

Regulatory and Audit Committee

Title: Risk Management Group Update

Date: Wednesday 31 January 2018

Author: Maggie Gibb – Head of Business Assurance (& Chief Auditor)

Contact officer: Maggie Gibb – 01296 387327

Local members affected:

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

Summary

The Risk Management Group met on 7 December 2017, with the following attendees:

- Councillor David Martin (Chairman)
- Councillor Tim Butcher
- Councillor Netta Glover
- Councillor Peter Martin
- Richard Schmidt (Head of Strategic Finance)
- Rachel Shovell (Audit Manager)
- Amy Wadsworth (Senior Business Assurance Officer)

Mrs H Dell, Children's Services Improvement Programme Manager attended the meeting on behalf of Tolis Vouyioukas, Executive Director to update members on the risks associated to Children's Services.

Mrs Dell informed the group of the following points:

- Considerable resource was currently being utilised due to the Ofsted inspection that was taking place.
- The Children's Services risk registers were a work in progress and the updated risk register would be completed by January 2018.
- The updated risk register would cover high level cross cutting themes and would report into their senior management team with an effective escalation process in place.

Mrs Dell highlighted and discussed the following key risks:



Financial Risks

Financial risks were significant and impacted across the business unit. Mrs Dell confirmed that these would be reported to RMG in February as part of the Key Financial Risks.

Recruitment and Retention

- There had been recent success in recruiting social workers and converting agency staff to permanent contracts, however informed the group of the competitive market that the service continued to face which was at times hard to compete with due to limited budgets and national shortages of social workers, teachers and educational psychologists.
- There was a local area agreement in place to ensure consistent pricing across neighbouring counties in relation to social workers.
- The social worker Grow Your Own programme had had a positive impact.

Increase in demand

There had been an increase in demand across the business unit. The Early Help review and SEND programme underway to help address these, both focussing on early intervention. Mrs Dell mentioned that demand will frequently rise following an inspection.

Mr P Dart, Programme Director Change for Children attended the meeting to present a RAG update report to the group on risks associated to the Change for Children Programme.

Mr Dart informed the group that the programme risks were in the process of being transferred to the corporate risk management system and confirmed that there was a good reporting and escalation process in place.

Mr Dart highlighted and discussed the following key areas of work:

Early Help

The Early Help review was looking to create:

- A new Early Help integrated model
- Financially sustainable services
- Reduction in demand for social care services
- Improved outcomes for children and families

Looked After Children

Designed to improve outcomes for Looked After Children with a view to reducing out of county placements and private fostering arrangements, which would not only provide savings but better outcomes for young people.

Education

Mr Dart informed the meeting that all the savings for this year and next year had been identified and working to identify those needed in 2019/20 and 2020/21. It was also confirmed that the transition of the BLT would come under the Education workstream.

SEND

Mr Dart informed the group that sub projects had been set up in order to deliver the £2.1m savings. Some of these savings had already been achieved through general housekeeping across the service area. Money had been used from the SEND grant to plug the gap this year.

Mr Dart stated that they were meeting SEND statutory obligations to ensure all those have a special educational healthcare plan and by doing this it had meant that some packages have been reviewed. For this to be successful there was a need for cultural change, working with partners and building relationships with schools.

Mr Dart gave his assurance that whatever the financial implications of the Change for Children Programme, there would be no increased risk to children's safeguarding and social care arising from it.

Mrs G Rhodes White, Interim Executive Director for Communities, Health and Adult Social Care (CHASC) attended the meeting to give an update on CHASC risk register.

Mrs Rhodes White reported that the risk registers for CHASC were in need of reviewing. Senior managers within CHASC had been working with the Assurance Team to review the risk management process and training had taken place. There were to be further workshops held in January and February 2018 to ensure that new risk registers and robust processes were in place in time for the new financial year.

Mrs Rhodes White highlighted and discussed the following key themes that emerged across the business unit:

Workforce

Mrs Rhodes White stated that there were issues in attracting candidates for senior leadership roles. Key senior roles were currently covered by Interims.

Managing the market

Mrs Rhodes White informed the group that this was a very challenging area with increases in complexity of demand, financial challenges and placement availability. Keeping the provider market viable and afloat was a challenge and completing against a rising cost that is often determined by the number of self-funders in Bucks.

Recommendation:

To NOTE the report

Background Papers: None

