Strategic Risk Register

September 2023

1. Best start in life for children and young people

2. People live well and age well

3. Strong resilient communities

4. Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods

5. A strong and inclusive economy

6. A connected and accessible Sandwell

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous score (Mar 2023)	Movement in risk score	Current risk score (Aug 2023)	Target risk score and date	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk and action date)	Key Sources of Assurance
4 07/12	**Children's Social Care** If the council does not put in place robust arrangements and receive appropriate assurances to ensure that the Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT) addresses the areas of poor or inconsistent performance, as outlined by Ofsted (and as required by the Statutory Direction served on the council on 6 October 2016), with rigour and pace, then the council will fail in its responsibilities to: • Safeguard vulnerable children • Promote and improve the outcomes of children in its care • Manage any adverse financial consequences arising from the failure to create favourable outcomes for children within the resources available to it • Continue on its progress to date and direction of travel to further improve the council's reputation for children's social care as currently demonstrated by the ILACS inspection. Risk Area – Children's Services Risk Owners – Director of Children and Education **Objectives impacted: 1**	8 (amber)	↔	8 (amber)	4 (green) Good Outcome of ILACS inspection by May 2025	**Current and Ongoing Controls** • Performance and contract management against KPIs and the improvement plan. The KPIs have been reviewed (to take effect from autumn 2023) as part of the contract review process and have taken into account the Ofsted findings, as well as any findings from the recent national Care Review commissioned by the DfE around early help, children's social care and partner collaboration. • The most recent Ofsted inspection of the Fostering service rated all areas as 'Good'. • Completion of case file audits and learning from the audit is used to ensure practice improvement. • Ongoing measures to improve staffing levels and recruitment via the development of a workforce strategy and market supplements. • The Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) took place in May 2022 and reported a judgement of 'Requires Improvement to be Good' and continues to inform the risk score. • Contract review commenced in April 2022 resulting in a recommendation being made to the Secretary of State not to invoke the break clause within the Service Delivery Contract. **Further actions** • Embedment of the multi agency early help strategy which was launched in March 2022 (ongoing). • Consideration of the impact of the government's full response to the Josh McAllister Care Review once published which government stated would be later this year. The acute shortage of social care workers (which is the position locally and nationally) continues to impact this risk despite actions being taken as noted in risk 064 below.	Operational Partnership and Strategic Partnership Boards Ofsted monitoring visits Improvement Board Sandwell Local Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report Grant Thornton – Value for Money Governance Review 2021 Reports to Scrutiny ILACS Ofsted inspection July 2022 Independent Reviewing Officer function Rolling programme of audits of case files as part of the quality assurance framework Performance Management framework and Service Delivery Contract SCT business plan SCT external audit report Key Performance Indicators (including social worker vacancy rates) LG Futures benchmarking exercise Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - Follow Up- December 2022 Corporate Parenting Board
6b 04/18	**Business Continuity Management** If the council does not develop, review, monitor and test plans and capabilities that seek to maintain the continuity of key functions in the event of an unplanned disruptive incident, then it will be unable to perform critical business functions which will impact the provision of council services and result in potential financial loss and loss of public confidence in the council. Risk Area – All Council services Risk owner – Director of Borough Economy **Objectives impacted: All**	12 (red)	↓	8 (amber)	8 (amber) Achieved	**Current and Ongoing Controls** • Business continuity plans are in place to mitigate the denial of staff (e.g. illness, industrial action), ICT (e.g. software failure, cyber-attack), facilities (e.g. building closure), stakeholders (e.g. suppliers, partners). These plans identify the criticality of each council service and the arrangements in place to restore services in the event of an unplanned incident. • The pandemic has provided some assurance around the robustness and effectiveness of the continuity of key functions over the last few years, through a shift to working remotely. • Following the incident in the ICT suite in May 2022 the council continues to revisit its resilience arrangements- in particular in relation to its Oracle business system, to ensure robust measures are in place to reduce both the likelihood and impact of a similar risk materialising in the future. Details in respect of the actions taken were presented to the Committee in November 2022. • All directorates have now reviewed the BCP to incorporate any learning from the ICT incident noted above. **Further actions** • Support from the cyber team to work with the resilience team to further improve all service area business continuity plans (ongoing). This is in progress and a workshop was held with Housing in July 2023 which focussed on resilience planning in relation to cyber security.	Emergency Committee Resilience team reports to Leadership Team Post incident reports Test exercises including cyber exercise Computer room incident report to ARAC Nov 2022
21a 06/15	**Compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)** If the council does not ensure it has a robust framework in place to comply with the DPA 2018 (which includes GDPR) or FOIA then it faces significant external action from the Information Commissioner's Office for failing to undertake its statutory duty. Further, failing to comply could result in negative public reaction and reputational damage, significant monetary penalties, loss of confidential data and potentially legal action. Risk Area – Legal & Governance Risk Owner- Director of Law and Governance **Objectives impacted: 3**	12 (red)	↔	12 (red)	8 (amber) March 2024 (officers) March 2024 (members)	**Current and Ongoing Controls** • The Information Governance Board which is chaired by the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) or Data Protection Officer (DPO) meets monthly to monitor progress of the information governance (IG) workplan. • IG framework sets out the council's policies, requirements, standards and best practice that apply to the handling of information. • Information Asset Registers capture the information held by the council service areas. • Information champions disseminate, feedback, facilitate and co-ordinate IG activity. • Annual completion of and compliance with the NHS self- assessment toolkit -NHS Digital which demonstrates the council processes in place to meet the requirements of the NHS's data protection standards and sharing arrangements. • Annual mandatory data protection and cyber security training is entrained for all staff. • Compliance with the Council's data retention policy, which is reviewed regularly. • Improved performance and monitoring arrangements for compliance with FOI and SAR responses. • Improved performance and monitoring arrangements for compliance with FOI and SAR responses. The Governance team report on performance to the IG Board and to Leadership Team on a quarterly basis. The latest statistics show that compliance continues to improve. The measures put in place by the Council's Information Governance Team are working and need to continue and be built upon. **Further actions** • A further programme of work to ensure compliance by elected members will now commence in Autumn/Winter 2023, which will be completed by April 2024. • The procurement and embedment of a new case management system for FOIs and SARs. Proposals assessed and agreed in principle by the Capital and Asset Management Board in May 2023. However, a review as to whether a joint procurement of both a new corporate Customer Relationship Management System in support of the customer journey	Information Governance Board Information Champions Data Protection Officer Information asset registers Information Commissioner's Office Internal Audit reviews Information incident log Performance data on compliance with FOI and SAR responses to Leadership Team and directors

