangements is the Whole Authority Strategic Risk Register. The strategic risk assessment ensures that:

- Strategic risks are identified and monitored by the authority
- Risk controls are appropriate and proportionate
- Senior managers and elected members systematically review the strategic risks facing the authority.

3.2 The council's strategic risk management policy and guidance helps ensure strategic risks are identified and assessed robustly, risk controls are put in place that are appropriate and proportionate, and risks are supported by effective mitigations to ensure, as far as possible, risk reduction/risk management. The report is made up of three parts:

- Part 1 provides the proposed updates to the council's strategic risk management policy and process for identifying and managing strategic risks.
- Part 2 provides a self-assessment of the effectiveness of the operation of strategic risk management arrangements in line with the existing strategic risk management policy.
- Part 3 provides an overview of the strategic risk register and key amendments, including the strategic risks, the risk levels pre and post mitigation, the risk owner who has agreed the update, and any key changes, such as adjustments to risk levels or mitigating action updates.

Part 1 - Strategic Risk Management policy

- 3.3 The existing strategic risk management policy has been in place since 2019. The policy and supporting guidance have now been reviewed. The review has built on the policy in place with the changes proposed largely strengthening arrangements or incorporating new arrangements identified. This has been informed by evidence from our own self-assessment, the work of Governance & Audit Committee and a recent Internal Audit review. It has also drawn on external guidance and practice on risk management. Appended to the report are the proposed revised strategic risk management policy (Appendix 1.1), risk appetite statement (Appendix 1.2) and supporting risk guidance (Appendix 1.3).
- 3.4 The main updates proposed are:
- Related corporate risk management arrangements that the council has in place through which risks are identified and managed and are integrated with the strategic risk management policy.
 - Categorisation of responsibility using the 'three lines model' to help delegate and coordinate risk management roles and responsibilities within and across the Council.
 - When identifying risks, the need to consider both current risks that require immediate treatment, but also risks that may become more prominent in the future, including the production of a Risk Radar Report on an annual basis to support horizon scanning and inform risk identification.
 - The requirement and responsibilities to consistently produce directorate risk registers, supporting the identification, management, escalation, and de-escalation of strategic risks.
 - The further definition of the Council's risk appetite, using a 'risk appetite range' for various categories of risk that are based on organisational activity. This risk appetite statement is a separate document to the risk management policy to allow for more regular review and updates to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate.
 - Further definition of risk monitoring and reporting arrangements, which includes the role of Governance & Audit Committee.
- 3.5 Following consideration of feedback from the committee the policy will be presented to Cabinet in June for formal approval. The existing strategic risk management policy continues to guide the current strategic risk register. It is proposed that this new, revised risk management policy would formally come into place from April 2025, to allow for a period of transition. This period of transition would allow the council time to strengthen arrangements in line with the revised policy, including:
- Building directorate risk registers and embedding these in planning and decision-making processes and strengthening existing directorate risk registers.
 - Reviewing policy documents to ensure that risk, and risk appetite, has been considered and is captured.
 - Adapting and updating the format of the strategic risk register
 - Strengthening risk management training and awareness for all officers.
- 3.6 The committee's action list includes the action for the 'Deputy Chief Executive to consider which corporate risk control policies (extending beyond IT and data protection) that the Committee should periodically review and recommend for approval across the authority'. The revised strategic risk management policy identifies under section '2.3 integration of risk management' other corporate risk managements arrangements through which risks are managed. These identify the other risk control policies that the committee can review in line with the committees responsibilities. These will each need to be considered individually regarding the arrangements already in place. It is recommended how and when these are considered by the committee are agreed with the lead officer, as identified in the policy, and incorporated on the committees forward work planner accordingly.

3.7 In addition, some of the strategic risks identified in appendix 3 will have further risk controls in place. In reviewing the risks provided the committee should consider if there is any further assurance of the risk controls in place they require from risk owners. This could then be requested to be provided to Governance & Audit Committee or coordinated with the remits of scrutiny committees.

