

Appendix Three: Risk Register - The Council's Business Plan 2026 to 2027

| Ref | Risk Description  | Consequence  | Owner  | Gross |   | Current |   | Target |   | Control Description | Progress   | Date Due | Action Owner |  |
|-----|---|--|--|-------|---|---------|---|--------|---|---------------------|--|----------|--------------|--|
|     |   |  |  | P     | I | P       | I | Score  | P |                     |  |          |              | I  |
| 1   | <b>Political and Partnership Landscape:</b> The Government's devolution agenda, the universal requirement to create Mayoral Strategic Authorities and the introduction of unitary councils may lead to increased uncertainty, significant additional work to shape new governance, a challenge to partnership and relationship management, dilution of budgetary control, and the assumption of significant new service responsibilities.   | The potential loss on city-level growth and community identity, distraction from business as usual work, increased budgetary risk, and negative impact on partnership working.   | Chief Executive                                    | 5     | 4 | 4       | 3 | 12     | 3 | 3                   | <p>Prioritisation and policy development linked to new Government agenda &amp; engagement with Oxfordshire partners.</p> <p>Use partnerships to support community cohesion - including the Oxford Strategic Partnership, the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership and the Anchor institutions networks.</p> <p>Use cross party working groups for major decisions.</p>  | 80%      | Open         | Transition Director                                |
| 2   | <b>Financial Stability:</b> Pressure on income and increased demand for services means that the Council will not be able to deliver its plans and corporate priorities. Lack of knowledge on the implications fairer funding in respect of business rates and revenue support grant. Fluctuations in the Council's income and expenditure. Increased costs due to inflation impacting the capital programmes. Increase demand, including for temporary accommodation. Pressures on the Oxford Model caused by more challenging client and inflationary increases incurred by ODS, and a need for Ox Place to refresh the business plan for developments once the current plan expires in 2033. A poor performing wider economy results in a reduction in income including commercial rents and business rates.  | Reduction in services, including too vulnerable people with complex needs. Difficult decisions must be taken by Members and senior officers about resource allocation. Fees and Charges have to increase. The Council is exposed to a higher risk exposure outside of its risk appetite. Staff morale and the reputation of the Council is reduced. Unresolvable pressures ultimately lead to government intervention. | Group Finance Director                             | 4     | 4 | 3       | 3 | 9      | 2 | 2                   | <p>The Business Plan is intrinsically linked with the Council's MTFP and Budget 2026-27 and the financial and operational health of the Council.</p> <p>The Business Plan development process has been comprehensive and carefully designed alongside the development of the Council Strategy 2024 to 2028.</p> <p>All strands within the Business Plan align with the Council Strategy and will need to align with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan utilising existing resources and capacity.</p> <p>Robust management and monitoring of the Business Plan delivery.</p> | 80%      | Open         | Group Finance Director                             |
| 3   | <b>Cyber security and IT infrastructure:</b> A failure to respond to a cyber attack and ensure IT infrastructure resilience. This might be caused by human error or deliberate targeting, as the Council is a high-profile organisation with financial information. Exposure through third-party partners. Inability to invest in security improvements. Lack of skilled staff and recruitment challenges. Inadequate funding and prioritisation of IT infrastructure. Complexity of infrastructure and connectivity issues. Readiness and capacity for change and LGR transition.  | Inability to provide key public services. Financial losses, fines and reputational damage. Staff wellbeing and morale impacted. Reduced productivity and operations. Increased IT inequality, limited service accessibility. Failure to deliver savings, modernisation and Local Government transition priorities.   | Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services | 3     | 4 | 3       | 3 | 9      | 3 | 2                   | <p>Prioritisation of ICT projects to be delivered over next 18 months to 2 years.</p> <p>Improve digital skills of staff.</p>  | 90%      | Open         | Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services |
| 4   | <b>Increased demand for services:</b> There is increased demand for services provided by the Council, particularly Customer Services, Council Tax, and Benefits, whilst at the same time there is a significant increase in work to support the Government's decision to reorganise Local Authority arrangements in Oxfordshire. Demand is increasing because of the cost of living and accommodation which reduces disposable income and drives up debt. Other causes are increased deprivation; not maximising technology; cutting services (discretionary services are often preventative); resources; Oxford less attractive, failure of partners, increased complexity of support needed, i.e. homelessness. The population of Oxford is growing, and this therefore means that demand will also grow; rising health inequalities, an ageing population, significant deprivation in certain areas of the city; Failure to fully leverage technology, when residents are unable to access digital services due to critical poverty, and when partner organisations reduce or eliminate preventative services. | The increasing pressure on services and staff, can lead to lower staff morale and a failure to meet statutory obligations. As a result, the Council's reputation may suffer as customer expectations go unmet, and relationships with delivery partners may become strained. Delivering services within budgets and achieving savings targets will become more challenging.  | Chief Executive                                    | 5     | 4 | 3       | 3 | 9      | 3 | 3                   | <p>Maximise availability of technology.</p> <p>Work with partners and agencies to deploy collaborative solutions.</p> <p>Prioritise and de-prioritise actions, projects and delivery.</p>  | 80%      | Open         | Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services |
| 5   | <b>Legislation:</b> Unanticipated changes in legislation caused by uncontrollable Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental factors.   | Adverse impact on some of the most vulnerable citizens in the city.  | Director of Law, Governance and Strategy           | 3     | 3 | 3       | 2 | 6      | 3 | 2                   | <p>The Council and Business Plan development process has been comprehensive and carefully designed.</p> <p>Robust management and monitoring of the Business Plan delivery.</p>   | 80%      | Open         | Director of Law, Governance and Strategy           |

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