

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Risk No.	Risk Owner	Risk	Controls and Mitigations	Out of 5 Previous Score Aug 2024					Further Planned Actions	Out of 5 Current Score Nov 2024			Further Planned Actions
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Risk 1	Director (Place)	Failure to adopt a Local Plan in line with national policy, meaning a lack of local planning policies to plan and manage development that risks planning applications being judged solely against national policy "in favour of sustainable development" and/or unplanned development	Meeting targets set out in the Local Plan timetable (Local Development Scheme, approved September 2019). Ongoing discussion with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities and key stakeholders (Duty to Cooperate). Partnership in Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA). Preparation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Delivery of Dunton Hills Garden Village (DHGV). Retention of permanent staff and recruitment of temporary staff to meet short-term needs when required. Adopted Local Plan	1	4	MEDIUM	0	5.60	Call for sites has been completed and a revised Local Development Scheme is to be considered by committee once the outcomes from the revised NPPF are known	1	4	MEDIUM	The Planning Policy Working Group will begin work to consider the development of a new Local Plan
Risk 2	Director (Environment)	Failure to develop an Environment Strategy and action plan due to lack of engagement with communities and businesses and non delivery of our plans for waste management services will result in the Council actively contributing to climate decline	Strategy and action plan are in place. Introduction of new recycling scheme Environment Strategy & Action Plan agreed by Council Co Wheel Scheme implemented. Electric charging pilots implemented. New Climate & Sustainability officer employed. Brentwood Environmental Business Alliance (BEBA) launched.	2	3	MEDIUM	0	7.80	Provide initial response to Biodiversity Duty - and subsequent costed action plan	2	3	MEDIUM	Seek additional resource to assist in delivery of wider remit of the Environment Strategy to include the biodiversity agenda. Begin on review of the existing strategy to reflect a more ambitious approach, in particulart to the wider borough wide target of acheiving net-zero by 2040
Risk 3	Director, Communities & Health	Failure to deliver a clear Leisure Strategy for the future of leisure facilities in Brentwood due to an inability to identify risk and liabilities for Brentwood Centre, Community Halls and Hartswood Golf Course, Play Areas and recommend options for the future. Resulting in reduced leisure provision within the Borough and health and well being of residents affected. Financial failure of the leisure facilities provided causing issues with the overall budget.	Leisure Strategy reviewed and updated Feasibility/business plan in progress for King George's Playing Fields. Budget agreed for KGPF and 5-year Play Area Improvement programme Workstream established for transition of Brentwood Centre to Council.	3	4	HIGH	0	16.80	Contingency arrangements are being put in place - there is a risk that no arrangements are in place in the event that the Council's choose/or have to delay procurement and therefore need an operator to operate the facilities in the meantime, in a specific and time limited basis.  Additionally, various strategic work that is required (related to the leisure contract) has been scoped and briefed.  The leisure contract has also been highlighted for internal audit.	3	4	HIGH	Contract reaching final stages of procurement with strong bids from operators. Decision is scheduled BBC in December. Given the strong bids and positive clarification meetings, the risk will reduce in terms of Members approving the successful bid.  Funding agreed to update Playing Pitch Strategy review and Built Facility Strategy Review.  These actions will further reduce the risk.
Risk 4	Strategic Director	Failure to deliver the Council's Strategic Housing Development Plan due to resources not adequately in place to deliver the Plan, resulting in fewer new homes being built within the borough	Strategic Housing Delivery Plan 21-26 now developed to meet objectives within the Housing Strategy. Quarterly programme board in place to monitor governance. HRA Business plan meetings also in place to monitor the impact of the SHDP and planned programme for exising stock on long term financial strategy.	2	4	MEDIUM	0	11.20	SHDP programme boards have been scheduled with a governance focus. Resources have increased around the delivery team	2	4	MEDIUM	We are currently looking to recruit a Head of Development to assist with this programme. We have been reviewing the spend to date on consultants and further analysis is being carried out to ensure value for money.