Part 2 - Effectiveness of current strategic risk management arrangements

3.8 Appendix 2 provides a self-assessment of the effectiveness of the operation of strategic risk management arrangements in line with the council's current strategic risk management policy. This formed part of the self-assessment of performance management arrangements presented to the committee in February 2024. The most significant update reflected in the assessment has been the conclusion of the internal audit review of risk management which provided a 'reasonable assurance' rating. This will also form part of the assessment of the effectiveness of the 'enabling functions', which includes performance and risk management, under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2022 and will be included in the council's self-assessment report.

Part 3 - Risk Register updates overview

3.9 The council continues to operate in a dynamic environment and has controls in place to assess, manage and mitigate, as far as possible, a variety of risks. The strategic risk register will regularly evolve and adapt in line with this. This will include adjusting the focus, detail and risk levels of risks where necessary. An overview of the changes in the risk levels and progress with mitigating actions is provided in Appendix 3. Any changes to risk levels/scores since the last report to the committee in December 2023 are summarised in the table below.

| Risk | Current risk score | Previous risk score | Reason |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Risk 10 - related to the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). | Medium (8) (26/27 post mitigation) | High (12) (26/27 post mitigation) | The risk level for this risk is assessed to decrease to medium, post-mitigation, for the year 2026/27 as a result of the RLDP being proposed for adoption during 25/26. |
| Risk 12 – related to the rising cost of living. | High (12) (25/26 post mitigation) | Medium (8) (25/26 post mitigation) | The risk level for this risk has increased from medium to high, post-mitigation, for 25/26, to reflect ongoing financial hardship that is likely to be faced by many families as a result of the cost-of-living. The risk score is assessed to return to medium, post-mitigation, for the year 26/27. |
| Risk 14 - related to public bus services. | High (12) | High (12) | This risk has been refocused as result of the immediate financial pressure being mitigated; the current risk now stems from a changing delivery model. The inherent risk of a reduction in public bus services remains unchanged. |

3.10 This report does not include the full risk register or a full update of progress against mitigating actions. Scrutiny of that aspect of the work rests with Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee and the full register will be presented to the committee at its May meeting. The full strategic risk register will also be presented to Cabinet for consideration at its June meeting. Members of Governance and Audit Committee have access to the papers of other committees should they wish to familiarise themselves with the wider work. All councillors can also access a live version of the risk register on the authority's intranet site.

Chief Officer Commentary

3.11 Following previous feedback from the chair of the committee it has been agreed that a commentary from the responsible Chief Officer be added to this report. The responsibility sits with the Chief Officer for People, Performance and Partnerships:

3.12 “Having overseen the process of updating the risk assessment I’m satisfied that it presents an accurate assessment of the strategic risks facing the authority over the next three years based on knowledge available to responsible officers at the present time. The assessment of the risk management arrangements that we have in place is fair, identifying both strengths and areas needing improvement. I’m comfortable that the changes proposed as part of the risk management policy review, informed by feedback from this committee, will help us to address these areas of improvement and to make the arrangements we have in place more robust.”

4. REASONS:

4.1 To provide timely, relevant information on strategic risks as part of the performance management framework for ensuring the authority is well run and able to contribute to achieving the Council’s purpose.

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Appendix 2 - Self-assessment of the effectiveness of the strategic risk management framework

