

City of Edinburgh Council

10:00am, Thursday, 14 December 2023

Critical Risk – update report

Executive/routine
Wards

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Council is asked to note the response to Motion 8.8 raised at the meeting of Full Council on 1 June 2023.
- 1.2 Council is further asked to note the response to Motion 7.5 at the meeting of Full Council on 31 August 2023.

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Report

Critical Risk – update report

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an overview of the City of Edinburgh Council's response to the Workforce and Service Delivery risk, previously assessed and reported to Governance Risk and Best value Committee on 2 May 2023 and 1 August 2023 as critical risks.
- 2.2 The report responds to the motion 8.8 raised at Council in June 2023 with a request to report back within 2 cycles.
- 2.3 This report also responds to the motion 7.5 raised at Council on 31 August to report on the number of motions, amendments and questions being raised at Council Committees.

3. Background

- 3.1 Following a motion at the meeting of the City of Edinburgh Council on 1 June 2023 it was agreed to compile a report detailing a plan to reduce the identified critical risks, and that a plan would be monitored by an appropriate Committee for the next six months. A further report detailing progress was requested to be brought to Council in December 2023. This report responds to the second part of this motion.

4. Main report

4.1 The Workforce Risk

4.1.1 Context

The Scottish Government 'Scotland's Labour Market Trends June 2023 [report](#) highlights the estimated unemployment rate in Scotland is low (3.1%) by historical standards, and there has been a significant increase in the estimated economically inactive in Scotland (22.9%) following the COVID-19 pandemic. The estimated employment rate for people aged 16 to 64 years in Scotland was 74.6% in February to April 2023. This is 0.7 percentage points down on December 2019 to February 2020 (pre-pandemic). This backdrop of low unemployment and higher rate of economically inactive has an impact on the number of people actively within the jobs market.

Against this backdrop, a wide range of Council Services where reporting workforce as a high to critical risk arising from difficulties recruiting to vacancies at the time of assessment in the previous two quarters.

4.1.2 **Response/mitigations**

The strategic approach to tackle the recruitment challenges faced by the Council to ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills and in the right place will be the focus of the next People Strategy and Strategic Workforce Plan for 2024-2027.

A report was approved by the Policy and Sustainability Committee on 22 August 2023 which detailed the timeline and process for the development of the refreshed Strategy, including the communication and engagement plans. Alongside the development of the People Strategy, the Council's Workforce Plan will also be reviewed. This will be supported by the implementation of the new HR/Payroll system, which will provide effective data to inform this more effectively and set out areas for action and focus to ensure a resilient and competent future workforce. The current Workforce Plan is available to view on the Council [Orb](#).

In response to the immediate recruitment challenges, the Council has adapted the way we engage with potential recruits. The approach of advertising through the national public sector recruitment portal myjobscotland has in the past provided suitable recruitment pools from which to make appointments. Recognising this alone is no longer providing the number and quality of applicants necessary, officers have extended this to include focused targeted recruitment campaigns using different forms of engagement, such as face to face open days, extensive social media and app communications, as well as local promotion such as lamppost wraps and posters in community venues.

This has been captured in a campaign toolkit which is allow this to be used across the Council. This is now available to all recruiting managers. The outcome of this type of initiative within Facilities Management, for example, led to the filling of 64% of vacancies across all locations where this was previously around 10%. Other examples of recruitment approaches being adopted successfully are set out in the '[Workforce Deep Dive -Hard to Fill Roles report](#)' presented to the Finance and Resource Committee on 20 June 2023.

As part of the Workforce Deep Dive report, the report acknowledged the need to revisit the planned review of terms and conditions of employment which was put on hold during the pandemic – 'Your Total Reward'. This piece of work, together with the Workforce Plan, will include analysis and benchmarking of pay against other local authorities and the private sector to consider what changes may be required to tackle problems of workforce retention and recruitment.