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						and new FOI/SAR case management system is now to be considered. Strategic Finance to then assess the business case and funding options. • Further improvement is still necessary in response times of FOI requests, with a target of 95% compliance which continues to impact on the current risk rating.	
42a 02/17	**Cyber Security** The public sector continues to be the target of significant, sophisticated and increasingly frequent cyber-attack with these intent on causing service disruption or disclosure of sensitive data. If the council does not invest additional and sufficient financial resources into a cyber security resilience programme, then it will remain at significant exposure of receiving a successful cyber-attack. The consequences will be: • The inability of the council and SCT to deliver some or all services, particularly critical services for a significant period of time, ranging from days to months • The loss of corporate and sensitive personal data (including bank details) • Enforcement action • Significant financial loss • Employee stress; and • Reputational damage Additionally, the council will be: • Unable to meet sector defined standards and compliance for cyber resilience e.g. PSN • Unable to share and collaborate with partner organisations in a joined-up manner as the council will not be viewed as a trusted partner Risk Area – Information Governance and ICT Risk Owner – Director of Finance **Objectives impacted: All**	12 (red)	⟷	12 (red)	8 (amber) Sept 2024	**Current and Ongoing Controls** • Participation in national cyber resilience programmes run by organisations such as DLUHC, LGA and the NCSC • Close collaboration between the ICT Service and the council's Information Governance Team to develop a holistic approach to information protection • Appropriate technical controls to protect the council's network perimeter and information assets • Updates and progress reports as requested to the Leadership Team and Corporate Scrutiny Board. • Training for all staff through the implementation of the annual online training. • Regular communications continue to be sent to employees pertaining to protecting themselves and the council from emerging and new cyber security threats. • Attendance at national C-TAG forum, DLUHC cyber clinics and West Midlands Warning, Advice and Reporting Point (WARP) where members can receive and share up-to-date advice on information security threats, incidents and solutions. • Subscription to relevant cyber intelligence threat reports providing early warning of emerging threats, vulnerabilities and trends. • Use of the Active Cyber Defence and Early Warning tools provided by the National Cyber Security Centre. • An ongoing programme addressing the retirement and upgrade of obsolete and unsupported technology platforms • Annual ICT Health Check and Network Penetration Test • Implementation of a 3rd party managed Security Operations Centre to detect potential threats within the council's ICT environment providing timely alerts 24 hours a day • Establishment of a Cyber Resilience Governance Board as part of revised ICT governance arrangements **Further actions** • Reprofile remaining cyber budget following one-off saving due to identified budget pressure • Adopt the NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) as a methodology across the public sector for demonstrating adequate and consistent cyber hygiene (April 2024 – timeline determined externally by DLUHC) • Develop a PCI-DSS improvement programme to identify the gaps in compliance across all council credit and debit card payment channels April 2024 • Redefined governance structure to provide oversight of ongoing improvement programme following allocation of additional cyber funding (May 2023) • Development and maintenance of incident playbooks to activate in response to adverse cyber activity (March 2024) • LGA Cyber 360 review to be scheduled and reprofile Cyber Resilience Improvement Programme (Dec 2023) • Undertake a Business Continuity Reaction Exercise in conjunction with LGA service offer (January 2024) • Technology Modernisation Programme to ensure all ICT assets are up to date, in support and patchable – includes storage, server and end points i.e. laptops (April 2025) • Council endorsement of a corporate cyber resilience strategy (April 2024) • Appointment of a cyber lead to assist with the development of the cyber resilience strategy and overall improvement plan (April 2024) • Uplift of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement Licensing to Enterprise 5 (E5) at anniversary date which includes a full suite of security and compliance tools (April 2024) • Implementation of new E5 security tools (September 2024) • Evaluation of vulnerability monitoring options and subsequent implementation (March 2023)	Cyber Board LGA Cyber Assessment NHS Digital PSN certification Audit Committee risk reviews Self- assessment against cyber principles
56a 06/22	**Towns Fund Programme (Delivery)** If the council does not manage the programme to ensure that all projects are delivered to scope, time and budget ,then this could result in financial implications, the inability to regenerate our town centres, create sustainable economic growth and create long term economic prosperity, and also reputational harm to the council. Risk area- Regeneration and Growth Risk owner – Director of Regeneration and Growth **Objectives impacted – 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6**	6 (green)	⟷	6 (green)	4 (green) Programme completion of all projects and delivery of intended outcomes	This risk sets out the next phase of the programme following the ministerial approvals received by the council for all 16 business cases that were submitted. **Current and Ongoing Controls** • Robust governance in place to oversee the programme throughout the delivery phase including three Town Deal Boards (one per Town Deal Area), that have inherited Superboard roles and responsibilities. Revised governance arrangements for Delivery Phase were reviewed and approved by Cabinet in May 2022. • The council is the Accountable Body for the Town Deal funding. The Director of Regeneration and Growth chairs a Towns Fund Programme Board (which is also attended by the Director of Finance/ representative and officers from procurement and legal as well as all project leads) to review risks and provide a forum for resolution of issues, as well as seeking assurances on the management of risk. • Fortnightly engagement with advisors from DLUHC • Programme management arrangements in place including appointment of a permanent programme manager, programme support officer, dedicated monitoring officer resource, programme risk register and project risk registers for agreed business cases, which are updated quarterly. **Further actions** • Implement delivery phase of projects and programme plan. • Ongoing reviews of financial profiles to manage supply chain issues and implications of cost inflation.	Town Deal Boards Department Of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Deep Dive Jan 2022 Scrutiny Reviews Monitoring and reporting of outcome indicators, with processes in place to manage changes and risks during delivery stage.