| Strategic Risk Management | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>The strategic risk register captures the high and medium level strategic risks that face the council in line with the council’s risk management policy. This ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic risks are identified and monitored by the authority • Risk controls are appropriate and proportionate • Senior managers and elected members systematically review the strategic risks facing the authority | | | |
| | How well are we doing? | How do we know? | Action & timescale |
| <p>Is there a collective view of the council’s strategic risk management arrangements and risk appetite that is communicated and understood?</p> | <p>The council’s strategic risk management policy and guidance have been reviewed. This review has been informed by feedback from Governance and Audit Committee, cabinet members and the Strategic Leadership Team, as well as the findings of an internal audit review into our risk management arrangements.</p> <p>This review has focused on strengthening processes and arrangements already in place to build on good practice. This also includes setting a more explicit risk appetite statement for the council.</p> <p>Once approved by Cabinet, work will begin to embed this refreshed policy into practice. This will include working with directorates to strengthen their arrangements, ensuring risk and risk appetite is appropriately captured in decision making processes, and increasing awareness of the policy, and the importance of adhering to it, throughout the organisation. There is a need to strengthen the organisation’s risk training to ensure the effective discharge of risk management responsibilities.</p> | <p>Strategic risk management policy and guidance</p> | <p>Embed strategic risk management policy once approved by Cabinet – April 2025</p> <p>Complete further strategic risk training and guidance – May 2024</p> |
| <p>Is strategic risk management embedded in the council?</p> | <p>The strategic risk register is updated regularly and available to all members and officers to view at any time. There are arrangements to formally review the whole strategic risk register six monthly. These are facilitated by the performance and data insight team in coordination with risk owners and include review reports to Strategic Leadership Team and cabinet. The latest strategic risk register is formally reported to Governance & Audit Committee, Performance & Overview scrutiny committee and Cabinet. This facilitates and demonstrates that risk</p> | <p>Strategic risk management policy and guidance</p> <p>Strategic risk register</p> <p>Service business plans risk register</p> | <p>Embed strategic risk management policy once approved by Cabinet – April 2025</p> <p>Complete further strategic risk training and guidance – May 2024</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| | <p>management is embedded with these groups and officers who have specific responsibilities.</p> <p>The update of the strategic risk register is informed by a wide range of evidence as set by the policy. The review of the strategic risk management policy has strengthened the alignment with other risk management procedures and processes.</p> <p>The starting point for identifying risks are often service business plans, where heads of service and service managers identify the risks their service faces or will face over the next three years in line with the risk management policy. The most recent quality assurance of service business plan (October 2023) identified that the completion of service-based risk registers was often not robust enough or fully completed. This shows strategic risk management isn't consistently embedded at a service level and has identified a need for further strategic risk management training in the organisation.</p> | | |
| <p>Is there a shared understanding of the most significant corporate risks?</p> | <p>The strategic risk register identifies high and medium level strategic risks and ensures risk levels are assessed and mitigating actions are identified. The register is updated regularly, which ensures it remains focussed on the most significant strategic risks facing the council. It is available to all members and officers to view at any time and has regular reporting arrangements in place. This ensures there is a shared understanding of strategic risks facing the council.</p> <p>The findings from the most recent quality assurance of service business plans (October 2023) have shown that strategic risk management isn't consistently embedded at a service level, which could impact the effectiveness of service risk identification and management. This may subsequently be having an impact on the effective identification and management of strategic risks, although other arrangements are in place, as set out, will limit this.</p> | <p>Strategic risk register</p> <p>Service business plans risk register</p> <p>Strategic risk management reports</p> | <p>Complete further strategic risk training and guidance – May 2024</p> |

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| | <p>The latest six-monthly review of the strategic risk register has identified for some risks there is no forecast change in risk level or score post mitigation. A review of mitigation actions will be undertaken with risk owners to seek assurance these remain appropriate to manage the type/nature of the strategic risk identified.</p> | | |
| <p>Is there a robust risk management assurance framework in place?</p> | <p>There are arrangements to formally review the whole strategic risk register six monthly. These are facilitated by the performance and data insight team in liaison with risk owners and include review reports to Strategic Leadership Team and cabinet. The latest strategic risk register is then formally reported to Governance & Audit Committee, Performance & Overview scrutiny committee and Cabinet. This provides assurance on the robustness of risk management framework in place.</p> <p>An internal audit review of risk management has been completed and was given a reasonable assurance rating. This identified strengths and some weaknesses. Actions to respond to the recommendations have been agreed and are being implemented. The findings from the review have informed the development of the strategic risk management policy.</p> <p>A review of strategic risk management arrangements is now reported to Governance and Audit Committee six monthly. The content of this report has been developed to support the committee to consider assurance of the risk framework in place. Risk management arrangements also form part of the Council’s annual self-assessment report. These arrangements are providing assurance of the framework in place and informed areas for development identified in this report.</p> | <p>Strategic risk register</p> <p>Strategic risk management reports</p> | <p>Embed strategic risk management policy once approved by Cabinet – April 2025</p> <p>Complete actions in response to internal audit review recommendations – April 2025</p> |

Appendix 3 - Monmouthshire County Council Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment Overview – November 2023

| Ref | Potential Risk | Council objective impacted | Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation | Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation | Changes to risk level/score | Risk level/score change | Planned mitigating actions | Mitigating action progress | Risk owned by: |
|-----|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| | <i>Risk identified in the strategic risk register</i> | <i>Risk to delivery of Community and Corporate plan objective</i> | <i>Risk assessed by the level of likelihood of occurrence and impact/ consequence prior to any mitigation</i> | <i>Risk assessed by the level of likelihood of occurrence and impact/ consequence informed by the expected impact of mitigation</i> | <i>The rationale for adjusting the risk level since the last risk update report in December 2023</i> | <i>Whether the risk level overall has increased, stayed the same or decreased</i> | <i>Significant planned mitigation actions identified for delivery in the risk register by March 2024</i> | <i>The progress made and impact, where available of the planned mitigation actions by March 2024</i> | <i>The owners of the risk, in line with strategic management policy, who have agreed the risk</i> |

| Ref | Potential Risk | Council objective impacted | Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation | Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation | Changes to risk level/score | Risk level/score change | Planned mitigating actions | Mitigating action progress | Risk owned by: |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| Risks to resources | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | It will not be possible to deliver all of the commitments in the Community and Corporate Plan leading to slower than desired progress towards our purpose as a result of a tightening financial position | All | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – Medium (8) 2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Ensure affordability and deliverability of the commitments set out in the Community and Corporate Plan in the context of the wider economic climate | A six-month progress update on meeting commitments set out in the Community and Corporate plan was presented to Cabinet in January 2024. During this meeting Cabinet agreed to reflect on the deliverability of the community and corporate plan in light of the current and future budget pressures, and to receive a report in the first quarter of 2024/25 setting out revised measures alongside targets for performance up to the final year of the plan. | Paul Matthews, Chief Executive & Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader |
| | | | | | | | Review and update enabling strategies following the adoption of a new Community and Corporate Plan | The enabling strategies are currently under review. Some strategies have been presented for approval including the Asset Management Strategy and Procurement Strategy. The Financial Strategy will be presented to Council in June. The others, including digital and people, will follow in June and be subject to decision at Cabinet. | |
| 1b | A small working political majority makes it harder to ensure timely and appropriate decision making which results in delays and uncertainty in some projects | All | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – Medium (9) 2025/26 – Medium (9) 2026/27 – Medium (9) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Utilise members seminars and scrutiny workshops to engage and involve all councillors in the development of policy | Members seminars are being used to share developments and involve councillors on significant forthcoming decisions. Scrutiny workshops are being held to seek councillors' involvement in the development of proposals. | Paul Matthews, Chief Executive & Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader |
| | | | | | | | Maintain a fully populated forward work planner of Cabinet and Council business | An established forward work planner is in place. There is a need to improve the timeliness of completion of the forward plan and align the forward plans of each committee. | |
| 2 | Some services will become financially unsustainable in the short to medium term in their current form due to increasing | All | 2024/25 – High (16) 2025/26 – High (16) | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Ensure that services deliver within budget, deliver savings targets and continue to identify, review and challenge pressures | The Month 9 2023/24 budget update forecasts an overall revenue budget deficit of £314k; this is due to a combination of a shortfall in services being able to meet their budgeted savings targets of £1.866m and in-year budgetary pressures across | Peter Davies, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer Resources & Cllr Ben Callard, Cabinet Member for Resources |