The Partnership has engaged Capital City Partnership to support more localised recruitment events for social care roles. Work has also been undertaken to look at processes to allow recruitment applications for roles to be completed on the day as part of recruitment events and making the application process as simple as possible. The Council are now operating rolling adverts for social work, social care and nursing roles. More flexible working patterns are now in place within the Homecare service to attract suitable candidates.

The Finance and Resources Committee currently receives quarterly Workforce Dashboard reports. The [report](#) presented to Committee on 21 September 2023 shows, the level of vacancies advertised over the quarter was 2,873 which is an increase from previous quarter of 458.

Of the 992 colleagues onboarded within the quarter, 45% were internal and 55% were external candidates. Over the quarter 153 apprentices were supported. This is against a backdrop of 310 leavers during the period.

The report also reflected a reduction in sickness absence for the same period amounting to 7,688 days.

This risk was previously rated as critical, given the progress made in recruitment across a wide range of areas this risk has been reduced from critical to high. Its recognised the rating of high risk is still outwith risk appetite and that further progress on recruiting to vacancies is required, making full use of the measures outlined above.

4.2 The Service Delivery Risk

4.2.1 Context

This risk relating to service delivery is inextricably linked to having appropriate staffing resource to be able to deliver the services the citizens of Edinburgh rely on the Council for.

The Service Delivery risk had a further dimension, which resulted in it being rated as critical, when assessed in June 2023. This was in part a result of the outcome of a [Joint inspection of adult support and protection in the city of Edinburgh partnership](#).

There is a potential significant shortfall in Scottish Government funding to implement the new *Scottish Recommended Allowance* for children in kinship and foster care.

Foster Carers with settled children in placements are being offered better rates by independent fostering agencies. This can lead to an impact for children in the care of the City of Edinburgh Council and increased costs.

No recourse to public funds and unaccompanied asylum seekers which are two risks where demand is high, with limits on supply accommodation to support young people and families.

4.2.2 Response/mitigations

In response to this element, the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board has developed and approved [Adult Support and Protection and Social Work & Social Care Inspection Improvement plans](#).

There are several strands of work to address the findings from the Adult Social Work and Social Care inspection and the Adult Support and Protection Inspection and this has been contained with the report to [Policy and Sustainability Committee](#).

Alongside the actions identified as part of the Adult Social Care and Social Work inspection programme, there are several improvement and change programmes that are also being managed through the Partnership's change programme and is undernoted:

- Discharge without Delay continues to be implemented as part of our Home First approach.
- A range of commissioning pathways for Older People's, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities are being designed.
- Formal adoption of the new Scotland Excel shared Alarm Receiving Centre.
- Edinburgh are a pathfinder for GIRFE (Getting it Right for Everyone) which will help shape the national framework and practice model for adult services.

There are a range of workstreams ongoing which will drive service improvements and improve delivery of services. Further details are provided in Appendix 1. As these workstreams are at various stages of completion, it is prudent for the service delivery risk to remain at high currently. However, it should be noted that there are several services that are regulated with the Care Inspectorate and are subject to a regular inspection regime.

There have been a number of inspections carried out within care homes and internal Homecare and Reablement services which have had been graded as 5 - very good / major strengths highlighting that the Partnership does continue to deliver high quality services whilst carrying the current high service delivery risk.

The delivery of the Adult Support and Protection and Adult Social Work and Social Care improvement plan and the implementation of actions will be monitored by Policy and Sustainability Committee and Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) Performance and Delivery Committee on a six monthly basis.

In response to the housing accommodation risk, the [Housing Service Improvement Plan](#), including the voids plan was reported to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 3 October 2023.

Continue to engage with the market via the Flexible Purchasing System seeking additional accommodation.

Continue to develop innovative models of accommodation as set out in Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

Children, Education and Justice have increased fees and allowances for Foster Carers by 5% in mitigation of the higher rates being offered by independent foster agencies to encourage and support retention of carers. The Council will continue to monitor the Scottish Government National recommended allowances, monitor number of carers and review fees and allowances in comparison with other Local Authorities. Backdated payment being planned, however, given challenges with SWIFT there is likely to be an added administrative burden to apply this.

Following a review of the overall risk at CLT Risk Committee on 26 October 2023 this risk has been reassessed at high risk, reducing from the critical rating last quarter. While this rating is on risk appetite work continues to further manage elements linked to this enterprise risk category.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The Corporate Leadership Team will continue to monitor and moderate its response to the ever changing operating context within which the Council operates in order to best manage the range of risks faced by the Council within the available resource capacity of the Council.
- 5.2 The Adult Support and Protection and Adult Social Work and Social Care improvement plan and the implementation of actions noted in para 4.12 will be monitored by Policy and Sustainability Committee and Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) Performance and Delivery Committee on a six monthly basis.
- 5.3 In addition to the risk reporting content within this report, there was a request at Council on 31 August 2023 for a report to be provided to Council on the number of motions, amendments and questions raised at Committees and whether there is a higher workload now. The table in Appendix 2 provides the detail on number of additional reports requested though Committees in relation to the motion reference above. This significant increase in report requests will have a corresponding impact on Officer time and capacity to undertake other activities on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no direct cost associated with this report. Costs associated with the People Strategy, Workforce Plan or Adult Support and Protection and Adult Social Work and Social Care improvement plan and the implementation will be reported as reports on these items are brought forward.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 This report does not directly impact Equality or Poverty. However strands of work referred to within this report will outline their impact on equalities and poverty as they are brought forward.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 This report does not contain direct implications for the Climate and Nature Emergency. However, strands of work referred to within this report will outline their impact on equalities and poverty as they are brought forward.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 This report outlines the Council's response to two critical risks reported to GRBV on 2 May 2023 and the 1 August 2023. These risks continue to be reported and mitigating actions against each risk tracked by CLT, with oversight from GRBV on a quarterly basis.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Workforce Deep Dive -Hard to Fill Roles report](#)
- 10.2 [Joint inspection of adult support and protection in the city of Edinburgh partnership](#)
- 10.3 [Inspection of adult social work and social care services](#)
- 10.4 [Adult Support and Protection and Social Work & Social Care Inspection Improvement plans](#)
- 10.5 [Corporate Leadership Team Risk Report at 20 March 2023](#)
- 10.6 [Strategic Workforce plan 2021-2024](#)
- 10.7 [People Strategy 2021-2024](#)

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Key strands of Adult Support and Protection and Social Work & Social Care Inspection Improvement plans
- 11.2 Appendix 2 - Review of the number of Motions/Amendments/Questions raised in Committees in response to item 7.5 raised at Council on 31 August 2023.

Appendix 1

Key strands of Adult Support and Protection and Social Work & Social Care Inspection Improvement plans

Action	Update
<p>Improve access for people at the point of contact through a focus on Social Care Direct, ensuring people at risk of harm are identified with the right actions taken quickly.</p>	<p>An early-intervention approach has been delivered through a 'test of change' (ToC) which saw additional resource at the first point of contact with Social Care Direct. This has been focussed on the North East locality and evidence shows that this has reduced the number of referrals being passed to the North East for screening. An immediate and longer-term plan to implement the model in all four localities is currently being developed.</p>
<p>Increase capacity through an agency Social Work team to undertake assessments and reviews of people in receipt of services to ensure needs are being met.</p>	<p>The temporary team consisting of agency staff to undertake reviews and assessments has been approved, and whilst recruitment into posts has commenced by the agency this has been slower than expected. The project team have identified an initial cohort of service users across a spectrum of cases requiring a review. The team will undertake reviews/assessments using a strengths-based approach with a focus on ensuring right sizing of any care and support provision that promotes independence. In each review, the team will be considering both the quality of service delivery and any identified risks to individuals. Weekly meetings between the Partnership and the team are ensuring close oversight of performance and learning.</p>
<p>Undertake a strategic commissioning exercise to ensure that the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) has a clear understanding of bed-based services (including dementia, nursing, intermediate care) to meet people's needs.</p>	<p>A Lead Commissioner started 31 August 2023 and has undertaken a analysis of demand and cost for residential and care at home; reviewed trends in waiting-times for service, including people in hospital. Some early opportunities identified to manage cost while maintaining quality:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. negotiate fee rates in 8th and 9th decile nearer to standard rates, 2. with reviewing teams, taper intensive packages for people leaving hospital by active review after discharge, 3. estimate costs and benefits, plan reviews. <p>October 2023 - with commissioners and programme lead:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. begin reviews. 2. analyse demand and cost for self-directed support and other budget blocks. 3. find causes of scarcity, plan practical remedial measures.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. with NHS Lothian's bed-modelling programme, estimate medium- and long-term demand in residential care; prepare capacity plan. 5. develop the Older People's pathway for residential care, including internal services, Intermediate Care and HBCCC. 6. create list of short/medium term commissioning intentions to shape market. 7. understand where new entrants to the market are needed. <p>Winter and Spring 2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet people who use services and care providers. 2. Work with commissioners on social care general strategy and plan, aligned to MTFS. 3. Align medium- and long-term commissioning plans to the Strategy. 4. Agree plans for future frameworks and blocks.
<p>Continue with One Edinburgh programme, increasing capacity for people requiring a package of care to live at home independently.</p>	<p>Totalmobile: stabilised in North West and successful roll-out at South West, preparations underway for South East/North East/Over Night Service, with a slightly adjusted plan to meet Over Night Service needs.</p> <p>Internal Redesign/External Commissioning: Development sessions held with IJB (20th June; 26th July). Submitted and approval agreed at Sept Edinburgh Integration Joint Board. Coproduction with providers will be planned once outcome agreed. Finance lead updating savings target associated with reablement.</p> <p>Care at Home brokerage: Successfully recruited 2 out of 4 brokerage officer posts and readvertised to fill final 2 brokerage officer posts.</p>
<p>Introduce new ASP Investigation processes with specific chronologies and risk assessment.</p>	<p>New process designed and implemented in June 2023. New process addresses 3-point criteria for ASP, risk assessment, as well as chronologies.</p>
<p>Replace SWIFT with a system that improves processes and creates service capacity, efficiency and safety.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWIFT replacement has been agreed by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and the overall governance of the project sits within City of Edinburgh Council. CGI are leading the project with input from the Partnership, Criminal Justice and Children's services. 2. In planning for migration to a new system, data quality issues within the Partnership need to be addressed. Paper going to CLT to request decisions to support this activity.

	3. In medium term, work needs to focus on Partnership aligning the project with other SRO's projects to ensure we can specify our business requirements on a new system e.g. conversations.
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Appendix 2 - Response to item 7.5 raised at Council on 31 August 2023

The table below provides a comparison of the number of Motions/Amendments/Questions raised at Council Committees between May 2020 – May 2022 and May 2022 – September 2023.

Council Committee	May 17/May 18		May 20/May-22		May 22/Sept 23
	Count of additional reports		Count of additional reports		Count of additional reports
Finance and Resources Committee	5		2		10
Transport and Environment Committee	9		17		26
Education Children and Families Committee	3		3		16
Governance Risk and Best Value Committee			1		4
Council	8		13		24
Policy and Sustainability Committee	8		19		27
Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee	5		5		9
Culture and Communities Committee	3		1		20
Planning Committee			2		6
Regulatory Committee			1		5
Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee					1
Licensing Committee			*1		1
Relevant Committee/no direction	10				2
Total	51		65		151

*Licensing Board

The average time taken to respond to additional questions was half a day.