Risk 5	Director (Resources)	General Fund budget forecasts could fall below the minimum level of reserves due to finances not being adequately managed, resulting in the Council being unable to deliver statutory services	Medium Term Financial Strategic (MTFS) is undertaken on an annual basis, with monthly budget monitoring and quarterly reports to Committee. Meetings are in place to review and challenge budget managers as well as regular reporting to CLT and Committee. A Funding Volatility Reserve has been created to specifically address the uncertainty of Government funding levels. Risk Assessment of Minimum level of reserves is carried out yearly and monitored throughout the year. Draft 2022/23 accounts show a small underspend and protection of working balances.	2	5	HIGH	0	15.00	2023-24 outturn allowed for some proposed transfers to reserves to provide for future spending and insulate against uncertainty. This is subject to committee approval in October.	2	5	HIGH	Current year forecast is for a £300k underspend. So there is no immediate prospect of the risk manifesting, although the next monitoring report will be more granular. The 2025-26 Budget and 2025-30 Medium Term Financial Strategy will incorporate the impact of changes arising from Government policies, once they are known.
Risk 6	Director, Communities & Health	We will be unable to react to a major incident leading to a breach of our statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act if we don't have in place adequate plans and procedures, understood, tested and reviewed, resulting in ineffective response to an incident leading to greater inconvenience and hardship and a longer timescale for return to normal	All services areas have Business Continuity Plans in place. Support and ongoing embedding of Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Plans within service departments Training to Extended leadership teams undertaken	2	3	MEDIUM	0	7.80	A One Team set of Emergency Plans is being prepared to support CLT in an Emergency. Once agreed it will replace the seperate plans and training will take place. A One Team Business Continuity Plan has been agreed and work is underway to support this with Service BC Plans. Once finalised the plan will be tested. Proposals are under discussion to recruit and train Emergency Officers. RDC now uses the BBC CCTV Room for out of hours calls and a One Team approach is being developed for dealing with calls.	2	3	MEDIUM	Work underway to replace current Emergency Planning arrangements with new One Team response to emergencies, including the recruitment of Emergency Officers. Service Business Continuity plans are being written to a revised format (completed end November 2024). The new plan will then be exercised. Working with the CMT to provide out of hours information to the CCTV Room. Working to cordinate our response with partners and compiling joint plans through the Essex Resilience Forum
Risk 7	Director of People & Governance	Lack of capacity to effectively govern the organisation if recruitment processes are not effective and resources are not adequately in place resulting in a delay in delivery of business objectives and key projects not delivered	Monitor vacancy factor within Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Communications Protocol & Strategy People & Culture Strategy and Action Plan Regular meetings between Corporate Managers and & officers. Review options for alternative service delivery model Establishment Review and Control Group between Finance & HR	2	3	MEDIUM	0	7.80	Work continues on reviewing the recruitment and retention policies to ensure the processes in place are effective and ensure effective recruitment and onboarding.	1	3	LOW	Work is continuing to ensure effective policies and procedures are in place in terms of recruitment and onboarding. Regular meetings are now in place with Corporate Manager with HRBPs to ensure more effective workforce planning. Also working on a key piece of work in terms of establishment control with Finance.
Risk 8	Director (Assets & Investments)	We may be unable to meet the income projections for the Council if the commercial income target from the Joint Venture and other activities are not achieved resulting in the Council unable to meet budget requirements, spending/service cutbacks and greater use of reserves	Consultants have been engaged to advise and assist in delivery of projects Appropriate governance arrangements have been set up for the Council's Wholly owned company - Seven Arches Investment Ltd Progress reports to Committee. Robust business modeling and financial projections. Monthly SLT & Leader meetings to monitor finances Financial Initiatives working group established	2	5	HIGH	0	15.00	The independent review of SAIL has been completed. The draft report is being reviewed internally for officers to understand the recommendations and the impact of implementing these recommendations. The full report and recommendations will be reported to a Finance and Resource Committee. The Council continues to review the joint venture and to carry out the appropriate financial dueilgence and risk assessment regarding the asset viability.	2	5	HIGH	The Council is reviewing its on options on the Joint Venture and both parties are communicating currently on what the best course of action is for the vehicles, this will be subject to a Full Council resolution. Following the report findings of the SAIL review an independent consultant is to be commisioned in November to pull together a Business case on options for the Council to consider regarding the commercial vehicle.