| Ref | Potential Risk | Council objective impacted | Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation | Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation | Changes to risk level/score | Risk level/score change | Planned mitigating actions | Mitigating action progress | Risk owned by: |
|-----|---|----------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| | demand and continuing financial pressures | | 2026/27 – High (16) | 2026/27 – High (12) | | | | three of our frontline service directorates. Services are currently forecasting to deliver 85% (87% at Month 6) of their overall savings targets for the year, inclusive of the in-year additional budget recovery action identified. Non-delivery of planned savings poses a risk to both 2023/24 budgets and the medium term if alternative strategies to deliver savings cannot be found. | |
| | | | | | | | Develop a set of budget proposals 2024/25 | The 2024/25 budget was agreed by Council at their meeting in February 2024 following a month-long period of public consultation. | |
| | | | | | | | Strengthen medium to long term strategic financial planning as part of the Medium-term financial plan | The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) will be presented to Council in June. The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will follow which will outline a more specific delivery plan. | |
| 3 | The authority is unable to maintain key infrastructure and meet other identified pressures due to insufficient capital funding availability | All | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Further refinement of priority assessments in the property and infrastructure budgets | A regular programme of property condition surveys is underway, supported by routine compliance checks for all assets. This information as well as technical input from MCC’s Landlord Services team, will continue to be used to inform prioritisation of planned capital maintenance spend. | Peter Davies, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer Resources & Cllr Ben Callard, Cabinet Member for Resources |
| | | | | | | | Deliver the Asset Management Plan to manage the Council’s land and property portfolio | The refreshed Asset Management Strategy was approved by Council in January, introducing clearer alignment to the Community & Corporate Plan and establishing key principles which will inform strategic decision making for the council’s land and property portfolio. The Asset Management Strategy is delivered via the associated Asset Management Plan, which is subject to regular monitoring and progress reporting. | |
| 4 | Increases in the number of people exiting the labour market, a UK skills shortage and wage inflation will impact recruitment, retainment and workforce planning and affect the delivery of Council services | All | 2024/25 – High (16) 2025/26 – High (16) 2026/27 – High (16) | 2024/25 – Medium (8) 2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Recruit and retain staff more effectively | An e-recruitment and learning management system is being implemented to support the development of recruitment as a genuine talent acquisition process. | Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships & Cllr Ben Callard, Cabinet Member for Resources |
| | | | | | | | Embed workforce planning into team management processes | Workforce planning arrangements will be developed as part of the development of the people strategy. | |
| 5 | Loss or corruption of data due to cyber-attack or data mismanagement, which will compromise the delivery of essential council services | All | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – Medium (8) 2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Ensure robust arrangements are in place to safeguard the organisation’s data and systems from cyber-attack | The Council recognises that total elimination of cyber-attack is not possible, but the focus is on ensuring robust arrangements are in place to safeguard data and systems from cyber-attack via: physical barriers to the network, staff awareness, training and culture and structured governance, risk analysis and business continuity planning. | Sian Hayward, Head of Information, Technology & Security & Cllr Ben Callard, Cabinet Member for Resources |

| Ref | Potential Risk | Council objective impacted | Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation | Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation | Changes to risk level/score | Risk level/score change | Planned mitigating actions | Mitigating action progress | Risk owned by: |
|-----|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|--|
| 6 | Significant harm to a child or adult may occur due to a specific failure of safeguarding arrangements | A Connected Place Where People Care | 2024/25 – Medium (8) 2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | 2024/25 – Medium (8) 2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Continually monitor and evaluate safeguarding processes and practice and ensure good accountability for safeguarding | The Annual 22/23 Safeguarding Evaluation Report was presented to Council in December 2023, highlighting progress, identifying risks and setting out actions and priorities for 2023/24. The strategic risk has been updated with the findings of this evaluation. | Will Mclean, Chief Officer Children & Young people, Jane Rodgers, Chief Officer Social Care, Safeguarding & Health & Cllr Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services |
| 7 | Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable children due to an increase in demand, complexity of cases and insufficiency of registered placements | A Connected Place Where People Care | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Continue to implement the fostering strategy | There remains an insufficiency of in-house carers in Monmouthshire, particularly carers who are able to provide more specialist care or look after sibling groups; seven generic foster carers were approved during 23/24. This creates an over-reliance on private and independent providers where the right placement for a child cannot be assured. | Jane Rodgers, Chief Officer Social Care, Safeguarding & Health & Cllr Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services |
| | | | | | | | Develop and expand the Children’s Services Commissioning Strategy in response to the intention to eliminate profit from children’s social care | A Placement Development Strategy will be presented to Council in April, setting out the strategy for the expansion and development of in-county residential and supported accommodation placements for children who are looked after. There are huge challenges with this work particularly around workforce, resources and the time it takes to develop provision. The demand for appropriate placements remains high in a low supply environment. | |
| 8 | Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable adults due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases | A Connected Place Where People Care | 2024/25 – High (16) 2025/26 – High (16) 2026/27 – High (16) | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Work with Welsh Government to recruit and retain care staff | A social care recruitment and retention strategy has been developed, with a particular focus on addressing areas where there is high demand. At February 2024 the number of vacancies across the social care sector was 34; this has decreased from 56 in February 2023. | Jane Rodgers, Chief Officer Social Care, Safeguarding & Health & Cllr Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services |
| | | | | | | | Implement a ‘place-based’ approach to create sustainability in care at home services | A micro-carer pilot was launched in April 2022. A micro carer is a self-employed care worker that provides flexible, personalised support and care to citizens who live in their local area. There are currently 21 people being supported by micro-carers in their local community, delivering 161 hours of care and support in total each week. | |
| 9 | High absence rates, particularly among those eligible for free school meals, and worsening behaviours in schools as a result of the continuation of trends that first emerged during the pandemic will result in a | A Learning Place | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Work with Education Welfare Services to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and are able to access excellent teaching and learning | Education Welfare Officers are working with vulnerable pupils to bring them back into the educational setting, where possible. There are varying reasons for pupil absence, so a different approach is being adopted for different cohorts, and the Education team are working with multiple agencies to ensure these children and young people return to school. | Will Mclean, Chief Officer Children & Young People & Cllr Martyn Groucutt, Cabinet member for Education |

