

CORPORATE RISK MONITORING SUMMARY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This is one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year providing an update on actions to manage risks identified in the Corporate Risk Register.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Cabinet on 14 April 2011 agreed that I would provide a risk summary to Cabinet and that the summary plus the departmental reports of Chief Officers would be placed within the Virtual Members Room. The Chief Officer reports provide an update on their actions to address the identified risks and any 'new' risks which merit consideration for inclusion in the Corporate Risk Register.

3. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

- 3.1 The Corporate Risk Register has recently been revised by the Executive Team to take account of the new Corporate Plan. It was considered and approved by Cabinet on 2 February and will be reviewed each quarter in line with the performance management cycle with highlights and exceptions being reported to Members.

4. PROGRESS ON THE ACTIONS BEING TAKEN

- 4.1 As well as recording the existing key controls and contingencies the Register also indicates those additional actions which need to be implemented in order to manage the most significant risks down to acceptable levels.

- 4.2 The Council is developing key performance indicators for each of the revised Corporate Risks.

- 4.3 This report confirms the revised Corporate Risks and highlights progress with key control actions taken in the final quarter of 2011/12 with any relevant performance information:-

- 4.3.1 If we do not manage health and safety effectively then death or serious injury could result to service users, employees or members of the public.

- A further IOSH 'Managing Safely' course was delivered during the quarter.
- The programme of Health & Safety audits has continued.
- The second annual review of surveillance for Parks & Open Spaces was completed in February.

- 4.3.2. If safeguarding arrangements are inadequate children might be exposed to greater risk of abuse or exploitation

- The comprehensive review of services / outcomes for children which responds to Professor Munro's review of Child Protection remains on schedule.
- 4.3.3. If safeguarding arrangements are inadequate vulnerable adults could be exposed to greater risk of abuse or exploitation.
- Preparations have been made for the Peer Review in May which will focus strongly on safeguarding issues.
- 4.3.4 Not having plans in place could compromise delivery of essential services in the event of a major public emergency
- During the quarter all outstanding business continuity plans were reviewed and tested.
 - The audit of business continuity arrangements for key external partners in critical service areas was completed in March.
- 4.3.5 If the Council does not maintain the trust and confidence of citizens in the conduct of its duties this could result in significant damage to the authority's reputation and undermine the level of engagement with residents.
- On 29th March Cabinet approved a revised approach to business planning which includes a 12 week comprehensive consultation programme.
 - Additional funding has been allocated to the area forums to support activity which will address the issues raised through the neighbourhood plan consultation.
 - The development of Neighbourhood Plans has continued.
 - The press office continues to take a proactive approach to media, both in issuing statements and in monitoring and evaluating local, regional and national media coverage.
- 4.3.6 A serious failure in corporate governance could result in breaches of legislation and/or significant damage to the authority's reputation.
- The Council is working with the Local Government Association at both officer and Member level to address the issues raised by the AKA report.
 - An Improvement Board has been established to support delivery of the Council's 5 improvement priorities.
 - £300,000 of additional resource was allocated in the 2012/13 budget for improving standards and practice.
 - On 29th March Cabinet approved the establishment of a cross party Business Delivery Board and Strategic Change Programme Board
 - At the same meeting proposals for a corporate Performance Appraisal process and for improving organisational culture were also approved
 - The Annual Governance Statement 2011/12 was considered and endorsed by Audit & Risk Management Committee on 13th March.

4.3.7 If we do not use the available resources to meet the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan the services we provide might not be appropriate.

- On 29th March Cabinet approved a revised approach to business planning. This will ensure that the future prioritisation process for the Council both in terms of objectives and the allocation of resources is based on a robust evidence base and analysis of need.
- At the same meeting Cabinet also gave its support to the development of a Corporate Performance Appraisal process

The agreed performance information for this risk is the forecast against the agreed budget and the capital programme forecast against the original approval. Members are referred to the Financial Monitoring summary appendix.

4.3.8 Insufficient growth in the borough's economy could make it difficult for the Council to deliver its vision of a more prosperous and equal Wirral

- Significant work has been undertaken to develop a number of new initiatives including support for Micro Businesses and Social Enterprises and the implementation of the Green Growth Strategy.
- Work with respect to securing international investment from China has continued with further discussions for the International Trade Centre. Additional work has also been undertaken in relation to the development of international links.
- Progress has also been made towards the implementation of the Investment strategy and significant work has and continues to be done in support of bids for funding such as the Regional Growth Fund Round 3.

4.3.9 If we do not engage sufficiently with the workforce it could lead to demotivation, a negative culture and a focus on short term rather than long term considerations.

- During the quarter an Employee Opinion Survey was undertaken by IPSOS MORI.
- On 29th March Cabinet gave its support to proposals for series of measures aimed at addressing employee concerns including the establishment of an Independent External Ombudsman.

4.3.10 If do not have the right people with the right skills in the right posts it will be difficult to deliver the corporate priorities.

- At Cabinet on 12th January proposals to join the Merseyside Collaborative Contract for externally provided training were approved.
- On 15th March Cabinet approved the award of the contract for the Council's MBA programme.
- On 29th March Cabinet gave its support to the development of a Corporate Performance Appraisal process

4.3.11 If we do not learn about changes to the legislative and policy environment it could impede our ability to understand and respond to them.

- Proposals to strengthen the Chief Executive's office including the establishment of a Policy Unit have been developed.

4.3.12 If we do not ensure that the policies and practices being introduced by the Council reflect a thorough understanding of the wants and needs of our citizens and businesses the services we provide might not be appropriate

- On 29th March Cabinet approved a revised approach to business planning which includes a 12 week comprehensive consultation programme.
- This approach will also ensure that the future prioritisation process for the Council both in terms of objectives and the allocation of resources is based on a robust evidence base and analysis of need.
- At the same meeting Cabinet approved the development of a Corporate Commissioning Strategy Framework

4.3.13 In an era of increasingly scarce resources, if the Council does not collaborate effectively with partners we may not make the best use of the collective resource available to meet citizens' needs.

- On 29th March Cabinet approved the development of a Corporate Commissioning Strategy Framework

4.4.1 Business failure from a supplier to the Council, including major private sector suppliers and the voluntary, community and faith sector providers, leading to interruption of service.

- The audit of business continuity arrangements for key external partners in critical service areas was completed in March.
- On 15th March Cabinet approved the award of a contract for the provision of support to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.

5. VARIATIONS TO THE RISK REGISTER

5.1 A number of new risks of potential corporate significance have been reported:-

5.1.1 The first concerns issues of capacity. The Director of Children & Young People has identified potential difficulties in recruiting adequately qualified and experienced staff in a number of key areas. In addition the absence of key officers at a senior level is placing pressure on others for example the Director of Finance/Deputy Chief Executive. This is being mitigated by the provision of additional resource.

5.1.2 The Director of Children & Young People has also identified two areas of potential pressure. One is that a rise in exclusions could exhaust existing

specialist provision and that increased statementing of children and more out-of-borough placements could lead to a significant increase in costs.

- 5.1.2 Members may also be aware of a planned shutdown of power to the Treasury Building in early June. Should the planned works overrun there could be significant disruption to service delivery. However there is sufficient time within the schedule to accommodate this. As a further precaution contingency plans are being developed.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE