Report to:	**AUDIT COMMITTEE**
Relevant Officer:	Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health
	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
	Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services
	Paul Turner, Assistant Director Children's Services
Meeting	15 September 2022

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER DEEP DIVE – STRATEGY

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider a progress report on individual risks identified in the Council's Strategic Risk Register and to consider the controls being implemented to manage the strategic risk relating to strategy.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the controls being implemented to manage the strategic risk relating to strategy.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To enable the CLT and Audit Committee to consider an update and progress report in relation to an individual risk identified on the Strategic Risk Register.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council?   No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget?   Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 N/a

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The risk impacts on all the Council's priorities.

6.0 Background information

6.1 At its meeting in March 2022, the Audit Committee agreed to continue to invite Strategic Risk Owners to attend future meetings to provide updates and progress reports in relation to the individual risks identified on the Strategic Risk Register.

| 6.2 | Does the information submitted include any exempt information? | No |

7.0   List of Appendices:

7.1   **Appendix 4(a)** - Strategic Risk Register Deep Dive – Strategy

8.0   Financial considerations:

8.1   The controls being implemented will be done so within current budget constraints.

9.0   Legal considerations:

9.1   Risks need to be effectively managed in order to comply with relevant legislation.

10.0   Risk management considerations:

10.1   To enable CLT and Audit Committee to gain assurance that strategic risks are being effectively managed.

11.0   Equalities considerations:

11.1   Equality analysis should have been undertaken, where necessary, when decisions were made in relation to the identification of the actions identified in this document. As this report presents monitoring against pre-agreed actions no further equality analysis has been undertaken as part of this report.

12.0   Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1   Sustainability, climate change and environmental matters should have been considered, where necessary, when decisions were made in relation to the identification of the actions identified in this document. As this report presents monitoring against pre-agreed actions no further analysis has been undertaken as part of this report.

13.0   Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1   The progress report has been prepared in conjunction with risk owners.

14.0   Background papers:

14.1   N/a

Appendix 4(a):

Risk Category: Strategy

Risk: a) Poor health and wellbeing outcomes.

Risk Owner: Director of Public Health and Director of Community and Environmental Services

Gross Risk Score	20	Impact - 4	Likelihood – 5

What impact does this have?
• Increased demand for statutory services.

What opportunities does this create?
• Build a more resilient community to reduce reliance on the public sector.

What controls do we already have in place?
• Dementia Action Alliance in place. • Preventative services such as the Tobacco Addiction Service are in place to improve health outcomes and reliance on public services. • Continued work with grass root community groups to advise / signpost them to support that enables them to support their communities. • Isolation support for Blackpool residents is in place and a counselling service has been commissioned to support those who have to isolate due to Covid-19 and require mental health and wellbeing support. • Integration 2020 project, which involved multi-agency work to encourage connecting people and organisations in a coordinated approach to solution focused community engagement and development, in order to improve people's health and wellbeing. • Work being undertaken to encourage and support greater levels of community engagement and development in neighbourhoods, pushing health and social care services to consider factors that influence people's health and wellbeing beyond the medical model of intervention. • Increased town wide engagement and community involvement. • Community Covid champions focussing on vaccination, increasing uptake and guiding those who are not vaccinated to understand why and support accordingly.

Net Risk Score	16	Impact - 4	Likelihood – 4

What are we doing to further manage the risk?
Monthly VCFS/Communities catch up meeting to be introduced post Covid-19. Meetings take place every two months over Teams which the Director of Public Health chairs to discuss a wide range of health and wellbeing matters. **Deliver the new Digital Blackpool program which is focused on reducing issues experienced during isolation.** Funding has been received to deliver a laptop loan scheme and this is now up and running and available

to Blackpool residents.

Focused work with the Primary Care Networks (NHS) to ensure multi agency work continues, focused around place based solutions.

There are currently four Primary Care Networks in place. Public Health are actively engaged with two of these and support the other two on a more ad-hoc basis. Given the current NHS reorganisation around footprints the focus on place based solutions will be embedded further going forward.

Develop joint working with the NHS to develop neighbourhoods.

In July 2022 it was agreed that as part of the NHS reorganisation Blackpool would become its own footprint. Staff are currently being appointed to these roles and this will then present an opportunity to develop deeper integration across the town.

Work with NHS Colleagues on their Communications and Engagement work to inform the Community Engagement Framework and Guide.

The draft framework has been to both CLT and Scrutiny and the team are just in the process of undertaking further engagement activity across both stakeholders and residents.

The engagement will consist of both VCFS led outreach and a workshop and will be delivered in partnership with Healthwatch/Empowerment to provide an element of independence.

The Community Engagement post which formerly sat in Public Health has now moved over to the Chief Executives department and sits alongside the Council's policy and research functions.

Review the leisure services offer to determine what the impact on income would be if the service created a greater focus on health and wellbeing rather than necessarily competing with the private sector gym market.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic a number of funding opportunities have become available for health and wellbeing, some of which is allocated to accessing leisure centres. This has enabled the service to expand its focus and maintain a level of the traditional gym membership offer alongside some targeted marketing in relation to health and wellbeing. The leisure centres are therefore attracting new customers who have multi-complex health and wellbeing challenges to engage them in a programme and fitness due to the positive outcome this can have.

Deliver the actions identified in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the year as such initiatives are shown to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is a ten year plan and the Council is currently in year four of its delivery. An annual report it taken to Scrutiny Committee to provide an update of progress, with the last report presented in March 2022 being well received. In addition an internal audit of this area is underway, the outcome of which will be reported to a future Audit Committee. Implementation of the actions is progressing well and this is balanced with the adoption of a dynamic approach so as not to miss out on additional opportunities from 'greening', such as links with the Growth and Prosperity Team and the regeneration programme.

What will these additional actions achieve?

The NHS reorganisation and the creation of a Blackpool footprint creates an opportunity to join up capacity and resource between the Council and the NHS. As part of this there is a clear agenda for community engagement and co-creation with local residents. When communities feel that they are engaged with and listened to this can have a positive impact on their health and wellbeing outcomes.

A key focus of leisure services is to reduced health inequalities through embedding 'Move More' principles into systems.

In addition to the positive impact that the implementation of the Green and Blue Strategy will have on health and wellbeing it will also contribute to the Council climate change agenda through carbon reduction.

What barriers do we face?

Whilst community engagement capacity across the Council has significantly decreased due to austerity there is an opportunity through joint working with the NHS across the Blackpool footprint to pool resources and bridge some of the gaps.

In terms of leisure services the sector as a whole is still trying to recover / bounce back from the Covid-19 pandemic and this is also the case for the Council's leisure facilities. Therefore the financial position is being closely monitored. To help offset this the service is investing in new equipment this year which will hopefully help maintain and grow the customer base. The complexity of the health system also creates some barriers in terms of linking through to leisure as a means of improving health and wellbeing.

The biggest barrier to the Green and Blue Infrastructure is the pace of change across the town and 'greening' sometimes drops down the priority. There is a continued need to ensure that where possible green and blue initiatives are considered at the outset of schemes so that the Council can maximise opportunities in this space.

Do these actions contribute to the sustainability of the Council?

Improving health and wellbeing of local residents and making interventions upstream will in the long term start to reduce treatment costs which will benefit both the health and social care costs for our residents.

The implementation of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is a key contributor to delivery of the Council's climate change agenda and the need to identify ways in which to make Blackpool more sustainable given the current climate emergency.

Do these actions impact on the Council's finances?

Factors such as cost of providing and the maintaining health and wellbeing initiatives is factored into the Council's budget setting process. Where appropriate, sustainability of schemes is also factored into any external funding bids.

Both Council and Public Health funding has reduced over the last few years which has limited opportunities to carry out all of the preventative work the team would have liked to have done.

However, the Council are working closely with NHS colleagues as part of the implementation of the place based footprint to seek opportunities to leverage funding for further preventative initiatives.

How does this contribute to the Council Plan?

The work of Public Health and also the joint working with the NHS via the implementation of place based solutions all contributes to the Council's community priority.

The work of leisure services contributes to the health and wellbeing agenda which forms part of the Council's community priority.

The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy contributes to the community priority, as there is a proven links between the benefits of green space on health and wellbeing. It also contributes to the economy priority as the provision of green space helps promote an attractive space for residents and visitors to use.

Any additional changes to this strategic risk?

Given the new arrangements with the NHS and the Blackpool footprint there will be changes along the way which need to be managed. At this stage all the signs of the new arrangements are positive however if there is no true delegation of the budget from the ICS to the place this could limit opportunity.

An Active Live Strategy is in place which was approved in January 2021 and covers a five year period. Delivery of the actions in this strategy will be a key driver of reducing health inequalities across the town.

A key risk is the impact that the cost of living crisis will have on the health and wellbeing of Blackpool residents. Consideration is being given to what this impact will be and what ways the Council can support the local community.

Risk: b) Poor educational attainment

Risk Owner: Director of Children's Services

Gross Risk Score	20	Impact - 4	Likelihood – 5

What impact does this have?

- Loss of, or lack of, talent to take up employment in Blackpool.
- Increased exclusions and children missing education.
- Statutory requirement for local authority to ensure the adequate provision of school places in local area would not be met.

What opportunities does this create?

- Schools Improvement Funding.

What controls do we already have in place?

- School Improvement Board in place.
- Links with the Regional Schools Commissioner and OFSTED embedded.
- School improvement strategy in place which is challenged through the school improvement governance structure.
- Ten year strategy in place for 2020 to 2030 and Inclusion Strategy in place.
- Reviewed the Medical Admission Policy to ensure the right young people receive specialist support and maintain a good understanding of academies as admissions authorities to prevent delay in school allocation.
- School Organisation Plan in place to predict requirements for school places so that provision can be made as demand increases.

Net Risk Score	16	Impact - 4	Likelihood – 4

What are we doing to further manage the risk?

Further enhance the tracking system for school performance and work in conjunction with the Regional Schools Commissioner to hold schools to account.

A robust data set is considered by the Blackpool Education Improvement Board on a quarterly basis. This data contains a combination of national and local attainment indicators and helps the Board target their attentions on areas where improvement and intervention made by required. The Regional Delivery Directorate (formerly the Regional Schools Commissioner) and the Department for Education also receive this data.

Refine the Inclusion Plan for schools and literacy strategy.

Detailed plans have now been developed underpinning both the Inclusion Plan and Literacy Strategy setting out the actions which need to be taken. Both the Inclusion Plan and Literacy Strategy are currently being revised based on current outturn data and it is hoped that these will be ready around September. The Right to Succeed charity have carried out this work on behalf on the Blackpool Education Improvement Board.

Continue to gate-keep the process for making referrals to the Pupil Referral Units and ensure a robust Admissions Policy and Right of Appeal is in place.

Admissions to the Pupil Referral Units are the lowest they have been in around 10 years with current admissions standing at approximately 100 pupils. This is due to the robust Admissions Policy which has been put in place which sets out a clear criteria for a place in a Pupil Referral Unit including a place which has been procured by a school, due to permanent exclusion or a hospital school placement. Whilst it is difficult to predict future demand dependent on the needs of families who arrive in Blackpool the new processes have resulted in more pupils continuing their education in mainstream schools.

The Admissions Policy follows statutory requirements and as such a Right to Appeal process has been incorporated.

Further develop a school led system which improves attainment at Key Stage 3 and 4 whilst holding individual Trusts to account.

This is now embedded through the Blackpool Education Improvement Board which now has very good representation for key stakeholders. By working collaboratively steps can be taken to continue to improve in this area.

Blackpool has been identified by Central Government as a Priority Investment Area of which the Blackpool Education Improvement Board will be a key driver. We are yet to see what changes this new status will bring however actions will be taken to ensure compliance and to continue to improve the attainment of Blackpool's children.

What will these additional actions achieve?

The implementation of these actions will achieve a number of benefits including:
- Improved educational attainment.
- Rationalisation of spend across the school funding system.
- Ability to sustain self-improvement with less scrutiny from external bodies.

What barriers do we face?

There are a number of barriers which could impact on improvements to educational attainment. These include:
- The legacy of Covid and the impact that this has had on education.
- The unknown quantity on outturn as a result of the pandemic.
- Increasing inflation which impacts on schools budgets due to staff salaries and energy costs.
- The cost of living crisis and the impact that poverty can have on education.

Do these actions contribute to the sustainability of the Council?

Whilst the delivery of education is increasingly moving away from the Council as the number of maintained schools reduce, the Council still has a key role in the delivery of a number of associated services such as pupil welfare, attendance and safeguarding.

By helping to ensure that Blackpool children have a good quality education, it has a positive impact on the economy as it creates potential to seek good employment opportunities. The more that children who have a stabilising factor in their life, such as good education, increases their life chances. This in turn can help reduce the number of children in the care system or need to access early intervention services.

Do these actions impact on the Council's finances?

The Council is responsible for any deficit in school finances and therefore if schools do not effectively manage their budgets this can impact on the Council's finances.

The impact that good education can have on reducing the number of children in care and requiring early intervention can have a positive impact on social care budgets.

How does this contribute to the Council Plan?

The provision of education impacts on both the Council's priorities of community and economy.

Any additional changes to this strategic risk?

It is unclear what the next five years will bring in education for a number of reasons including what the

impact of the pandemic and poverty will have on education outcomes.

Risk: c) Provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is inadequate.

Risk Owner: Director of Children's Services

Gross Risk Score	20	Impact - 4	Likelihood – 5

What impact does this have?
- Lack of support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

What opportunities does this create?
- Improved opportunities for all children.

What controls do we already have in place?
- SEND board and partnership governance is in place.
- Professional SEND Team in place which provides a range of support and services to children and their parents / carers.
- Subject to Ofsted inspections which provide assurance on the quality of services provided.

Net Risk Score	16	Impact - 4	Likelihood – 4

What are we doing to further manage the risk?

Update SEND Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) and Strategy.

The SEND service was inspected by OFSTED and the CQC in March 2022 and as a result the Council have prepared a Written Statement of Action based on the report's findings. As part of this process both the SEND Self-Evaluation Framework and Strategy have been reviewed.

Refresh the SEND place-plan.

The Council are in discussions with the Department for Education about developing a 'Safety Valve Agreement' in relation to finances. As part of this process the SEND place-plan has been refreshed and is relatively functional. There will also be an element of unknowns which could impact on the SEND place plan.

Enhance the special school estate.

An outline planning application has been prepared which, if approved, will see an extension to Highfurlong Special School. In addition plans are being developed to build a new Special Free School in Blackpool based on social and emotional needs however funding will need to be secured to progress this.

In addition, the Special Education Resource Facility (SERF) on the Marton School Estate has been

enhanced to include additional classrooms.

Improve SEND compliance.

The newly appointed Head of Service has a compliance focus and is ensuring that compliance against legal requirements is met. There have been some dips in performance however this was in relation to quality issues where statutory timescales may not have been met in order to ensure that the quality of the assessments was appropriate. However, this continues to improve ensuring good quality and timelessness.

In all OFSTED reports of Blackpool Schools, school leaders and teachers are noted for their good practice in relation to SEND.

What will these additional actions achieve?
The aims of these actions are to ensure the delivery of a highly performing SEND service which ensures that service users are identified early for the right reasons and that assessments are reviewed on a regular basis to enable effective planning to transition to mainstream education. There is evidence to suggest that better educational outcomes are achieved when children with special educational needs and disabilities access mainstream education. Likewise, it is hoped that the delivery of the actions will result in a better transition from children's to adult services to ensure that service user needs continue to be met during their life. By investing in the property portfolio the aspiration is that the Council will be able to place children in Blackpool schools rather than funding expensive out of borough placements. There is also a key focus on building good diversity and cohesion in education and in the wider community.

What barriers do we face?
The key barriers to achieving the outcomes include: • Financial constraints • A lack of capacity in current special schools in the town. • The length of time it will take to increase capacity for special school provision.

Do these actions contribute to the sustainability of the Council?
By helping ensure that Blackpool children have a good quality education it has a positive impact on the economy as it creates potential to seek good employment opportunities. The more that children have a stabilising factor in their life, such as good education, increases their life chances. This in turn can help reduce the number of children in the care system or need to access early intervention services.

Do these actions impact on the Council's finances?
The Council is responsible for any deficit in school finances and therefore if schools do not effectively manage their budgets this can impact on the Council's finances. The impact that good education can have on reducing the number of children in care and requiring early

intervention can have a positive impact on social care budgets.

How does this contribute to the Council Plan?
The provision of SEND education impacts on both the Council's priorities of community and economy.

Any additional changes to this strategic risk?
OFSTED are due to re-inspect SEND across the town in around 18 months after the issue of their report. It will be important that by this point the Council and partner agencies can demonstrate improvement against the inspection findings.