| Ref | Potential Risk | Council objective impacted | Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation | Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation | Changes to risk level/score | Risk level/score change | Planned mitigating actions | Mitigating action progress | Risk owned by: |
|-----|---|----------------------------|--|---|--|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| | worsening of educational attainment | | | | | | Support learners' wellbeing through excellent teaching and learning and through wider school-based activity | A range of approaches to reduce barriers to learning for vulnerable pupils have been developed. The whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing is a structured approach for schools. This has a significant effect on children's attendance and achievement in school. The phased engagement of schools has been positive: 59% of schools are currently working with the team, an increase from 43%. | |
| 10 | <p>a) The council is unable to proceed with the Deposit Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) due to a failure to identify and agree suitable Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites</p> <p>b) The council does not support the Deposit RLDP</p> <p>c) Delays to the adoption of a RLDP inhibits our ability to take forward key policy objectives such as job creation and affordable housing development</p> <p>d) High phosphate levels in the rivers Usk and Wye limit development opportunities within a significant proportion of the county</p> | | <p>2024/25 – High (12)</p> <p>2025/26 – High (12)</p> <p>2026/27 – High (12)</p> | <p>2024/25 – High (12)</p> <p>2025/26 – High (12)</p> <p>2026/27 – Medium (8)</p> | The risk level for this risk is expected to decrease to medium, post-mitigation, for the year 2026/27 as a result of the RLDP being proposed for adoption during 2025/26 | Decreasing | <p>Prepare a replacement Local Development Plan to address the county's issues/challenges, including in relation to the provision of housing (market and affordable) and employment opportunities</p> <p>Work with partner organisations to identify and implement solutions to phosphate pollution in the Rivers Usk and Wye</p> <p>Ensure RLDP growth ambition is met by essential infrastructure</p> | <p>Following public consultation, a small number of changes were proposed to the RLDP Preferred Strategy; this amended strategy was approved by Council in October 2023. Three Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites have been identified for public consultation; Cabinet's decision on which sites to include in the RLDP will be informed by this consultation.</p> <p>Dŵr Cymru has recently committed to providing phosphate stripping technology at Monmouth and Llanfoist waste water treatments works by April 2025.</p> <p>A Local Transport Plan will be presented to Cabinet in May 2024.</p> <p>An Employment, Economy & Skills Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2024.</p> | Craig O'Connor, Head of Planning, Placemaking, Highways and Flooding & Cllr Paul Griffiths, Cabinet member for Planning and Economic Development |
| 11 | <p>a) The council is unable to deliver its commitment to decarbonise its operations in sufficient time to achieve net zero by 2030 because our resources are not commensurate with the scale and complexity of the challenge</p> <p>b) The Council is unable to deliver services as a result of the increasing frequency of climate-related emergencies such as floods or extreme heatwaves that increase the demand for</p> | All | <p>2024/25 – High (16)</p> <p>2025/26 – High (16)</p> <p>2026/27 – High (16)</p> | <p>2024/25 – High (16)</p> <p>2025/26 – High (16)</p> <p>2026/27 – High (16)</p> | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | <p>Deliver the Monmouthshire County Council Climate Emergency Strategy</p> <p>Prepare and adapt for the impact of climate change</p> | <p>The Climate Emergency Strategy is being reworked into an overarching Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy to align with the new Community and Corporate Plan and is due to be presented to Cabinet in May 2024. This reworked strategy will be underpinned by 4 action plans to better reflect the breadth of work that is taking place: Internal decarbonisation, Biodiversity and Nature Recovery, Rivers and Oceans and Community climate change.</p> <p>Welsh Government has produced The National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales, and in response, Monmouthshire is currently reviewing our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Flood Risk</p> | Strategic Leadership Team & Cllr Catrin Maby, Cabinet member for Climate Change and the Environment |

| Ref | Potential Risk | Council objective impacted | Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation | Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation | Changes to risk level/score | Risk level/score change | Planned mitigating actions | Mitigating action progress | Risk owned by: |
|-----|---|--|---|--|--|-------------------------|--|--|---|
| | emergency responses and can cause damage to infrastructure and the closure of facilities | | | | | | | Management Plan; a new combined strategy document will be presented to Cabinet in May. | |
| 12 | The rising cost of living tips more families into crisis requiring public service interventions which diverts resources from other policy priorities | All | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | The risk level for this risk has increased from medium to high, post-mitigation, for 25/26, to reflect ongoing financial hardship that is likely to be faced by many families as a result of the cost-of-living. | Increasing | To implement the discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme Work in partnership with community fridges to identify individuals and families in need of further support | The Council is delivering a range of activities to support residents including the Money Matters campaign which signposts to sources of support and teaming up with Mind Monmouthshire and Citizens Advice Monmouthshire to set up cost of living support drop-in sessions across the county. Community Fridges are currently operating in Monmouth, Abergavenny, Caldicot, Goytre and Chepstow. Funding has been secured for consultancy support to help the community fridge volunteers and to look at sustainable funding options, common policies, practices and developing new fridges. | Frances O’Brien, Chief Officer Communities and Place & Cllr Angela Sandles, Cabinet member for Equalities and Engagement |
| 13 | Residents are unable to secure or retain suitable accommodation, leading to rising homelessness and outward migration as a result of failures in the housing market | A Safe Place to Live A Fair Place to Live | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – Medium (8) 2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Develop suitable accommodation for homeless people, including long-term housing for all those accommodated in temporary housing Work with national providers and the Home Office to identify suitable accommodation for those fleeing persecution | A Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan was approved by Cabinet in April 2023. Through Rapid Rehousing the council has facilitated increased resources into homeless prevention, for example through additional staffing and the availability of the Homeless Prevention Fund. New arrangements have been established with partner agencies such as the DWP and Shared Benefit Service to support more people at risk of homelessness. A total of 261 awards were given during the 23/24 financial year to both households at risk of homelessness to help tackle arrears/debt and households experiencing homelessness to enable them to remain in their current accommodation or access alternatives. In September 2023 Council passed a motion committing the authority to formally becoming a county of sanctuary. An application has been submitted to the County of Sanctuary network and we are awaiting confirmation that we have met the criteria for accredited membership. | Frances O’Brien, Chief Officer Communities and Place, Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships & Cllr Angela Sandles, Cabinet member for Equalities and Engagement |
| 14 | Reliance on grant funding for the delivery of public bus network and the proposed implementation of a franchising model may result in an inability to provide long-term certainty of services that are essential for residents to access key services | All | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) | 2024/25 – High (12) 2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – Medium (8) | This risk has been refocused as result of the immediate financial pressure being mitigated. The inherent risk of a reduction in public bus services remains unchanged. | Unchanged | Develop a collaborative working relationship with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and CCR to inform the development of the franchise model in Monmouthshire | Transport for Wales/Local authorities’ ‘regional scrum’ bus coordination meetings, a CCR Bus Working Group and a WG/TfW/MCC Traws Cymru Delivery Group have been established and are meeting regularly. TfW is undertaking a study into options for Traws services in Monmouth. | Frances O’Brien, Chief Officer Communities and Place & Cllr Catrin Maby, Cabinet member for Climate Change and the Environment |

