

<b>11 March 2021</b>		<b>ITEM: 10</b>
<b>Standards and Audit Committee</b>		
<b>In Quarter 4 Review of the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non key	
<b>Report of:</b> Andy Owen, Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Jonathan Wilson, Assistant Director Finance		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Sean Clark, Corporate Director of Finance, Governance & Property		
<b>This report is</b> a public		

### **Executive Summary**

One of the functions of the Standards and Audit Committee under the Terms of Reference of the Constitution is to provide independent assurance that the authority's risk management arrangements are adequate and effective.

To enable the Standards and Audit Committee to consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk and opportunity management arrangements the report is presented on a bi annual basis and provides details of how the key risks and opportunities facing the authority are identified and managed.

The Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager has engaged with Services, Department Management Teams, Performance Board and Directors Board during January to February to review the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register.

This report provides Standards and Audit Committee with the key risks and opportunities identified by the review and the revised Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register.

A number of the risks and opportunities or management response arrangements have been impacted by the pandemic situation and the effects on the items are reflected in the report.

The register is due to be refreshed in the next review and this will enable the impacts from the pandemic situation to be fully considered and appropriate changes incorporated in the records (e.g. existing items updated, new items considered and old items removed or replaced).

## **1. Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 That Standards and Audit Committee note the items and details contained in the Dashboard (Appendix 1).**
- 1.2 That Standards and Audit Committee note the 'In Focus' report (Appendix 2), which highlights the higher priority items identified by the review.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 Risk and Opportunity Management (ROM) describes the planned and systematic approach used to identify, evaluate and manage the risks to and the opportunities for the achievement of the council's objectives.
- 2.2 ROM makes a significant contribution to the sound Corporate Governance arrangements to meet the requirements set out in the Account and Audit Regulations and is an important part of the council's overall Performance Management Framework.
- 2.3 In accordance with the ROM Policy Strategy and Framework regular reviews of the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity register were undertaken during 2019/20 and reported to Directors Board and Standards & Audit Committee.
- 2.4 The annual review of the council's ROM arrangements was undertaken in the last quarter of 2019/20. As part of the review the ROM Policy, Strategy and Framework were updated and reported to Standards and Audit Committee 12 March 2020, via Directors Board 25 February 2020 and Performance Board 03 February 2020.
- 2.5 As the Council was focussed on responding to the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak the refresh of the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register which was scheduled to commence in April to 2020 was deferred to the second quarter.
- 2.6 The Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register was refreshed during June to August 2020 and the details reported to Standards & Audit Committee 10 September 2020, via Directors Board 17 August 2020 and Performance Board 13 August 2020.
- 2.7 A further exercise was undertaken with Services and Department Management Teams during October to November 2020 to revise the register.
- 2.8 For the In Quarter 4 Review the Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager has engaged with Services, Department Management Teams, Performance Board and Directors Board during January and February 2021 to update the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register.

### 3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The outcome of the review is shown in the Dashboard (Appendix 1), In Focus report (Appendix 2) and the following tables.

#### 3.2 Appendix 1 – Dashboard

The dashboard provides a summary of the items in the register mapped against the council's priorities, shows the significance of the risks and opportunities, along with the developments to date and the management time frames.

#### 3.3 Appendix 2 – Risks and Opportunities In Focus report

This document highlights the higher priority items identified by the review.

The rationale for items being in focus is based on the numeric value of the rating. Any risks/opportunities which are currently rated 16 or 12 automatically become in focus, and any which are currently rated 9 or 8 would be considered on a case by case basis for the in focus report.

A summary of the position for each in focus item is included below

**Risk - In priority (rating) and then reference number order.**

#### **Adult Social Care Stability and Market Failure - Risk 2** (Rating: 16 Critical/Very Likely)

Adult Social Care has received additional funding in recent years – through a precept as part of the Council Tax and also through the Improved Better Care Fund. A significant proportion of this money has been used to stabilise the market place and deliver sustainability for care providers. This has included increasing the capacity of the contract and brokerage team to ensure contract compliance visits and monitoring to take place in a timely manner – reducing or aiding early identification of risks. The introduction of a Brokerage function has also meant that more realistic costs and fees are negotiated. In addition uplifts have been provided (as described in the risk description) to improve stability and domiciliary care has been retendered. Through the Better Care Fund, we have also been able to enhance capacity through investment in a Bridging Service and through enhancing existing services to ensure that people can come out of hospital when medically fit to do so – even when they are unable to return home. This has helped to reduce Delayed Transfers of Care and Waiting Lists.

