Office of the Chief Executive Risk Report

Communications

Poor, unclear and untimely response to emerging issues
Risk - We respond inadequately, inaccurately or in an untimely manner to high-profile local issues.
Impact - (a) Reputational damage (b) Relationships with citizens, communities and businesses could be affected, making it harder to deliver some of the council priorities.
Mitigation (a) The OCE restructure strengthens the management of the communications team (b) The communications team has a 24hr cover arrangement (c) Projects with a significant impact on the city have communications plans and support from the communications team.
Rating – 12 (Medium)

Policy and strategy

Lack of responsiveness to outside factors that affect policy development
Risk – We fail to respond to changes in legislation and policy at a local, regional, national and international level
Impact – (a) illegal practice (b) financial issues related to breaches in legislation, policy, inconsistent or inefficient operation of the council
Mitigation – (a) ensure that presence on local and regional policy groups to discuss responses to policy and legislative issues (b) horizon scanning to ensure the council is aware of emerging issues and ready to respond (c) work with specialists across directorates to ensure that responses are consistent and not conflicting (d) ensure emerging challenges are successfully communicated to members and staff (e) ensure sufficient quality and capability is built into the policy team
Rating – 14 (Medium)

Insufficient interpretation of policy would lead to poor strategy development and operational delivery
Risk – Emerging policy is misinterpreted and the impact on the council is misjudged leading to reputational and financial issues and poor strategy development
Impact – (a) financial issues (b) strategy development takes the council away from appropriate direction of travel (c) council prioritise in wrong

areas and fail to deliver for citizens (d) strategy is created this is misaligned with our ability to deliver operationally.

Mitigation – (a) ensure sufficient quality and capability is built into the policy team (b) ensure groups are formed to scrutinise policy and ensure attendance of specialists both internal and external to the council (c) ensure that the strategy formation is aligned with capacity and capability to deliver and initiate service transformation where required.

Rating - 13 (Medium)

Partnerships

Weak partnership working at local, regional and national level will create barriers in terms of working as an efficient council.

Risk – Lack of connections with businesses and industry, customer groups and forums, educational sector, voluntary sector, other LAs and government agencies, etc, will lead to: failure to pick up peer knowledge and industry direction and experience; failure to influence key organisations and agencies in order to resolve critical issues and develop high priority work; failure to be present and to negotiate to ensure council priorities are met.

Impact – (a) No benefit of shared experience (b) Reduced credibility for the council in local, regional and national forums (c) inability to negotiate the best deal for the city (d) gap in knowledge of emerging work and issues.

Mitigation – (a) Ensure that the council is keyed into critical networks in the city (b) Ensure that the council knows its customer and partners though relationship management and business and customer intelligence (c) Ensure that the appropriate members and officers are positioned in the right partnerships to enable the best deal for the city.

Rating – 14 (Medium)

Economic development

Inability to support growth of business and jobs in the City

Risk – Insufficient support for business growth and the creation of jobs in leads to a decline in these areas and failure to achieve council's top priority.

Impact – (a) Decline in business start ups (b) Decline in business sustainability (c) Increase in unemployment (d) increase in unemployment in critical demographic groups

Mitigation - (a) Work with business and business forums to ensure that best available support is provided (b) Ensure that the jobs and skills markets are development to ensure the best resource is available to enable businesses to thrive
Rating – 14 (Medium)

Performance

Failing to deliver the Council plan and council priorities
Risk – We do not complete the actions for delivering the Council Plan.
Impact – We will not achieve our ambitions for the city.
Mitigation - (a) We have an agreed Policy and Performance Framework which sets out a performance-based approach to service planning and delivery (b) Service planning procedures and practices across the organisation are being harmonised based upon best practice (c) Service Plans are linked to the Council Plan to connect service activity with Council Plan priorities (d) There is a common governance and monitoring framework covering all the priority areas.
Rating – 14 (Medium)

Insufficient resource for transformation work
Risk – Lack of resources or skills within the business units or central services (e.g. Procurement, HR, ICT, Legal etc) to manage or support transformation and change
Impact – (a) Projects over-run so we miss in-year savings targets (b) Reduced benefits from projects because of poor implementation or additional costs (c) Reduced savings because of the need to buy-in more staff or staff with the necessary skills.
Mitigation – (a) The Lean Programme will spread skills in managing projects and change to business units (b) OCE will provide a centre of expertise to advise business units which are making changes or going through transformation (c) New Service Planning guidance includes the need for services to forecast their demand for support from central services (d) The holistic framework for monitoring provides an overall view of resource demands enabling gaps to be identified and addressed quickly.
Rating - 19 (High)

Inappropriate use of data
Risk – We fail to use the data in the hub to inform and direct policy and planning.

Impact - Council priorities will not meet the true needs of the city and its citizens.

Mitigation – (a) The principles of the new performance framework have been widely publicised to senior management (b) The Intelligence team are working more closely with the CANs/CES and ACE Performance teams to develop common approaches to data collection and performance monitoring to bring all performance data into the Hub (c) The Intelligence team and Corporate Finance team work together on the quarterly and annual reports to present a comprehensive picture of the state of the council (d) The new structure for OCE brings monitoring of economic data into the central Intelligence team (e) The OCE restructure also strengthens the Intelligence team.

Rating – 14 (Medium)

Not getting best value from comparator data

Risk – Need to establish effective benchmarking data and procedures to replace the previous old Audit Commission regime of comparative quartiles.

Impact – (a) Without comparisons it is difficult to put performance into context and to make good value for money assessments (b) Could make it difficult to respond adequately to challenges to services and assess proposals for alternative delivery of services.

Mitigation – (a) The Intelligence team work closely with finance managers to establish effective driver and cost data (b) We subscribe to CIPFA and APSE toolkits which provide comparison data for some service areas (c) We are investigating other sources of comparator data from the LGA and commercial suppliers.

Rating – 15 (Medium)