| Ref | Potential Risk | Council objective impacted | Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation | Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation | Changes to risk level/score | Risk level/score change | Planned mitigating actions | Mitigating action progress | Risk owned by: |
|-----|--|----------------------------|--|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| | | | | | | | Strengthen performance of existing routes | Newly tendered bus network started 1 April – this is expected to increase passenger usage and reduce support per trip. TfW, MCC and operators are working on improved information to attract more passengers. MCC has successfully bid for WG Local Transport Fund grant which is helping to deliver bus infrastructure enhancements. | |
| 15 | An increase in the number of legal challenges to decisions resulting in delays and increased costs | All | 2024/25 – Medium (9) 2025/26 – Medium (9) 2026/27 – Medium (9) | 2024/25 – Medium (6) 2025/26 – Medium (6) 2026/27 – Medium (6) | Risk levels remain unchanged | Unchanged | Impact assess service changes and policy decisions | An established Integrated Impact Assessment template and guidance is in place and is completed for all decisions that require an assessment. These assessments are challenged by a panel of policy officers prior to decision. | James Williams, Chief Officer Law and Governance & Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader |

Appendix 4: Strategic Risk Management – Summary

Risk Management is the process of identifying risks, evaluating their potential consequences and determining the most effective methods of controlling them or responding to them. Strategic risks are those which affect the Council as a whole. Typically these will be key risks which could significantly jeopardise the Council’s ability to achieve its objectives, statutory plans and/or provide operational services as planned.

The Council is committed to the effective management of risk. As a large public sector organisation, it is exposed to a wide range of risks and threats in delivering key services to communities. Within the Council the purpose of risk management is to:

- preserve and protect the Council’s assets, reputation and staff
- promote corporate governance and aid good management in controlling and managing risks
- support successful delivery of strategic aims, objectives and outcomes
- improve business performance and better anticipate calculated risks where these are likely in delivering improvements
- avoid unnecessary liabilities, costs and failures

The Council seeks to ensure that risk management is effective from strategic to individual services and employees. Therefore, all employees and councillors are responsible for ensuring there are good levels of internal control and risk management throughout the Council in order that the Council’s specified outcomes are achieved.

The Council uses a ‘traffic light’ system of Red/Amber/Green associated with High/Medium/Low to categorise risk levels. This is determined using the risk matrix below.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| High risk | The risk is highly likely to occur and the impact will be major. Management action/control evaluation and improvement is required coupled with continued pro-active monitoring |
| Medium risk | The risk is unlikely to result in a major issue, however, if it did the impact would be significant or serious . This risk is relatively less significant than a High risk however it needs to be closely monitored within timely management action/controls to ensure it does not escalate. |
| Low risk | The risk is very unlikely to occur and the impact will be minor or moderate at worst. Risk will be managed by seeking control improvements where practical and / or monitoring and reviewing at regular intervals |

Risks are also given a score. Scores of 1-4 are low risks, scores of 6-9 are medium risks and scores 12-16 are high risk. Providing a score as well as a risk level allows the variations within risk levels to be more clearly stated.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------------|
| Major (4) | Low (4) | Medium (8) | High (12) | High (16) |
| Substantial (3) | Low (3) | Medium (6) | Medium (9) | High (12) |
| Moderate (2) | Low (2) | Low (4) | Medium (6) | Medium (8) |
| Minor (1) | Low (1) | Low (2) | Low (3) | Low (4) |
| | Unlikely (1) | Possible (2) | Likely (3) | Almost certain (4) |