The current Covid-19 Pandemic has significantly increased the strain on providers and the system as a whole. A number of residential care providers have had to close temporarily due to Covid-19 outbreaks and this has significantly reduced available capacity and also the ability of providers to fill vacancies. Whilst additional temporary measures are being put in place, e.g. the opening of Oak House, the situation is likely to continue throughout the pandemic. Staffing is also a major issue, with increasing staff absence across both residential and domiciliary care sectors. This is having a direct impact on the number of people admitted to care homes and the number of hours available to provide care within the domiciliary care sector. This has led to hard decisions having to be made about how and where hours are distributed, which whilst risk assessed, is leading to some people having less care. There is also a direct impact on family carers who are being relied upon more and are at increased risk of being unable to cope. The pausing of services such as Day Care will contribute to this situation. The Council has asked for volunteers who are prepared to assist – including with the delivery of care. To date, a small number of Council staff members have indicated that they would be prepared to deliver all aspects of care. Training has commenced for these members of staff.

The Council has provided additional funding recognising the financial impact placed on providers. This includes making available a 10% financial resilience payment which was made available to all providers for the first 16 weeks of the financial year. Since the end of March, the Council has enabled payments to providers to be monthly in advance for at least 16 weeks to help with cash flow. The Government has also made funding available to support care homes with infection

control subject to the homes meeting certain conditions and they have announced a second tranche of funding as a result of the ongoing pandemic. Whether the vacancies will continue following Covid cannot be foretold. In addition, there is an increased risk to the stability of the care market from new UK immigration rules which currently excludes social care staff from the Health and Care Visa. As the Council examines its financial position, this too may limit the extent to which the Council can ease pressures on providers.

At the same time as the pandemic, capacity issues across the system will be compounded by the usual winter pressures. Whilst Winter Pressures funding has been released, capacity depends upon the ability to be able to staff facilities and to cope with the additional demand placed on the system by Covid. Delayed Discharges remain low, which is a reflection of how well Thurrock works with its partners and providers, but the ability to maintain this position is extremely tenuous.

Transformation work is however progressing to attempt to overcome and control current challenges – although some elements of the work will take time to be realised. This includes developing a new model of care for domiciliary care and a regional Workforce Development strategy focusing on external provision. At the beginning of 2018, the new domiciliary care contract started with providers now well established within the Borough, although one of the organisations who were successful in the tender process have failed to deliver the capacity contracted for; this is further evidence of the fragility of this market. Work has also taking place on alternative approaches to traditional domiciliary care, with two Wellbeing Teams launched. Wellbeing Teams will enable us to identify the model required and will focus on enhancing Wellbeing and not just on meeting needs. It will also look at how to encourage people in to the care industry and to professionalise a caring role. In addition, Thurrock is allocated additional funding for the Winter Period which is traditionally a very difficult time for the health and care system and will be compounded this year by Covid-19.

Despite the work taking place, the risk of market failure remains extremely high. The sheer number of challenges faced by the care market at the current time has led to the risk level being increased from '12' to '16'. Risk and action plan to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22)

### **Impact of Coronavirus - Risk 5**

(Rating: 16 Critical/Very Likely)

Recognised that this is not a short term crisis and there is no easy or quick solution to the situation as the position/challenges faced change regularly. Regular monitoring of the position, issues, planned response and recovery undertaken through gold/silver command structure. Member Oversight and Engagement Board meet weekly as of the end of October in order to monitor the data frequently and respond to the processes now in place since the introduction of the three tier local COVID alert levels. Ongoing regular reports from June 2020 to boards and committees with regard to the response, recovery and the implications of pandemic (e.g. MTFs and General Fund Budget Implications report to Cabinet 14 Oct 2020). The Council continues to strive to meet the challenge of keeping up with and responding to the latest position and government guidance. Given the ERF declared a major incident in Essex we are still in the response rather than the recovery stage of the crisis. With the country still in lockdown and until infection rates start to stabilise, then reduce, it is not likely that the Risk Rating will change before year end. Risk and action plan to be refreshed in next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

### **A13 Widening Project - Risk 9**

(Rating: 16 Critical/Very Likely)

The A13 corridor is a vital part of the transport network in Thurrock and the south Essex area, enabling the economy to grow through expanding businesses, new housing and more jobs.

#### **Major economic growth**

Thurrock and the south Essex area has seen major investment in recent years, including the opening of DP World London Gateway Port and Logistics facility, and the continued development of intu Lakeside retail and entertainment complex. This is part of a planned £20 billion investment in jobs, homes and infrastructure in Thurrock, including developments led by the private companies at Thames Enterprise Park, Lakeside Basin and the Port of Tilbury. A widened A13 will help support these developments, and also the significant investment planned for other parts of south Essex, including £272 million at Airport Business Park in Southend.

**Excellent transport links:** Thurrock and the south Essex area already has many excellent transport links with London, the rest of the UK and Europe, by road, river and air. The London Gateway Harbour Empowerment Order 2008 gave legal backing for further improvements to the surrounding road network, including widening the A13. This will be a benefit to traffic flow as currently around 77,000 vehicles each day use the A13 between the A128 (Orsett Cock roundabout) and the A1014 (The Manorway, Stanford-le-Hope).

**Funding and partners:** DP World London Gateway have contributed to the costs and the rest from government funding, directed through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP).

Ongoing review and monitoring of project and implementation of planned actions to manage identified issues, areas for improvement and potential risks. Risk to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

### **Local Plan - Risk 12**

(Rating: 16 Critical/Very Likely)

Any failure on the part of the Council to prepare a Local Plan in accordance with the timescale and programme set out the Council's Local Development Scheme will put it at risk of possible intervention by the Secretary of State. Should this occur the Council could lose the ability to plan for future development of Thurrock with its plan-making powers being taken away by the Secretary of State who has the option of directing another body to take over responsibility for preparing the Local Plan.

Further sanctions could also come in the form of the loss of the Council's New Homes Bonus and a reduced ability to bid for national funding support for new infrastructure.

A failure on the part of the Council to provide a rolling five year land supply would also increase the possibility that land owners and developers would be able to obtain planning permission upon appeal to the Secretary of State for speculative, uncoordinated and piece-meal development in the Green Belt.

Finally the reputational damage and harm to the Council could be substantial as would the abortive costs involved in promoting a Local Plan which will be found unsound at examination.

Regular updates on the development of the Local Plan and next steps provided to the Local Development Plan Task Force (a cross party Members working group) and the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic on the project and the plan to be considered throughout the process. Risk to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

### **CSC, Service Standards & Inspection Outcome - Risk 6**

(Rating: 12 Critical/Likely)

This risk evaluates the impact of increased demand and resource pressures on children's social care quality of service and provision. The pressures outlined throughout previous years remain acute. They include increased volumes, increased complexity and ongoing activity to review high cost placements. The implementation of the early help service model and the Thurrock multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) has been successful. The service continues to maximize the external investment and opportunities presented through the Troubled Families Programme and continuously measures impact of the MASH.

The service is demand led and cannot fail to respond to the needs of a child due to budget or resource constraints. Changes on a local, regional and national level can have a significant impact on the demand for services. War and international factors can result in an unplanned increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children or families with no recourse to public funds. Geographical movement of families across the Eastern Region and London can see a rise in families needing services, including large sibling groups. Areas for improvement have been identified in the Ofsted (ILAC) 2019 and a Development Plan has been created to address this.

As a consequence of Covid19 since March 2020 there has been a significant impact on the way in which we deliver services within children's social care. There has been an impact on the budget which is subject to continuous scrutiny. Service continue to review and prepare for the next Ofsted Covid 19 reassurance visit/focus visit, and the full ILACS inspection. Key focus on Criminal Exploitation.

The level and complexity of some children and young people's needs and the lack of available national resources (specialist placements) to meet those needs is driving up cost pressures. As the Council continues to improve practice regarding the identification and tackling of Child

Exploitation there is an increase in demand for service provision in terms of intervention; prevention and victim support. Current and new duties in terms of radicalization also place pressures on the service in terms of workforce capacity. Trends can be predicted based on previous levels of demand but these are subject to variance.

The pressures outlined above will not be alleviated in the short term and the risk rating will remain at the higher (red) level for the period covered. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in volumes of contacts into the service, including court delays regarding management of cases, in addition to staff self-isolation due to the ongoing global pandemic.

Risk and action plan to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22)

### **CSC, Safeguarding & Protecting Children & YP - Risk 7** (Rating: 12 Critical/Likely)

The nature of the work in terms of safeguarding and supporting children at risk of harm means that this will always be a high risk area although through the application of the S.E.T (Southend, Essex & Thurrock) Child Protection procedures the department actively works to mitigate this risk and reduce the likelihood.

The risk of children and young people coming to harm cannot be completely eliminated and the risk level needs to remain high and ensure clear vigilance across the council and partner agencies. New and emerging risk factors will arise and there is always a potential for agencies 'not knowing, what they don't know' that needs to be guarded against.

Embedding the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and Early Offer of Help has supported earlier identification of risk through a multi-agency approach enabling the department to work to intervene at an earlier stage and reduce the risk of harm in some cases. The development and implementation of the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements will further improve the inter-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people living in Thurrock.

The impact for individual children and families, particularly in cases of child death is significant and whilst actions to reduce the likelihood are implemented the impact will remain as critical. There is also a critical impact score in terms of reputational damage should a child death or serious injury occur.

The ongoing nature of risk in child protection and safeguarding is such that despite effective mitigation the acknowledgement of the risk needs to remain high and will not reduce. This is not to say that the risks are unmanageable but for effective management the gravity and complexity of the risk needs to be acknowledged.

Managing this risk places inherent pressures on the Children's Social Care budget as a demand led budget. Effective demand and resource management remain a priority for the service within an overriding context of keeping children safe.

Risk will remain constant throughout the period covered. The emergence of Covid19 has resulted in a number of changes to service delivery. An Operational Procedures document during the Coronavirus outbreak has been implemented for some time and is reviewed on a regular basis. This document ensures business continuity is maintained following appropriate risk assessments and government guidelines. Risk and action plan to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

### **Property Ownership Liability - Risk 15** (Rating: 12 Critical/Likely)

Council properties (except for HRA and parks) moved to corporate function for repair, maintenance planning and budgets transferred. There has been a significant increase of number of properties moving to the Corporate Landlord Function which has resulted in a sharp increase in work streams. Condition and compliance surveys completed and loaded on Concerto database. The Estates Module remains outstanding on Concerto. This is a significant module which will assist with the management of leases and other property related matters, it is resource intensive and currently does not have adequate resources allocated to be able to progress. Resource has been identified to move this module on once the Management module has gone live and is working as required. The Management module of Concerto has been tested and will be going live 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2021. A draft Corporate Landlord Policy and a draft Corporate Landlord Procedure have been drafted, but can only be finalised once the resourcing requirements of the Corporate

Property Team are agreed. The Facilities management function was brought back in house in April 2020 and Corporate Property Team restructure needs to be finalised to strengthen the capacity of the service. There is particular concern that vital roles are being undertaken by contract staff with no contingency or succession planning possible. In addition there is a lack of resource where posts remain vacant and where new resource is required to undertake a greater workload both within the Corporate Property and FM teams. A lack of resource in the FM Team with much increased work load particularly within the security team is a major risk with additional shifts having to be covered by on call agency. FM Team would be further impacted in event of COVID outbreak within the teams, security at Civic Offices and Wardens at Thameside would be covered by contractor. Mailroom and reprographics would be major impact but would need to reduce service initially and call on wider team for assistance.

Proposals to refresh governance arrangements for property matters was submitted in March 2020, this included a revised TOR for Property Board, a new reporting structure and an itemised forward plan to support property management, governance and enhance visibility of Corporate Landlord matters. The constitution has been changed limiting requiring consent for all disposal from the Leader or Cabinet. As there are currently no exclusions to this requirement the Assets Team should be obtaining consent for even day to day deminimis transactions, all disposal are on hold until the Director has agreed a way forward, this is having a significant impact on the Property Team dealing with day to day business. The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the rapid and unplanned closure of buildings for an unknown period of time and plans/protocols were established and arrangements put in place to ensure the safety of buildings and for critical staff that needed to work at the Civic Centre. The recommissioning of buildings was carefully planned to ensure health and safety hazards are managed thereby ensuring buildings were safe for re-occupation. The additional national lockdown however has reversed this process and added additional resource demand for decommissioning and re commissioning buildings and this has further been exacerbated by the ongoing national lockdown. Additionally, the pandemic has necessitated social distancing measures and new working practices to protect staff, visitors and customers from the virus. Risk Assessments and re-occupation plans in accordance with PHE and government guidance are drafted for the Civic Centre and further guidance for other corporate buildings and satellite sites are to be developed and rolled out as appropriate. Due to restriction of staff within Civic Offices no fire marshal system in place, signing in/out procedure, risk if staff do not adhere to system in event of fire evacuation. The Corporate Property Team has been asked to undertake a wider ranging Asset Review with a view to identifying buildings that can be re-tasked or disposed of to generate capital receipts in order to sport the overall Council budget. This piece of work has been a significant draw on the Team's resources and has impacted on the delivery of other pieces of work. The continuing impact is having a detrimental effect on our Commercial occupiers and will likely impact on the potential expected rental income for this year and next with the number of void properties also likely to increase. Risk to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

### **Fraud - Risk 23**

(Rating: 12 Critical/Likely)

The Counter Fraud & Investigation service has an organisational-wide strategy and proactive work plan to monitor and manage the identified risks. A persistent training and education regime is in place, where experts from the service work with staff, contractors, members and in the council's supply chain to identify and mitigate the risks, and increase awareness.