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57b	**Customer Journey**
	
	The delivery of Council Services, including through the One Stop Shop, must meet the demand and needs of Customers, in order to avoid reputational damage to the Council.
	
	Risk area- Corporate Customer
	Risk owner – Director of Regeneration and Growth
	Objectives impacted - All
		12 (red)	⬄	12 (red)	8 (amber) Oct 2024	**Current and Ongoing Controls**
						• New operating model for council employees is well embedded across all service areas.
						• Customer journey is one of the key priorities of the corporate transformation programme.
						• Regular discussions and focus sessions have taken place at Leadership Team to address concerns and issues.
						• Customer Journey Priority Focus Sessions are also being delivered to Cabinet. A Business Case has been developed for a new telephony system and this is being presented to Capital & Asset Management Board Feb 2023.
						• The MySandwell offer is continuously being developed.
						• Collection of Customer Satisfaction data is continuously being looked at and new methods trialled.
						• Customer Journey (CJ) is one of the key priorities of the corporate transformation programme.
						• The four main CJ Workstreams are:
						   - Development of a Customer Experience Strategy
						   - Review of Contact centres
						   - Review of the One Stop Shop & exploration of a Community Hubs offer for face to face services in each Town.
						• Technology – review of all Customer related technology & identification of any gaps: procure delivery partner to replace the Council's telephony system (achieved).
						
						Further actions
						• Continued stakeholder engagement, in particular within the One Stop Shop (Ongoing).
						• Additional capacity and resources to be identified to meet current demand for face to face services.
						• Pilot local hub concept in two areas of the Borough (March 2024) - in progress I West Brom and Blackheath
						• Ensure consistency of customer experience across the council and not just in some areas, as is currently the case (October 2024).
						• Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board is looking at the customer journey as part of its current work programme (2023/24).
							Customer satisfaction survey
							
							Customer compliments and complaints system
							
							Local Government Ombudsman report
							
							Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board Review
							
							Monitoring, reporting & governance through the Customer Journey Programme Board which will report in to the Corporate Transformation Office and to the Cabinet Member
							
							Weekley reports to Leadership team on Member Portal performance.
							
							Incorporate recent recommendations from Budget and Corporate Scrutiny into the Customer Journey Action Plan