Risk 9	Director of People & Governance	There is a risk of non-compliance with Data Protection legislation if we do not have good information governance strategies and controls in place, resulting in fines from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and litigation challenges to decisions made	Information Governance Group set up to ensure that the Council has the correct controls in place to ensure good governance in all decision making Data Protection Policies Training Interim part-time Data Protection Officer in post	2	3	MEDIUM	0	7.80	Futher work is been undertaken with the Corporate Manager - Transformation, Policy, Funding and Performance and Data Protection Officer. A action plan is in place and extra resource from Evalian have been requested to review policy.	2	3	MEDIUM	A number of working groups have been established in terms of data protection, information governance and cyber security. A resources is now in place from Evalian to work with key officers and review the policy and support the requirements of the action plan. GDPR e-learning has been rolled out to all officers to complete

Risk 10	Director (Resources)	Risk of Contract/Partnership failure within the organisation as a result of contract and procurement management not in place, resulting in negative impact on Council finances and reduction in Community benefits-the Council may not be able to comply with its statutory, strategic or service delivery obligations.	Service Level Agreements embedded within contract and penalties in place for non performance. Regular reporting on contract performance. Escalation and governance in place Contract management diagnostic survey completed in 2021, recommending contract and relationship management training. Contract and Relationship Management training completed in May 2022, included risk management within contracts. Procurement and contract manager meetings in place. Procurement strategy been adopted by the Council.	3	4	HIGH	0	16.80	Legal advice and ongoing negotiations have resulted in a diminished financial risk of partnership failure. A review of the relationship between the Council and Seven Arches Investments Ltd will take place is under way. The internal audit of development partnerships is complete, with recommendations agreed and reported. New partnership policy and procedures as well as a review of contract procedure rules are being developed for ratification by CLT and Members.	3	4	HIGH	The review of SAIL has been reported. Updated Contract Procedure Rules, including reference to partnerships, will be reported to committee when completed.
Risk 11	Director (Customer & Data Insight)	There is a threat of loss of data or access to network due to cyber attack that may result in digital disruption with a loss of productivity and service provision to residents.	We have a Managed Security Service that has been running for second year, part of this service uses a Security Operations Centre to monitor cyber threats. Immediate response plans are in place for critical threats, and regular investigation review are held, along with Account contract meetings. A suite of cyber security policies and procedures have been finalised, technical staff briefed and are available centrally on the service desk. Cyber security roadshows for staff and Members are still in preparation stage. Most recent extensive cyber audit provided moderate assurance.	3	5	VERY HIGH	0	22.50	A Joint Cyber working Group has been initiated with specific Aims and Objectives to oversee and advise on the current cyber ad data security risk landscape, and link with DR, IT change management, and business continuity planning. Membership of the group will be key senior officer from CLT, CMT and subject matter experts	3	5	VERY HIGH	The joint Cyber Group has held its first meeting (30 Oct 24) and will be developing an action plan to enhance cyber security, improve staff and member awareness of the risks and build on response plans through a formal exercise.