The council has current and effective policies on Counter Fraud, Bribery & Corruption and Money Laundering which are kept under constant review, with relevant updates being added or removed where appropriate. These policies acknowledge the threats and install an action plan in identified incidents including, civil & criminal litigation and redress to recover any identified losses. Any control weaknesses identified in investigations are rectified in collaboration with the affected services and Internal Audit through SMART Action Plans.

During this year the council has come under pressure from COVID-19 and due to this, many services have been affected in ways no-one could have envisaged. This includes the threat of fraud. All normal fraud risks remained, however LA's across the country were required to 'pay out' grants that HMG issued to small businesses and other areas of our communities to assist with their survival through C-19. This saw the council pay out millions in grants, with very little time to prepare for the possibility of fraud. During this time the council was the victim of excess fraud risk and due to a lack of systems to sit behind the applications for the grants, was targeted. The

revenues department (responsible for paying the grants) and Fraud have worked closely and have a system in place that allows for 'pre-payment' checks to take place and for the early grants to be 'post-payment' checked. This will result in possible fraud being identified. The Fraud team have also liaised with the Revenues Department and ensured that the Post Assurance documentation that had to be sent to HMG was comprehensive. The council will be part of the National Fraud Initiative project that has been launched by the Cabinet Office, which form part of a Post Assurance 'toolkit' being made available to Local Authorities. The Fraud team will own the risk concerning identified fraud.

These risks have sat alongside the 'normal' fraud risks that the council faces every day, namely Single Person Discount fraud, Tenancy Fraud, Right To Buy fraud as well as other forms of fraud such as Procurement/Contract fraud. The fraud awareness programmes that were put to all staff will assist with identifying this risk and early intervention is always key to an organisation combating the risk it faces. These have continued and working alongside our alert system, staff are made aware of fraud trends and or known risks.

Covid 19 has also enabled an easier avenue for 'mandate fraud' which has been highlighted to staff, as we are not in the office spaces we once shared, communication is largely placed within the email systems. This can create the opportunity for criminals to compromise email accounts and facilitate a fraud. Where staff would normally be able to speak directly to a colleague, this now does not happen and must be brought into the risk faced by the council. CFI have been approached by various council who have fallen victim to £1m+ mandate frauds.

The risk remains at 12, as new risks have emerged alongside old risks, the new risks have mitigated measures taken, however it is clear that those measures do not affect the 'attempts' we come across and thus it is felt that the risk to the council remains likely and critical. The council can ill afford a substantial loss of funds at this very critical time. Risk to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

### **Major Projects (Place) - Risk 10**

(Rating: 12 Substantial/Very Likely)

The Thurrock growth programme crosses many disciplines within the Council. It requires significant programme management capacity from the Regeneration team to lead the programme alongside a joined up approach with other areas of the authority to ensure that relevant specialisms are brought in as required and programmes and strategies are complementary. Investment needs to be committed to project development stages before outputs and benefits are realised, significant levels of funding are committed at risk to prove feasibility and investment then needs to continue to secure the benefits from the initial funding. External funding is committed to numerous projects, whilst this reduces the financial burden to the Council, compliance with funding agreements must be achieved to ensure the Council is not exposed financially via claw back mechanisms. Projects span numerous financial years and have to be able to respond to changing market, policy and financial conditions. Strong project and programme managers are essential to ensuring that delivery stays on track and investment secures value for money outputs. Increasing resource capacity in the team via Matrix has provided some additional support and approval has been received to secure 1 additional FTE. The project portfolio could benefit from significant external funding in 2020/21 which will put additional pressure on the existing staff resource as more projects are developed. Momentum needs to be maintained in the ongoing restructure to improve working approaches and secure additional resource. Risk to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22)

### **Opportunity - In priority (rating) and then reference number order.**

#### **Investment in Growth - Opportunity 13**

(Rating: 12 Exceptional/Likely)

