

Council/Committee:	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Report Title	Strategic Risk Register Update
Date of Meeting	18 September 2025
Report Author	Peter Farrow Head of Audit
Lead Officer	Alex Thompson Executive Director of Finance and Transformation
Wards Affected	All
Appendices (if any)	1. Strategic Risk Register

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on the profile of the key strategic risks currently faced by the Council and how they are being mitigated.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to:-
- note and comment on the latest strategic risk register.

3. Proposals – Reasons for the recommendations

- 3.1 To inform the Committee of the Council's strategic risks.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of the latest strategic risk register. As such, there is no alternative option.

5 Context and Key Issues

- 5.1 Effective risk management is a key element of good corporate governance, as noted in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance, and is essential to the overall performance of the Council in meeting its corporate plan objectives. Good risk management will ensure that resources are used efficiently and

effectively, and that assets and resources are protected against risk in the most efficient way.

- 5.2 The role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is to help provide assurance to the Council that it has a system of governance, risk management and internal control in place and that the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements continue to inform decision making.
- 5.3 This report updates the Committee on the profile of the key strategic risks currently faced by the Council since they were last reported.
- 5.4 The strategic risk register is a live document and reflects the Council's risk profile as at August 2025. The risks undergo ongoing review to ensure they remain appropriate and are assessed in order to aid informed decision making and resource allocation.
- 5.5 The strategic risk register does not include all of the risks faced by the Council. Other risks are captured within directorate, programme and project risk registers in line with the Council's risk management framework.
- 5.6 The review and assessment of each strategic risk has been discussed with the risk owners and shared with the Strategic Leadership Team.
- 5.7 An update on the current risks, including the measures in place to mitigate them are included within Appendix 1.
- 5.8 A summary of the current risk profile is shown below:

Risk	Current risk score
SEND Placements and Transport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing trajectory of demand Both demand and cost 	Amber Red
Building Community Cohesion (New)	Amber
Pandemic Preparedness (New)	Amber
Climate Change	Amber
Housing Transformation	Amber
Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation (reduced from red)	Amber
Cyber Security	Amber
Adults - Strategic Workforce Development (risk now focussed on sickness levels)	Amber
Compliance with DPA/GDPR	Amber
Children's Social Care	Amber
Business Continuity Management	Amber
Equalities	Amber
Borough Archives	Amber
Elections Act	Amber
Budget Monitoring and Management (temporarily increased from green at this early stage of the year)	Amber

Medium Term Financial Strategy (as above)	Amber
Workforce Recruitment	Green
Customer Experience	Green
Organisational Culture	Green
Continuous Improvement	Green
Regeneration Fund Programme	Green
Sandwell Local Plan	Green

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial or resource implications directly arising as a result of this report.

7. Legal and Governance Implications

- 7.1 There are a number of standards applicable to the management of risk within the local authority sector. Included amongst these is guidance from CIPFA/Solace, the British Standards Institute (BSI) and a set of joint standards published by the Institute of Risk Management (IRM), Alarm (The public sector risk management association) and AIRMIC (Association of Risk Managers in Industry and Commerce).

8. Risks

- 8.1 The report is an update of the key risks facing the Council.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)

- 9.1 It was not necessary to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment

10. Background Documents

- 10.1 None.

11. How does this deliver the objectives of the Strategic Themes?

- 11.1 This report will support the delivery of the following Strategic Themes:-
- Growing up in Sandwell
 - Living in Sandwell
 - Healthy in Sandwell
 - Thriving Economy in Sandwell
 - One Council One Team Approach.

The report details the key strategic risks that need to be managed to ensure that they do not negatively impact on the delivery of the Council Plan.