Risk 12	Director (Policy & Delivery)	Partnership with Rochford District Council does not deliver the benefits originally envisaged	Development of Corporate Strategy 2024 - 2028 to provide direction Clear Themes & Priorities to demonstrate achievements Targets and Performance Monitor and Managed Transformation Plans for next 3 years developed Embedded roles and objectives for all directors and service managers. Governance arrangements win place to manage the themes, the transformation work and outcomes Feedback on process and progress regularly sort from those involved in order to refine and improve the process and work undertaken. Allocated budget to support the work of the partnership to ensure it delivers against its objectives	3	3	MEDIUM	0	11.70	Following Peer Recommendation the Council have engaged with the East of England Local Government Association to undertake a review of the Transformation Plans and specifically those around One Team THIS report will consider the development of the work and the options available to members to take the partnership forward Further the Councils have developed Transformation Plans for each service which will be scrutinised and developed into a plan for transformation for the next 36 months. Work continues to bring together services and ICT programmes and contracts where appropriate and in line with the Transformation Plans	3	3	MEDIUM	Continue to develop 36 month Transformation Plans Report findings of EELGA review in December 2024 and January 2025 Work with Members to hold future Summit on direction of One Team, Transforamtion and co - working
Risk 13	Director (Resources)	The Council's high level of debt places financial pressure on the Budget and MTFS as debt repayments rise without a commensurate increase in income	Treasury Management Review to improve governance and practices. Close monitoring of the capital programme to minimise borrowing. Review options for asset disposals.	2	4	MEDIUM	0	11.20	Implementation of actions in 2024/25 following the 2023 Review of Treasury Management. MTFS includes specific actions to bring down the level of projected debt. Review of the relationship with SAIL which will ensure rigorous control of large capital projects as well as monitoring of the investment portfolio.	2	4	MEDIUM	The 2024-29 MTFS includes specific actions to bring down the level of projected debt. The review of SAIL will ensure rigorous control of large capital projects. Options are being explored to dispose of assets to generate receipts and replace borrowing as a means of capital funding.

Risk 14	Director (Resources)	Vacancies and uncertainty for the Finance service coupled with a lack of available supply undermines the Council's financial management and control	Prioritise financial services that are statutory. Ensure the new finance structure has sufficient resilience. Be prepared to offer enhancements to recruit and retain staff. Post-restructure, develop a plan to recruit to vacancies and maintain resilience.	2	4	MEDIUM	0	11.20	A permanent appointment to the S151 Officer post has been made, with a start date of 5 November 2024. Some vacant posts have been filled internally and remaining permanent recruitment will be complete in the autumn.	2	3	MEDIUM	A permanent appointment to the S151 Officer post has been made, with a start date of 1 November 2024. Only one vacant post remains vacant.
Risk 15	Director (Housing)	The Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) becomes unviable due to the increasing costs of services and lack of income and low rents	Quartely HRA Business Finance meetings taking place where the 30 year business plan is reviewed and updated. Any underspent in year budgets are being moved to reserves to increase resilience. Review being carried out of planned works and SHDP programme to ensure finances are accurately forecast	3	4	HIGH	0	16.80	Quartely HRA Business Plan meetings are taking place to review the modelling and impact of mitigations. Financial position to be reaffirmed to Members and the HRA Business Plan updated	3	4	HIGH	Business plan meetings continue and are currently focusing on a re-write of the 30 year business plan ready for the Budget in February. Costs and assumptions in the current plan are being reviewed, and a paper to increase rents and introduce service charges for grounds maintenance is going to committee in December.
Risk 16	Director (Housing)	Increase in numbers approaching as Homeless resulting in lack of available Temporary Accommodation to be able to fullfill Statutory Homeless Duties	Accomodation officers are seeking to increase the number of landlords in the private sector to access properties for use as nightly let accommodation in addition to securing properties to discharge the Council's homeless duties.	2	3	MEDIUM	0	7.80	We will be developing a Temporary accommodation strategy including looking at options across our own Asset portfolio to increase provision	2	3	MEDIUM	Numbers remain stable despite a spike in placements across Essex. We continue to monitor approach numbers and have a resource recruited to look at the HRA Asset Strategy which will include TA provision.
Risk 17	Director (Housing)	The Council receives a Short Notice Inspection from the Housing Regulator which results in a low rating. This could have both reputational, and financial implication including ability to gain Homes England Grant required to support the SHDP programme	The services have committed resources to prepping for any inspection, and service plans and business direction supports a high level of performance. A Housing improvement Board has been created to push forward with service development in this area in support of the standards.	2	3	MEDIUM	0	7.80	Action Plan of improvements is in place and first improvement board taking place in September. Relevant staff and Directors have attended learning and feedback sessions from other authorities who have already been through the process to take on board learning from this.	2	3	MEDIUM	The first Housing Improvement Board has taken place, and a summary of progress is going to committee. Preparation for a planned inspection continues.