58 06/21	**Equalities** If the council fails to meet its legal obligations in respect of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty ensuring fairness is adhered to and is unable to demonstrate and evidence compliance with its obligations, then this will result in potential legal consequences for non compliance, reputational harm to the council as well as potential impact on recruitment and retention. Risk area- Legal Risk owner – Director of Law and Governance **Objectives impacted - 5**	9 (amber)	⬇	8 (amber)	6 (green) July 2024 When EDI strategy complete	**Current, Ongoing Controls and Further actions** • An Equality Diversity and Inclusion Commission has been set up with agreed Terms of Reference. • The EDI Commission will be chaired by the Leader of the council. • Four Stakeholder Groups, have been set up including an Ethnic Minority group; LGBT+ group, a Disabilities stakeholder group and a Women's group. • Funding has been secured and posts recruited to. • Additional EDI consultant support has been secured to help drive the EDI agenda further. • A review of the Equality policy has been completed and was launched in December 2022, following Cabinet approval. • New equality impact assessment toolkit and guidance has been issued and launched in December 2022 and drop-in clinics taking place to ensure the council's consultations and decision making will withstand scrutiny. • An action plan has been developed based on feedback provided by employees across the council along with gaps identified in the workforce diversity data as well as best practice put forward by other public-sector organisations. • A robust governance framework to help monitor and review the objectives and actions in the plan is also in place. • An Equalities Calendar has been developed and implemented that details many EDI events to raise awareness of the agenda. • Various events such as Black History Month, LGBTQ+ History Month have been successfully delivered leading to improved awareness and understanding. • The council continues to engage with WMCA in relation to its Race Equalities taskforce. • The LGA Equality Framework has been approved for use by Cabinet will be used to develop the council's first EDI Single Framework Strategy. (Jul 24) • Refresh of the council's Equality Objective was published in March 2023 • An EDI Audit based on the LGA Equality Framework is being undertaken. The audit findings will feed into an EDI action plan (Oct 2023) • We are preparing a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) service user report which will be published in September 2023.	Employee Engagement Survey 2022 Sandwell Equalities Commission LGA Peer Review
59a 02/22	**Council's Improvement Plan** If the council does not put in place and successfully implement an improvement plan to address the concerns raised by the Secretary of State in respect of the council's best value duty and the recommendations made by the recent external reviews carried out by the council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, CIPFA and the LGA Peer Review then this may result in a loss of confidence in the council's corporate governance arrangements, government intervention, future audits providing a qualified opinion, a lack of trust in the council's ability to deliver its corporate priorities and reputational harm to the council. Risk area- All services Risk owner – Chief Executive and Commissioners **Objectives impacted – All**	8 (amber)	⬄	8 (amber)	4 (green) December 2023 (in line with report to SoS)	**Current Controls** This risk reflects and consolidates the government intervention as well as the findings and recommendations arising from previous reviews including the Grant Thornton – Audit Findings Report 2019/20, Grant Thornton - Value for Money Governance Review 2021, CIPFA Financial Management review and the LGA Peer review along with their follow up reviews conducted in 2022. • Two Commissioners have been appointed to oversee the improvement journey. • A performance management framework was approved by the council in April 2022 to help monitor performance and track progress on the delivery of the strategic outcomes in the Corporate Plan. • Constitutional review completed in December 2022 • The appointment of a permanent Chief Executive has been completed. • An improvement action plan and governance arrangements are in place. Funding to implement the actions and deliver the improvement plan has been set aside. • Activity from the Improvement Plan embedded within the Council's Corporate Plan and Business Plans • Six monthly reporting from the Commissioners and from the Council to the Secretary of State is in place. The third Commissioners report was made in June 2023 and published in July 2023. In their report, Commissioners noted the significant hard work and considerable progress made, with next steps to further embed improvement and to demonstrate that this is sustainable, They commented that they consider that the Council continues to make progress on the right path.	Grant Thornton- Audit Findings Report 2019/20 Grant Thornton – Value for Money Governance Review 2021 CIPFA Financial Management and Governance Review 2021 and follow up review 2022 LGA Peer Review 2022 and follow up review 2022 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Government appointed Commissioners Six monthly reports by the Commissioners to the Secretary of State Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - Follow Up- December 2022

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						Further actions • Ongoing implementation and monitoring of the progress made against the plans. • Demonstrating evidence of sustainable and continuous improvement	
62 01/22	**Climate Change** Failure to achieve the council's commitments in relation to Climate Change, including the pledge to make council activities, buildings, housing, fleet, schools and street lighting net-zero carbon by 2030 may result in: • reputational damage • financial impact • increased demand for council resources (in the event of extreme weather) and • a loss in public confidence. In addition, managing the effects of climate change will also have significant financial impact which the council will need to address. Risk Area – All Services Risk Owner – Director of Regeneration and Growth **Objectives impacted: All**	12 (red)	⬌	12 (red)	8 (amber) 2030	**Current Controls** • Climate Change Strategy 2020- 2041 in place which sets out the 2030 target for the council. • Member steering group to oversee implementation of the climate change action plan. • Climate change champions in place (officer level) and a Cabinet Member and member advisor champions in place. • An action plan for implementing the strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2022. • Establishment of programme governance arrangements, including the Cabinet approval to the appointment of cross party membership to the Climate Change Committee to monitor the implementation of the action plan, A Climate Change Programme Board (represented by service managers from across the council) is leading on measures within the action plan. **Further Actions** • Gap analysis to be conducted to assess the councils' ability to implement the action plan, followed by a report on available options which will be addressed in 2023/24. • To undertake stock condition surveys to enhance our understanding of investment needs and costs to achieve net-zero targets in our social housing stock and to inform future revisions of the HRA business plan and opportunities to draw in external investment • Consideration of adapting works and activities to ensure that contractor selection, works methods and materials used are aligned and contribute to the climate change strategy. • Explore funding models for retrofit of Council and other homes in the Borough e.g. attend MIPIM investors conference / WMCA Devolution Deal with Government in negotiation. • To implement the Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet in November 2022 which seeks to significantly rationalise the Councils buildings and assets • To establish EV charging infrastructure via ULEV programme (on street) and Council operational locations so that relevant Council fleet can transition to EV over the next 3 years– in progress. • To develop a policy on Single Use Plastics that is consistent with the national emerging policy. • Roll out Carbon Literacy Training to all elected Members, relevant officers and Climate Change Champions • The delivery of the action plan is the key measure that determines the current risk assessment. The deliverability of the Plan is heavily dependent upon future government initiatives and the availability of financial resources which will be the key driver in achieving the council's 2030 target.	Climate Change Programme Board Member Steering Group Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board review – Climate Change Implementation- March 2021 Internal audit review underway
64 08/22	**Workforce Recruitment and Retention** The council is required to recruit and retain a skilled, qualified and experienced workforce in order to provide and deliver services to Sandwell residents. If the council is unable to recruit and retain its workforce and deliver its statutory obligations to meet the needs of the community this could result in loss of reputation, penalties, litigation and in some cases imprisonment. Risk area – All council services Risk owner – Chief Executive and Head of HR **Objectives impacted: All**	9 (amber)	⬌	9 (amber)	6 (green) March 2024	The risk concerns issues are largely a reflection of the regional and national position also and not unique to the council, as supported by the LGA workforce survey completed in 2022. The target risk score was initially to be reached by March 2023. However, this has been put back in order to allow the recruitment strategy to be agreed and fully embedded, and until results over the mid-term are known. **Current and ongoing controls:** • Directorates to continue to undertake comprehensive workforce planning at least annually, as part of business planning processes, with a focus on creating and nurturing talent pipelines. • Cabinet workshop planned for development of a workforce strategy. • Recruitment and selection refresher training for hiring managers in order to share best practice in recruiting qualified and skilled employees. • Pre-employment checks are carried out in line with requirements for the job role including any statutory requirements. • Regular 121 meetings (supervision) and annual appraisal process is in place to ensure employees are engaged and can raise any concerns. • Regular employment engagement (full) and pulse surveys are undertaken, and plans are developed and implemented to address any areas requiring further action. • Pay benchmarking to ensure the council is competitive relative to the relevant job market in sectors where there are specific and critical challenges to recruitment and retention. • Future Talent Strategy to be developed as part of the Organisational Development strategy – to build on current Apprenticeships and Graduates strategy and incorporate succession planning and talent development framework for all employees. We have recruited 6 graduates via the National Graduate Development Programme to start October 2023. • The Resourcing Team alongside other teams across the council have attended a number of local job fairs either hosted by Sandwell Council or local colleges/universities to promote job opportunities. The Resourcing Team will continue to identify and attend local and regional job fairs to raise our profile and job opportunities. **Further actions** • Introduce and extend talent pools and open-ended recruitment campaigns to high turnover areas - this will form part of the recruitment strategy which is underway. • Review our recruitment branding and content to maximise the impact on candidate attraction - this will also form part of the recruitment strategy. • Review and extend advertising, to include focus on attraction of diverse applicants – again this will form part of the recruitment strategy. • Review of our long-term use of a neutral vendor agency provision where we are unable to fill roles to deliver a service to our residents	Employee Engagement Survey Pulse surveys HR related KPIs and data Appraisal process Benchmarking analysis LGA Workforce Survey 2022

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66 04/22	**Borough Archives** Failure to achieve the National Archives Accreditation could lead to withdrawal of 'Place of Deposit Status'. This will cause reputational damage and incur costs as public records will be stored in another location, which accrues a cost to the council and creates difficulties around access to the records. Accreditation cannot be achieved without alternative accommodation that meets the required British Standard. Risk area – All council services Risk owner – Director of Borough Economy **Objectives impacted: All**	12 (red)	↔	12 (red)	8 (amber) TBC	**Current and ongoing controls** • Public records are stored at Dudley archives which meets the required standard (BS EN 16893). However, this can only be a temporary measure, as Dudley's own archives increase and they will require the space currently occupied by Sandwell. • A feasibility study has been completed and a replacement archive solution for Sandwell's archives has been identified and was approved by Cabinet in November 2022. • A Qualified Archivist is now in place having completed training. • Discussions with The National Archives (TNA) around delaying an application for accreditation as it would fail. This is a temporary measure. • Appointment of a consultant has been undertaken to deliver second stage of feasibility that includes design, specification, costs and development of a funding strategy. This will enable submissions to be made to external funders. **Further Actions** • Funding sources for cost of capital to build the archives needs to be identified and agreed. • Some corporate capital will also need to be identified as part of the funding strategy. • A bid to Arts Council England to be considered for contribution to the cost of capital, once the funding strategy has been agreed.	The National Archives Archive Service accreditation
67 05/22	**Elections Act** The initial roll-out of voter identification was successful, following policy and secondary legislation confirmation and the implementation of the controls identified to mitigate risk, however it has not yet been stress-tested. It is anticipated that the 2024 elections which are expected to include a general election will provide a broader assessment of the mechanisms in place. Implementation of the next phase of the elections act is due shortly, to include the ability for voters to apply for absent votes on-line. There remain a series of technical and operational issues that are being explored nationally, with there being a concern over the readiness of new systems in line with the projected timeframe. Whilst the application portal will be nationally hosted, the Returning Officer will remain locally responsible for the processing and issuing of postal votes. Compounded by the multiple elections in 2024 and the potential for a snap general election, there are risks around the successful implementation of all of the Election Act requirements. Should the Returning Officer be unable to implement the Elections Act 2022, this could result in low voter confidence and some voters may be dis-enfranchised leading to a lack of confidence in election results. Risk area – All council services Risk owner – Returning Officer **Objectives impacted: All**	12 (red)	↓	8 (amber)	4 (green) May 2024	**Current and ongoing controls** • There will be extra money from the Government for implementation, but this will not be ring fenced and will only cover costs associated with Voter ID not additional election costs. • A One Council approach is being taken in order that the wider council can provide necessary support. • The Electoral Commission will undertake much of the communication, but the Returning Officer needs to consider the demographics and harder to reach parts of the electorate and the support that they will require. • There is a review of polling stations to see which ones are suitable and unsuitable. • Robust and updated training programme will be in place for all polling inspectors and presiding officers. • Job roles for election staff are being updated to provide clarification on what is required and to assist in arriving at the correct fee. • The Electoral Services Manager is part of the Business Change Network facilitated by the Cabinet Office and consequently is very well informed. • Privacy ID booths will be provided to every station to reduce the need for a specific place. This will be private but still in the "voting room" • Awareness Campaign and media campaigns to promote Voter ID have begun to compliment the national campaign by the Electoral Commission (which includes use of the Herald, website, etc) • Regular briefings with members have commenced. • Regular networking meetings taking place by Director and Manager. • Capacity and resourcing options are being explored.	Electoral Commission Elections Returning Officer Elections Service Manager Polling station inspectors
68 12/22	**Sandwell Local Plan** Failure to prepare and adopt a Local Plan within the timescales required could result in Government intervention in the operation of the planning service and in the decision making process for planning applications resulting in a loss of local democratic oversight. Risk area - Regeneration Risk Owner – Director of Regeneration and Growth **Objectives impacted: All**	8 (amber)	↔	8 (amber)	4 (green) 2025	Having an up-to-date Local Plan is a statutory requirement. Following the halting of the Black Country Plan, Cabinet approved the preparation of the Sandwell local Plan on 16 November 2022. The timetable envisages adoption in late 2025. The process to adoption involves several rounds of public consultation and political approvals as well as an independent Examination in Public. Conformity with an up-to-date Local Plan is often a prerequisite for Government regeneration funding. **Current and ongoing controls** • Members regularly briefed on key and up to date issues. Informing of facts and evidence based. • Project Manager recruited to lead on the delivery of the Sandwell Plan (fixed term post to Dec 2026). • Additional revenue budget secured to deliver the Sandwell Plan (Cabinet Report Dec 2022). **Further actions** • Review of salaries allocated to technical disciplines within the organisation – Use of consultants if necessary. • Quarterly update reports to Leadership Team	Regular updates to Leadership Team, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Cabinet as appropriate. Appointment of dedicated project manager
69 08/22	**Adult Social Care Market Sustainability** The Fair Cost of Care requirement for domiciliary care and older peoples residential and nursing home care & further requirement to produce a market sustainability plan will result in a significant financial pressure for the council in the region of 15 million pounds, although government funding is available for a 3-year period, it is not expected to cover these increased costs. There is then a further risk that the remaining elements	16 (red)	↓	9 (amber)	9 (amber) Achieved	**Current and ongoing controls** • Working with ARCC Ltd to complete the Fair Cost of Care exercise and Market Sustainability Plan. Draft document completed and submitted in October 2022. • Report presented to the Leader of the in October 2022 outlining the impact of the cost of care exercise and the options of how to support the market with the government allocations that have been made to date. • Ongoing dialogue with legal to ensure compliance with statutory Care Act duties and consideration of affordability.	Integrated Care Board Fair Cost of Care exercise ARCC Ltd

	of the care and support market currently excluded from the Fair Cost of Care exercise will not be sustainable without further significant investment, so a further internal cost of care exercise will need to be completed. A number of providers are approaching the council with requests for significant uplifts in their fees and notice to withdraw care and support to individuals. Should this not be addressed the capacity in the market will be unable to meet the demand and the recommissioned costs will be significantly higher adding to the budget pressures. Risk Area – Social Care Risk Owner – Director of Adult Social Care **Objectives impacted: 2**					• Working with neighbouring authorities in the Black Country and the Integrated Care Board to agree a system response to provider demands. • Negotiating with individual providers regarding fee uplifts. • Commissioned independent provider to undertake reviews of individuals. • Final Market Sustainability Plan submitted (March 23) • Report to Cabinet for Fair Cost of Care approved for plans on how to sustain the market (February 23). • ARCC scrutinised the data presented by the care homes regarding the validity of the data provided. • ARCC supported additional market engagement to scrutinise the data presented. • Plan towards meeting cost of care once government allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25 have been confirmed. • Annex B published 1st February 2023 and the final Market Sustainability Plan published 31 March 2023. • Updated the Market Sustainability Plan and complete Annexe A in May 2023. • Complete Market Capacity Submission in June 2023 **Further Actions** • Update the Market Sustainability Plan and complete Annexe A in May 2024.	
70 06/22	**Organisational culture** If the council does not have an effective organisational culture, then this could result in: • Poor officer and member relationships • Negative impact on employee engagement • Inability to demonstrate effective people management, • Weak diversity and inclusion practices • Recruitment and retention issues • Negative impact on the delivery of the improvement plan and • Potential for extended government intervention • Failure to deliver the corporate plan • Reputational damage • Missed opportunities for continuous improvement Risk area – All council services Risk owner – Chief Executive **Objectives impacted: All**	8 (amber)	⬌	8 (amber)	4 (green) March 2024	**Current and ongoing controls** • Regular meetings in place between senior members and officers to develop positive working relationships and information sharing. • LGA training on officer/member relationships delivered in September 2022 and planned for Autumn 2023 • Launch of One Team Framework (values and behaviours) including Staff Conference and Managers workshops • Employee Engagement Survey 2022 results disseminated and discussed at Directorate Management Teams and team meetings - action plans developed and monitored at Leadership Team. **Further Actions** • Embedding One Team Framework Approval of Workforce Strategy. • Mechanisms to be identified for ongoing insight and assurance around health of Officer and Member Relationship (December 2023). • Management Development Programme Agreed (2023). • **Employee Engagement Survey 2023 (September 2023)**	External Reviews (Grant Thornton and LGA) providing assurance that organisational culture change has started to occur. Employee Engagement Survey
71 08/23	**Strategic Workforce Development for Adult Social Care Recruitment, Retention and Sickness Absence** A workforce strategy is in place and links directly with workforce planning and training. This offers existing staff training opportunities to ensure that they are qualified and competent to face service needs. If recruitment and retention are not prioritised within the service and amongst service providers, then there will not be the skilled staff to deliver appropriate social care. Risk Area – Social Care Risk Owner – Director of Adult Social Care **Objectives impacted: 2**	New risk	NA	12 (red)	8 (amber) April 2024	**Current and ongoing controls** • Implemented Adult Social Care restructure for social work and therapy to deliver a career development pathway which will support retention, career development and succession planning within social work. • A student programme and the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment for Social Workers is in place. • An Occupational Therapist student programme with Worcestershire University is in place and works to secure university placements including access to Practice Educator training for SMBC Occupational Therapist 's to retain their skills and expertise. • Apprenticeships within the Directorate utilising the Apprenticeship Levy to access accredited qualifications. • An apprenticeship programme for social work is in place with Warwickshire University, a similar programme for Occupational Therapy is being developed with Wolverhampton University. • Qualification Sponsorship scheme to support employees to obtain recognised qualifications to enhance their work performance and skills. • Work around maintaining recruitment and retention: Phase 1 - A) Pay benchmarking B) Golden Hello C) Market Supplement completed. • Recruitment Events (exploring opportunity for joint partnership recruitment with health colleagues). • Regular 121 meetings (supervision) and annual appraisal process is in place to ensure employees are engaged and can raise any concerns. • Plans are developed and implemented to address any areas requiring further action from the employee engagement survey. • Sickness Absence Monitoring. **Further Actions** • New Draft Workforce Strategy to be finalised and approved. • Draft Workforce Strategy action plans to be finalised and approved. • Work around maintaining recruitment and retention: Phase 2 - A) Review of Job Descriptions and Person Specifications B) Further benchmarking C) Work with Children's Trust around these areas D) International recruitment.	Employee Engagement Survey HR related KPIs and data Appraisal process National Minimum Data Set for social care Benchmarking analysis

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous score (Mar 2023)	Movement in risk score	Current risk score (Aug 2023)	Target risk score and date	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk and action date)	Key Sources of Assurance
	The following associated risks are being subject to a wider review, while it is not envisaged that there will be any significant change in the risk scores an update will be presented to the November meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee						
27 06/09	**Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Resource Allocation** Local Government continues to operate in an uncertain financial environment arising from reducing central government funding, increasing demand for services, Covid-19 and more recently the impact of the high levels of inflation being reported. If the council is unable to identify sufficient savings and put in place the necessary policies, processes and actions to manage pressures, inflation and manage its plans, then this will impact on the council's financial resilience and its ability to effectively discharge its statutory responsibilities including the setting of a balanced budget for future years. Risk Area – Finance Risk owner- Director of Finance and Leadership Team **Objectives impacted: All**	8 (amber)	tbc	tbc	tbc	**Current and Ongoing Controls** • Local government settlement announced for one year only. • A balanced budget approved by council • Directorate and service business plans in place. • The initial review by CIPFA on the council's financial management and governance arrangements, noted that the council was a progressive two-star (out of five) authority. The follow up review subsequently undertook by CIPFA progressed this to a three-star. The review also looked at financial resilience and concluded that the council is financially stable and in recent years has been able to contribute towards reserves through achieving a balanced budget or an underspend. • A fundamental review of the MTFP (in line with the CIPFA recommendations) has been completed, to ensure the council understands the challenges ahead and to ensure that the MTFP matches the ambitions of the corporate plan and regeneration plans for Sandwell. A further review will be undertaken following announcement of the local government settlement. The review includes an assessment of the impact the high levels of inflation currently being experienced and are forecast, are having on the MTFP and the mitigating measures being implemented. • Star chambers continue to be used to support budget setting. • The local government finance settlement for 2023/24 was received and included additional funding for Adult Social Care alongside confirmation that business rates reset will not happen in this Parliament. **Further actions** • Continued implementation of the action plan developed following the CIPFA review (as per the improvement plan timetable). • Ongoing review of the MTFS. • Use of benchmarking data to help identify opportunities for efficiencies, savings and service improvements.	[Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board](#) External Audit CIPFA financial management review and follow up LGA Corporate Peer Review Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - [Follow Up- December 2022](#) LG Futures benchmarking data
27a 06/21	**Future Government Policies and Funding Sources** If the government does not provide local authorities clarity over the future plans for health and social care reforms, the public health grant, Better Care Fund, future years funding and continuing, with one year funding settlements then this inhibits local authorities to effectively manage medium term/ three year plans and put in place the necessary processes and actions to manage future pressures. This will impact on the council's ability to deliver sustainable services to the people of Sandwell and effectively discharge its statutory responsibility to set a balanced budget for future years Risk Area – Finance and Resources Risk owner- Chief Executive **Objectives impacted: All**	8 (amber)	tbc	tbc	Tbc	**Current and Ongoing Controls** Uncertainties remain around various central government funding sources, in addition to the national political uncertainties around economic growth and inflation, and whether this will be reflected in future funding policies. **Further actions** The council continues to horizon scan and consider the impacts of potential government initiatives and policies on future funding sources and demand for council services. (Ongoing)	[Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board](#)
27b 10/21	**Budget Monitoring and Management 2023/24** If the council does not put in place effective arrangements to monitor and manage the current year's budget to ensure that planned savings are achieved and efficiencies realised, then it will result in overspends and the resilience of the council's finances. Risk Area – Finance and Resources Risk owner- Director of Finance **Objectives impacted: All**	8 (amber) Monitoring and management 12 (red) Budget position	tbc	tbc	tbc	**Current and Ongoing Controls** • The financial management and monthly budgetary control processes in place. • Regular reporting of financial performance to Budget Board, Scrutiny and Cabinet. • As noted above, an initial review by CIPFA and a subsequent follow up on the council's financial management and governance arrangements was completed and an action plan developed to address the recommendations made. This is being monitored by the Corporate Improvement Board. **Further actions** The council continues to monitor and report its budgetary position on an ongoing basis.	Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Board CIPFA financial management review External Audit Annual Internal Audit review- budgetary control Management accounts
53 04/18	**Oracle e-Business Suite** If the appropriate project governance arrangements are not put in place to ensure that the project is delivered to time, scope and budget, then this may result in: • The council's business system being unsupported • Inability to transform services that would enable processes to be more efficient • Non-compliance/ misalignment with other council policies and projects such as Organisational development, the digital strategy, Work Place Vision and the IT transformation programme. Risk Area – Finance and Resources	8 (amber)	tbc	tbc	tbc	**Current and Ongoing Controls** • Appointment of Infosys Limited as the council's Oracle Fusion implementation partner who have commenced contract delivery. • Revised project management and governance arrangements in place including a Project Board which meets weekly, new roles within the project team and a senior responsible officer (SRO). • A Business Design group meets fortnightly to monitor the outcomes and benefits from the programme. • A Business Readiness Group meets fortnightly which has oversight on the implementation plan activity. • An Implementation Board meets weekly to monitor progress on delivery of programme workstreams. • A Programme Management Office has been established and is utilising good practice programme management approaches. • Cross-cutting working groups on change management, reporting, data cleansing and migration, and implementation planning. • SOCITM have worked with the council to produce key programme documents. • Service engagement to better understand the new system. • Resource model and profiles developed setting out capacity and capability requirements.	Project Board SOCITM Grant Thornton [– Value for Money Governance Review 2021](#) Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - Follow Up- [December 2022](#) SRO updates to Leadership Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous score (Mar 2023)	Movement in risk score	Current risk score (Aug 2023)	Target risk score and date	Progress to Date (incl. current risk mitigating controls and further actions to be taken to manage risk and action date)	Key Sources of Assurance
	Risk Owners – Director of Finance **Objectives impacted: All**					• A programme benefits framework has been produced and the strategic priorities for benefits have been agreed. • Completion and use of baselining exercise to identify cashable and non-cashable benefits that the new system will yield was reported to Cabinet on 18 January for approval. **Further actions** • Ongoing work is required on organisational-wide engagement. Engagement events being planned for teams that will be affected by the changes. • Ongoing systems development	
61 10/21	**Partner Organisations/Contractors Service Delivery** The council works closely with partners and contractors to provide services to its residents and businesses. In the event Partner organisations or contractors do not provide the required level of service to the public this may result in: • Efficient / good value for money / high quality services not being delivered • Enforcement action • Significant financial loss and • Reputational damage Risk Area – All Services Risk Owner – Chief Executive and Leadership Team **Objectives impacted: All**	8 (amber)	tbc	tbc	tbc	**Current Controls** • Leadership Team continues to progress a reporting structure for the council's key contracts and partnership arrangements. • All actions from the recommendations of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board review of the performance and management of the waste partnership contract with Serco are being implemented and progress updated quarterly. • Arrangements for scrutiny consideration of the council's key contracts is in progress. • Regular review if the Serco key performance indicators continues. • A deed of variation and extension period has been agreed and signed with SLT to deliver services up to 2027. **Further Actions** • Establishment of consistent contract management for both significant capital and service contracts. • Review of the current arrangements in place for each key contractor to ensure they remain fit for purpose and that the partnership objectives are aligned to the refreshed corporate plan.	Grant Thornton – Value for Money Governance Review 2021 CIPFA Financial Management and Governance Review and subsequent follow up LGA Peer Review 2022 Reports to the Improvement Board Grant Thornton Value for Money Governance Review - Follow Up- December 2022
65 08/22	**Inflation** Risk that the high levels of inflation are having on the cost of living for residents and their financial wellbeing and the impact of this on the demand for council services and resources. Risk area – All council services Risk owner – Chief Executive **Objectives impacted: All**	12 (red)	tbc	tbc	tbc	**Current and ongoing controls and further actions** • The council continues to offer its residents and businesses essential support to the cost of living crisis, responding to emerging needs and issues to support financial wellbeing and resilience. • Continued distribution of government support packages and initiatives. • Ongoing work to identify what further support can be offered to residents and • Supporting Sandwell information hub created online. • Local welfare provision in place.	Resident survey Monitoring of relevant KPIs