The Council has successfully secured approximately £100m in Local Growth Funding (LGF) to support development of infrastructure supporting growth in Thurrock in recent years

Opportunities to apply for Getting Building Fund and the LGF underspend have arisen over the summer. Thurrock has won more than £3m from the Getting Building Fund: £2.5m for a fibre broadband programme across Thurrock and £600k won by South Essex College for a transport and logistics academy. Both Grays and Tilbury have been identified as potential recipients of the Towns Fund which will bring a significant amount of investment into the local economy. Other opportunities to bid for funding are now being developed to help the economy recover from

COVID. In the longer term the Levelling Up Fund and the Shared Prosperity Fund should be introduced to replace the LGF and European Structural & Investment Fund (ESIF). Opportunity to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

**Treasury Management/Investment Strategy - Opportunity 16a** (Rating: 12 Exceptional/Likely)

Investments identified as having the greater ability to make significant income with the minimum of impact on service provision. Treasury Management and Investment Strategy established. Review undertaken and position reported to Council Feb 2020. Ongoing review, monitoring and presentation of investment briefings to Standards & Audit Committee, Cabinet, Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (e.g. Investment Briefing presented to July Council and Standards & Audit Committee; Investment briefing reported to S&AC Sept; MTFS Update & Revenue Budget Monitoring Quarter 1 presented to Cabinet Sept; MTFS Update & General Fund Budget Implications Cabinet Oct; Financial Update reported to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee Nov and Investment Briefing scheduled to be presented to S&AC Nov, etc). Cross party Shadow Investment Committee established and meeting commenced in quarter three.

The Council's investment strategy has been paused for new activity (while democratic oversight arrangements are reviewed/implemented). Performance on existing investments has been maintained and there are no significant impacts from the pandemic. The forecast income from existing investment is expected to be in line with the budgeted level but the pause in new activity will reduce the overall projected level for the year. Opportunity to be refreshed in the next review (Quarter 1 2021/22).

- 3.4 For members information the Criteria Guide for Impact and Likelihood levels are included under Appendix 3 to show the guidelines used to rate and prioritise the items.
  - 3.5 The whole register has been filed on Objective under the shared file for Risk and Opportunity Management
  - 3.6 A number of the risks and opportunities or management response arrangements have been impacted by the pandemic situation and the effects on the items are reflected in the report.
  - 3.7 The register is due to be refreshed in the next review and this will enable the impacts from the pandemic situation to be fully considered and appropriate changes incorporated in the records (e.g. existing items updated, new items considered and old items removed or replaced).
- 4. Reasons for Recommendation**
- 4.1 One of the functions of the Standards and Audit Committee under the Terms of Reference of the Constitution is to provide independent assurance that the authority's risk management arrangements are adequate and effective
  - 4.2 To enable the Standards and Audit Committee to consider the effectiveness of the council's risk and opportunity management arrangements the report on the refresh of the register is presented on a bi annual basis and provides details of how the key risks and opportunities facing the authority are identified and managed.

## **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 The Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager has engaged with Services, Department Management Teams, Performance Board and Directors Board to refresh the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register.
- 5.2 The refreshed Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register was presented to Directors Board 15 February 2021, via Performance Board representatives 01 February 2021.

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 ROM is recognised as a good management practice and how successful the council is in managing the risks and opportunities it faces will have a major impact on the achievement of the council's priorities and objectives.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Dammy Adewole**  
**Senior Management Accountant – Central Services**

Effective risk and opportunity management and the processes underpinning it will provide a more robust means to identify, manage and reduce the likelihood of financial claims and/or loss faced by the council.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Ian Hunt**  
**Assistant Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer**

Effective risk and opportunity management and the processes underpinning it will provide a more robust means to identify, manage and reduce the likelihood of legal claims or regulatory challenges against the council

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**  
**Team Manager, Community Development & Equalities**

The management of risk and opportunities provides an effective mechanism for monitoring key equality and human right risks associated with a range of service and business activities undertaken by the council. It also provides a method for reducing the likelihood of breaching our statutory equality duties.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

Risk and opportunity management contributes towards the council meeting the requirements of Corporate Governance and the Account & Audit Regulations.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register, January 2021. The document can be accessed via the following shared Risk and Opportunity Management file on Objective: <https://edrms.thurrock.gov.uk:443/id:fA1213633>

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 - Dashboard
- Appendix 2 - In Focus report
- Appendix 3 - Criteria Guide for Impact and Likelihood

**Report Author:**

Andy Owen

Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager