

**AGENDA ITEM: 13**      Page nos. 189 - 195

Meeting	Audit Committee
Date	11 March 2010
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Children's Service – Directorate Risk Register</b>
Report of	Director of Children's Service
Summary	This report summarises the service area's approach to risk management; its priority risks; and actions and timescales to control these risks. The service risk register for Children's Services is attached.

Officer Contributors	Val White – Assistant Director, Partnerships, Performance & Planning
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	None
Enclosures	Appendix A – Children's Service Risk Register Appendix B – Children's Service Financial Risk Register (to be circulated)
For decision by	Audit Committee
Function of	Council
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	Not applicable

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## **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the Committee receive and comment upon the Children's Service approach to Risk Management within corporate policy.**

## **2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 2.1 Audit Committee 20 June 2008, approval of Risk Management strategy.
- 2.2 Audit Committee 29 September 2009 noted the operation of the Council's risk management process.

## **3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The presence of strong risk management policies and procedures is paramount to the Council achieving all of its corporate priorities and as such impacts on all the corporate objectives.
- 3.2 There is one risk from the Directorate's Risk Register currently included in the Corporate Risk Register. The risk is:
- Increasing number of referrals, assessments, children subject to a child protection plan and children in care
- 3.3 The Children's Service Financial Risks for 2010-11 contain thirteen revenue budget and four capital budget risks.

## **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 The risk management process in Children's Service was reviewed and strengthened by the service's Senior Management Team in May 2007 in order to:
- ensure a consistent approach to risk management throughout the Children's Service;
  - ensure risk management is embedded throughout the Directorate;
  - detail the responsibilities for what is required of managers in respect of risk management;
  - provide guidance on what is required to complete the register.
- 4.2 The Directorate Risk Register is the responsibility of the Director who ensures it is reviewed quarterly by the service's Senior Management Team, and that the most significant risks are proposed for inclusion in the Corporate Register. The Director also ensures that any identified risks in respect of his statutory responsibilities as Director and in respect of Safeguarding are included as appropriate.
- 4.3 The Directorate Risk Register does not contain any details of individual clients that may be at risk. These lists are held within the appropriate teams.

- 4.4 The Head of Finance ensures consistency between the Directorate Risk Register and the quantified corporate list of financial risks. Currently the financial risks are held in a separate register. This register will be incorporated within the Directorate Risk Register for the financial year 2010/11.
- 4.5 All service managers are required to complete the Internal Control Checklist (ICC) in respect of their service area. The ICC uses, as part of the evidence to the outcomes stated, details from the risk register. It also gives assurance for the formal Statement of Internal Control.

## 5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 Effective management of risk gives assurance in the provision of services to the entire community on an equitable basis.

## 6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 6.1 Strong risk management processes and procedures protect the council from potential financial implications and enhance the control environment and governance requirements.

## 7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 None in the context of this report.

## 8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

- 8.1 Constitution part 3 Responsibility for functions, section 2 responsibility for Council functions, details the terms of reference for the Audit Committee to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework.

## 9 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 9.1 The Directorate's Risk Register, excluding the financial risks, currently contains 18 risks, summarised in terms of their impact and likelihood in the table below.

		Impact		
		High	Medium	Low
Likelihood	High	3	0	0
	Medium	6	5	0
	Low	2	2	0

- 9.2 The three risks identified as being both high impact and high likelihood are:
- Sufficiency of local social care placements for children in care, difficulty in recruiting and retaining sufficient foster carers.
  - From April 2011 we assume responsibility from the Learning and Skills Council for the commissioning of 14-19 learning provision. Successful implementation requires robust stakeholder engagement with schools, colleges and local employers.
  - Increasing number of referrals to children's social care leading to an increase in assessments, children subject to a child protection plan and children entering care system.
- 9.3 The Directorate's Financial Risks for 2010/11 consist of thirteen revenue and four capital risks, these are outlined in Appendix B. (to be circulated)
- 9.4 All risks are reviewed regularly by Senior Management Team and actively managed in the Directorate through the process described in section 4 above. The Directorate Risk Register is reported to Council Directors Group and to Statutory Officers Group. Clearly risks are inherent in the work of the Directorate and the strengthened process that has been put in place ensures that these are managed and appropriate actions put in place to address them.

## **10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 None.

Legal: SH  
Finance: DM

## 2009/10 Children's Service Risk Register

Corporate Priority	Objective	Risk Type	Risk Description	Risk Raised by	Date Raised	Controls in place	Initial Assessment		Mitigating Action Plan	Lead Officer	Divisional Group	Last updated	Action taken	Actions to be taken	Status	Revised Assessment	
							Likelihood	Impact								Likelihood	Impact
A bright future for children and young people	Safe at home, safe at school, safe in the community	Reputation & Operational	Failure to keep children safe	Deputy Director - Safeguarding & Social Care	1/4/07	Regular management attention to core practice. BSCB fully functioning. LCP procedures in place	Medium	High	Independent chair of safeguarding board recruited. Promotion of safe recruitment across children's workforce. Priority for Children's Service to lead on safeguarding	Deputy Director - Safeguarding & Social Care	Safeguarding Division	28/1/10	Audits of work undertaken. New work plan being developed. Child protection audit, safeguarding practice audit, and ICS audit all completed, action plans being developed and progressed.	Audit of thresholds for entry to the service and within the service to be undertaken by IDEA.	Open	Medium	High
A bright future for children and young people	Foster care recruitment campaign	Operational	Sufficient local care placements not available.	Divisional Manager - Looked After Children	1/4/07	Monthly reporting	High	High	Foster carer campaign. Re-alignment of recruitment/assessment/support functions. Improved efficiency of 'in house' provision. More integrated/joint commissioning.	Acting Head of Social Care	Social Care Division	28/1/10	New campaign and communications officer recruited free up management time with recruitment and training, focus on initial assessments. Further review of all recruitment functions underway	New foster carer campaign to be launched in March. North London consortium exploring option of joint training. However, joint recruitment will present more of a challenge.	Open	High	High
A bright future for children and young people	Ensuring every school is a good school	Reputation & Operational	Schools, settings identified by Ofsted providing inadequate standards	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	1/4/07	Half termly school review group	Medium	High	Rigorous programme of monitoring, challenging, intervening and support.	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	School Improvement	28/1/10	actions taken as a result of school review group	No schools currently in Ofsted categories. School review group closely monitoring standards in schools - ongoing	Open	Low	High
A bright future for children and young people	The delivery of six cross cutting priorities in the CYP	Operational	Re-centralisation of HR results in loss of expertise and focus on Children's Service issues	Assistant Director Partnership, Performance & Planning	1/4/07	Dedicated Children's Service Business Relationship Partner in place	High	High	Regular account management meeting with Head of Shared Services	Assistant Director Partnership, Performance & Planning	Partnership, Performance & Planning	3/2/10	Corporate HR improvement programme in progress	Establish account meetings with new Children's Service HR Business Lead	Open	Medium	High
A bright future for children and young people	Every school a good school for every child	Strategic & Operational	Schools unable to appoint substantive heads creating uncertainty about effective leadership and management	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	1/9/06	Consider alternative management arrangements for the schools	Medium	High	Work with schools to ensure the interim arrangements are effective and governors have in place a strategy for recruitment	Directors of Children's Service	School Improvement	28/1/10	Strategic plan for succession introduced	Ongoing programme of targeted support for aspiring school leaders.	Open	Low	Medium
A bright future for children and young people	Ensuring every school is a good school	Reputation & Operational	Young people on education or recreational activities or trips may suffer injuries as a result of an accident or human error	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	1/10/06		Medium	High	Educational and recreational visits guidelines revised and Divisional Managers are responsible for agreeing all trips and ensuring compliance	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	Major Initiatives	28/1/10	New guidelines published and key stakeholders briefed	More awareness raising with Head Teachers and Governing bodies	Open	Low	High
A bright future for children and young people	The delivery of six cross cutting priorities in the CYP	Reputation & Operational	Possible unintended consequences of ASB strategy and police activity leading to increased number of YP entering care/custody	Assistant Director Inclusion	1/4/07	Close working with the police and other partners to minimise risk	High	Medium	Quarterly impact monitoring via Youth Justice Matters Six monthly reporting to EMG.	Assistant Director Inclusion	Youth Offending Division	28/1/10	Review through YOS Management processes	Following a re-allocation of resources within the team Barnet YOS has reduced its remand and sentenced to custody population. We are working in partnership to ensure that we are involved in planning for young people demonstrating ASB	Open	Medium	Medium

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A bright future for children and young people	Ensuring every school is a good school	Operational	Inability to broker stakeholder buy-in for 14-19 strategy, including from local employers	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	1/4/07	Regular consultation with key stakeholders	Medium	High	Intensive work with stakeholders and partnership with Specialist Schools and Academies Trust	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	Major Initiatives	28/1/10	Partnership with specialist schools and Academies Trust - no longer working with	Established a new 14-19 team to lead on this agenda	Open	High	High
A bright future for children and young people	Reduce staff absence	Operational	Management absences at 68a Meadows Close (residential Unit) combined with on-going sickness absences means quality of care could deteriorate	Deputy Director, Safeguarding	19/6/08	6 weekly monitoring	Medium	Medium	Substantive management arrangements in place	Acting Head of Social Care	Safeguarding Division	28/1/10	All absences being addressed through absence monitoring procedure	Ongoing absence monitoring. Action taken as necessary.	Open	Low	Medium
A bright future for children and young people	Ensuring that every school is a good school	Reputation & Operational	Local Authority unable to reduce number of permanent exclusions	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	22/7/08	Reviewed on half termly basis	Medium	High	Programme targeted at 20 most at risk students in every secondary school	Head of Access to Learning	Access to Learning	4/2/10	Risk of exclusions not reducing but remaining at a high level or even climbing remains high. However the programme has now been extended to include up to twenty yp vulnerable to exclusion in participating secondary schools. There are good indications th	Report being provided to CYPSPB in relation to consider further extension and development of multi agency input to prevent exclusions .	Open	Medium	High
A bright future for children and young people	Ensuring that every school is a good school	Reputation & Operational	Inability to recruit headteachers in the most vulnerable schools	Deputy Director Schools & Learning	22/7/08	Regular reviews	Medium	Medium	Succession planning programme in place. Cohort 1 and 2 of leadership succession actively engaged in development programme. New programmes for Jewish and Catholic school leaders start September 2009.	Principal Acting Head School Improvement	School Improvement	28/1/10	Programme in place since Jan 08. Development conference for both cohorts January 22nd & 23rd 2009 Programme is ongoing. 10 members of the groups have been appointed as headteachers (5 in Barnet and 5 out of borough). Tailored Catholi	Ongoing programme of targeted support for aspiring school leaders.	Open	Medium	Medium
A bright future for children and young people	Safe at home, safe at school, safe in the community	Reputation & Operational	Vacancy rate in safeguarding and social care jeopardises the safety of the service	Director of Children's Service	18/12/08	Monitoring of vacancy rates	Medium	high	Re- launch of recruitment campaign. Market factor payments for social workers. Re introduce hand held's for social workers. Regarding of social work posts	Deputy Director - Safeguarding & Social Care	Safeguarding & Social Care	28/1/10		Market Factor Supplement and re-grading from April. BlackBerry roll out to social workers in February. Ongoing development of the Together Anything's Possible recruitment website.	Open	Medium	High
A bright future for children and young people	Safe at home, safe at school, safe in the community	Operational	Poor data quality through failure by staff to effectively use the ICS system	Director of Children's Service	18/12/08	Regular performance monitoring identifies poor data. And poor data quality.	Medium	high	ICS information manager in post	Deputy Director - Safeguarding & Social Care	Safeguarding & Social Care	28/1/10	Audit of use of ICS completed action plan to be developed and system and processes modified accordingly	Implementation of action plans relating to system development, training and reporting.	Open	Medium	High

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							Likelihood	Impact								Likelihood	Impact
A Bright Future for Children and Young People	Safe at home, safe at school, safe in the community	Operational	Significant increase in number of referrals, assessments, children subject to a child protection plan and children in care due to heightened awareness. <b>28/04/09 Update</b> Evidence of emerging difficulty to recruit to social care workforce. 20/10/09 Update: 1	Director of Children's Service	2009/10	Close monitoring of number of referrals, assessments and children in care. Ongoing audit activity to ascertain the causes of the increase and assess the likelihood of it continuing. Current indication is that the increase will be sustained for some time.	High	High	Review and analysis of trends in referrals, caseloads and social work vacancies. Promotion of referral thresholds among referring partners.	Director of Children's Service	Safeguarding & Social Care	28/1/10	<b>Update 28/04/09</b> New recruitment campaign to fill Social Work vacancies. Action taken does not change Initial Likelihood and Impact Assessments. <b>Update 26/08/09</b> The increased level of social work activity continues to rise and based on qtr1 position will e	Recruitment of 5th Child in Need team. IDEa Threshold audit. Enhanced presence and role of CAF advisors within the referral and assessment teams.	Open	High	High
A bright future for children and young people	Case management of young offenders	Operational, compliance & regulation	Staff within the post court team are currently carrying caseloads of 24+ young people. This makes adhering to national standard reporting and risk based assessment, planning, intervention and supervision very difficult.	YOS Manager	19.8.09	Re shaping of current resources and introduction of caseload weighting	Medium	Medium	Greater use of national standard appointments with seconded staff	YOS Manager	Youth Offending Division	28/1/10	Introduced caseload weighting, directed secondees to make appointments enforceable under breach	Restructure taking place to create 1 x additional main-grade worker who will offer a range of group-work programmes in line with changes in legislation, the scaled approach and risk management	Open	Medium	Medium
A bright future for children and young people	Community payback	Operational, compliance & regulation	No triage model to reduce first time entrants, no reparation placements available for community payback	YOS Manager	19.8.09	very limited reparation	Medium	Medium	working with police to develop reparation	YOS Manager	Youth Offending Division	28/1/10	applied for grants, looked to reshape delivery within the team, working with police colleagues within the attendance centre	- Restructure to create dedicated triage worker to focus on interventions with first time entrants. -Increased use of volunteers to assist reparation placements	Open	Medium	Medium
Supporting the vulnerable	Victim satisfaction	Operational, compliance & regulation	No victim work	YOS Manager	19.8.09	new police officer to deliver victim work starting 1.9.09	Medium	Medium	New police officer assigned to lead on victim work	YOS Manager	Youth Offending Division	28/1/10	changed focus of police role to cover victim work. Re shaped role of the prevention team to take on more final warning work	-Police officer to focus on referral order and serious youth violence victims 1 day per week - re prioritising of time allocated to restorative justice in referral orders.	Open	Medium	Medium
A bright future for children and young people	Scaled approach and inspection	Operational, compliance & regulation	all of the above (36,37 & 38) are issues within and of themselves however new legislation which comes into place on 30.11.09 and an impending inspection will mean that delivery in these area is not optional. Currently we are not in a position to deliver	YOS Manager	19.8.09	looking at shape and workload redistribution within the team	Medium	High		YOS Manager	Youth Offending Division	28/1/10	Scaled approach lead assigned to the team, staff briefed and involved in planning for the scaled approach	Ongoing work in other areas will reduce risk to service following the introduction of the scaled approach	Open	Medium	High