

Combined Assurance Status Report

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What we do best...

Innovative assurance services

Specialists at internal audit

Comprehensive risk management

Experts in countering fraud

...and what sets us apart

Unrivalled best value to our customers

Existing strong regional public sector partnership

Auditors with the knowledge and expertise to get the job done

Already working extensively with the not-for-profit and third sector



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Combined Assurance Status Report

Introduction

This is the sixth combined assurance report for Finance & Public Protection within the Council.

By grouping the different sources of assurance in a single model we provide the basis for Senior Management and Audit Committees to gain a better understanding of their organisations assurance status and needs.

We do this by coordinating assurance arrangements – providing some structure – this is our Assurance Map.

We have well established Assurance Maps that help us to focus our work plans on the make or break risks that affect the successful delivery of services and strategic objectives. The Maps also recognise the importance of critical business systems that support successful delivery and ‘protect the business’ – the due diligence activities.

The Maps give an overview of assurance provided across the whole organisation – not just those from Internal Audit – making it possible to identify where assurances are present, their source, and where there are potential assurance ‘unknowns or gaps’.

The Maps are an invaluable tool for senior managers, providing a snapshot of assurance at any point of time. This report explores those assurances in more detail.

We gathered and analysed assurance information in a control environment that:

- takes what we have been told on trust, and
- encourages accountability with those responsible for managing the service.

Scope

We gathered information on our:

- **Critical systems** – those areas identified by senior management as having a significant impact on the successful delivery of our priorities or whose failure could result in significant damage to our reputation, financial loss or impact on people.
- **Due diligence activities** – those that support the running of the Council and ensure compliance with policies.
- **Key risks** – found on our strategic risk register, operational risk registers or associated with major new business strategy / change.
- **Key projects** – supporting corporate priorities / activities.



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- **Key partnerships** – partnerships that play a key role in successful delivery of services

Methodology

To ensure our combined assurance model shows assurances across the entire Council, not just those from Internal Audit, we leverage assurance information from your ‘business as usual’ operations. Using the ‘3 lines of assurance’ concept:



Our approach includes a critical review or assessment on the level of confidence the Board can have on its service delivery

arrangements, management of risks, operation of controls and performance.

We did this by:

- Speaking to senior and operational managers who have the day to day responsibility for managing and controlling their service activities.
- Working with corporate functions and using other third party inspections to provide information on performance, successful delivery and organisational learning.
- Using the outcome of Internal Audit work to provide independent insight and assurance opinions.
- Considering other information and business intelligence that feed into and has potential to impact on assurance.

We used a Red (low), Amber (medium) and Green (high) rating to help us assess the level of assurance confidence in place.

The overall assurance opinion is based on the assessment and judgement of senior management. Internal audit has helped co-ordinate these and provided some challenge **but** as accountability rests with the Senior Manager we used their overall assurance opinion.

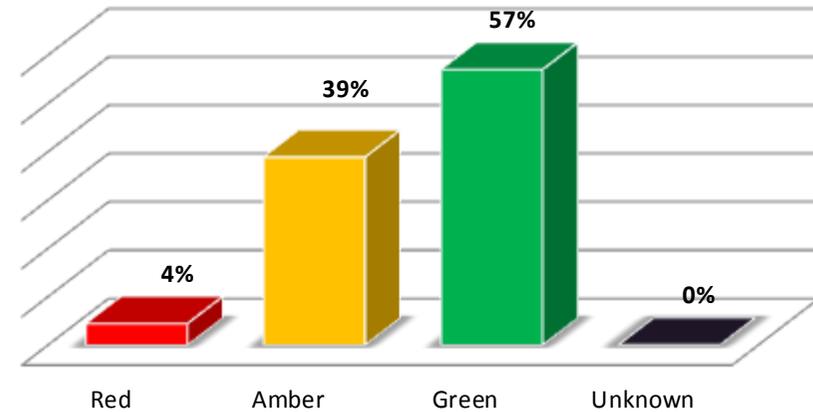


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Key Messages

The Directorate follows the Council's corporate methodologies in providing assurance on services and managing key risks. Service management provide an assessment and overview and ensure control checks on key services and processes and further assurance is provided through corporate checks, the Council's Internal Audit service and independent, third party inspections or reviews, including by KPMG, the Council's External Auditors. Over the last 12 months there has been a continued reduction in the few areas that are still ranked as red risks, down to 2% from 4% over the year.

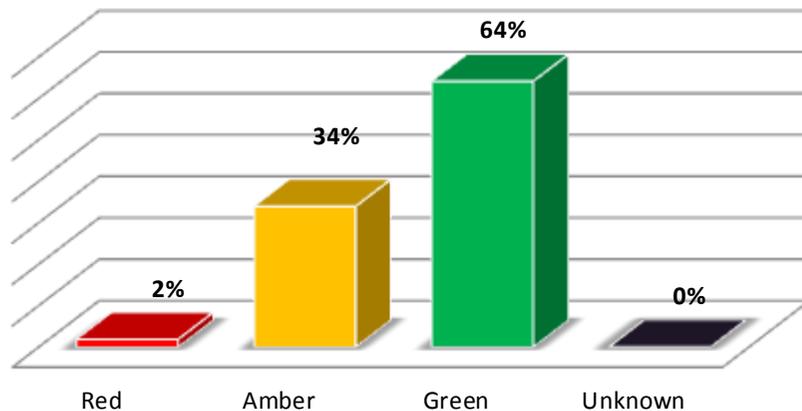
Overall Assurance Status 2016/17



Suggested next steps.....

Further work is continuing in finalising the Council's budget for the next two financial years and in taking forward the final stages of the Agresso roadmap of improvements to financial and other systems. The review of business continuity has been partially delayed by the need to respond to a number of unplanned events (checks required from the Grenfell Tower incident, dealing with IT outages and a governance review of the LRF requested by the Chief Constable). The review and agreeing any action plans will be completed in 2018. Following a positive Peer review of the Fire and Rescue service in 2017 we will need to prepare for the expected first

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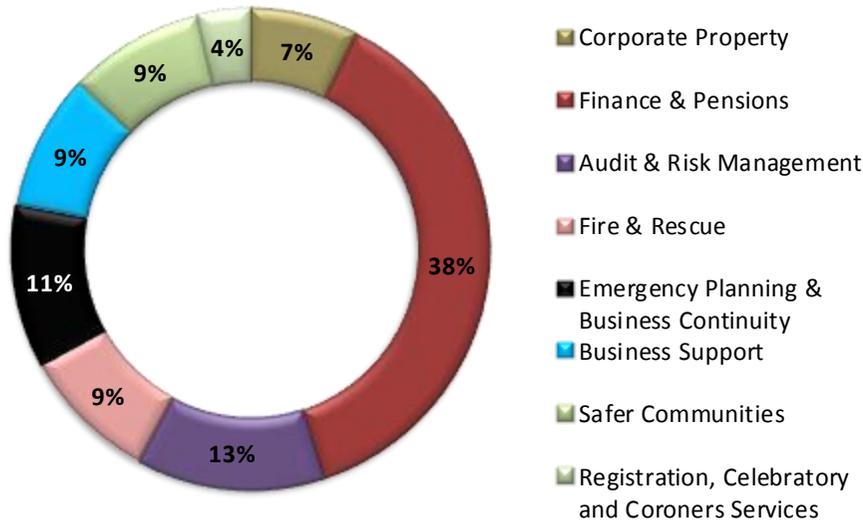
ever statutory inspection of the service by the Home Office in summer 2018.



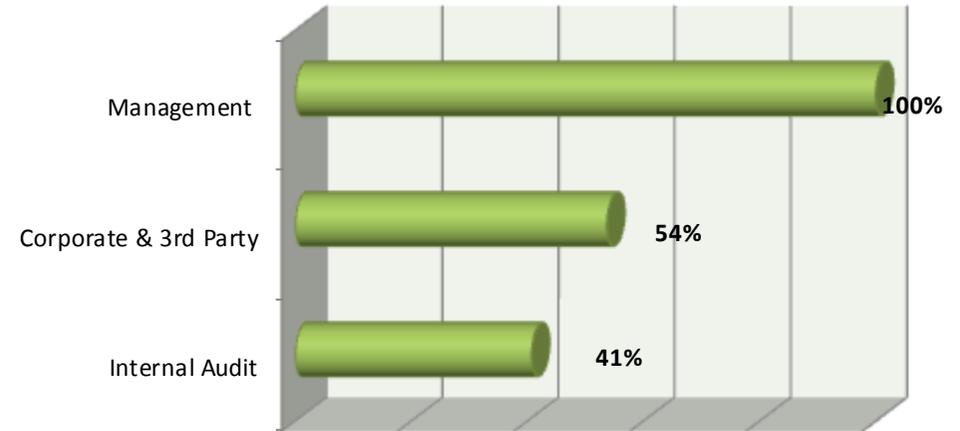
Critical Systems

The sections below show the levels of assurance within the directorate and a similar but improving situation compared to the last year.

More than half of the critical activities identified continue to be supported by corporate or third party assurance and in many cases this is provided through regular reports submitted to the Executive or the Council's Committees or external reporting and audit requirements. Key management actions are also reported through the Audit Committee.



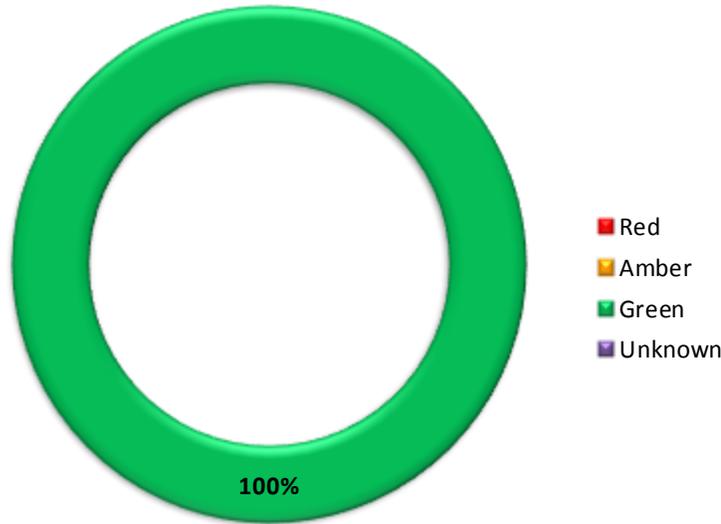
Who Provides Your Assurance





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Corporate Property



Overall Comments

There are high levels of assurance in the four key areas of the service. The Property Services contract with VFPL is performing well with the first annual extension due to be awarded on 1st April 2018, there are some areas that will require closer monitoring primarily with planned and preventive maintenance and work is in progress to put this in place. Similarly the Farms management contract with Savills is working well with the contract extension also due to be awarded on 1st April 2018.

Newer initiatives being led by Corporate Property include the Greater Lincolnshire One Public Estate programme which is working well with a strong coalition of public sector partners now established and supported by clear governance and programme resources. The current Asset challenge project is identifying significant collaboration opportunities with partners across Greater Lincolnshire.

The property company business case is under development supported by the LCC Commercialisation strategy which was completed in November; this strategy provides a clear corporate steer on the purposes of the property company. The company business case is due to be reported to the Executive in early 2018

The blue light programme is a significant programme for the 3 blue light partners, there have been challenges in agreeing

Overall Assurances

Green	Amber	Red
Property Management		
Property Strategy		
County Farms Contract Management		



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terms between partners on the building specification, collaboration agreement, land transactions and heads of terms, these are now on track and will be signed in January 2018 to enable construction of South Park to commence to enable Home Office PIF funding to be spent on profile.

Management of Risk

Both the VFPL and Savills contract have clear contract governance enabling the management of risk. The VFPL contract uses the NEC form of contract which includes an early warning process requiring risk to be reported and mitigation plans discussed in clearly defined timescale. The Executive and Management Boards review risk on a regular basis

Key projects such as the blue light programme have risk registers and these are monitored through project and programme governance

Lower Assurances

An emerging area of risk is day to day reactive repairs where a number of factors have led to increasing costs, mitigation measures are being developed to be put in place from 2018/19

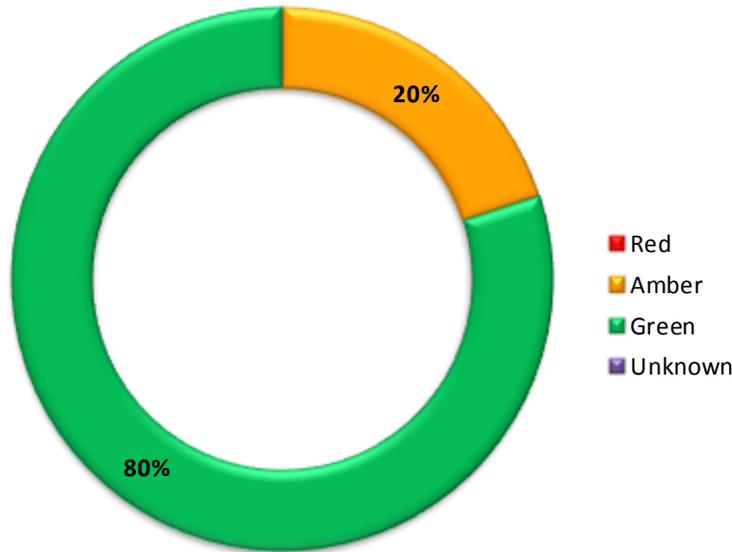
The Blue light south park project will remain Amber until April 2018 until all agreements have been signed and PIF targets delivered. Appropriate mitigation measures are in place through the programme governance

The Property Company Amber risk is due to the challenging timescale to complete the business case by early 2018. If approved by the Executive in early 2018, the company will establish its own governance and risk management



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Finance & Pensions



Pension Fund
 Bank Reconciliation
 Treasury Management
 General Ledger
 Accountancy
 Capital Programme
 Serco Finance Contract
 Management
 Accountancy Closedown
 Agresso System Support

Overall Comments

The assurance regime has again improved materially over the year from the low base position exhibited two years ago. On balance it still has scope for further improvement with the majority of the weaknesses linked directly to the Agresso stabilisation and rectification and associated changes to business processes. This is certainly the case in respect of all activities such as tax compliance, grant claims and ledger postings assessed as amber within the finance and pensions service area. Considerable activity has, and will continue, to be undertaken to reinstate the assurance regime to an appropriate standard. It is likely to take into the forthcoming financial year to achieve that objective as material further improvement requires the delivery of the work incorporated into the Agresso roadmap.

Overall Assurances

Green

Financial Strategy

 Budget Preparation
 Budget Management

 Creditor Payments
 Debtors
 Income
 Pension Administration

Amber

Payroll – ledger
 postings
 VAT
 Grant Income /
 Claims
 Tax Compliance

Red



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Management of Risk

The key resources of the service are its skilled workforce and the IT systems used in delivery of the services. In terms of the workforce, well developed training plans are in place and a hierarchy of appraisals, appraisal reviews and one to one meetings are in place. These form part of the service plan for the function which includes activity related to succession planning. The service has business continuity plans in place for both its human and system related dependencies. The service is reliant on the skills and experience of particular individuals at all levels within the organisational hierarchy and will be vulnerable to the loss of those key individuals should they leave the organisation. Whilst succession planning is undertaken this does not wholly mitigate such risks in the short term. Resilience of the corporate ICT framework remains a risk to the efficient and effective delivery of the service.

Lower Assurances

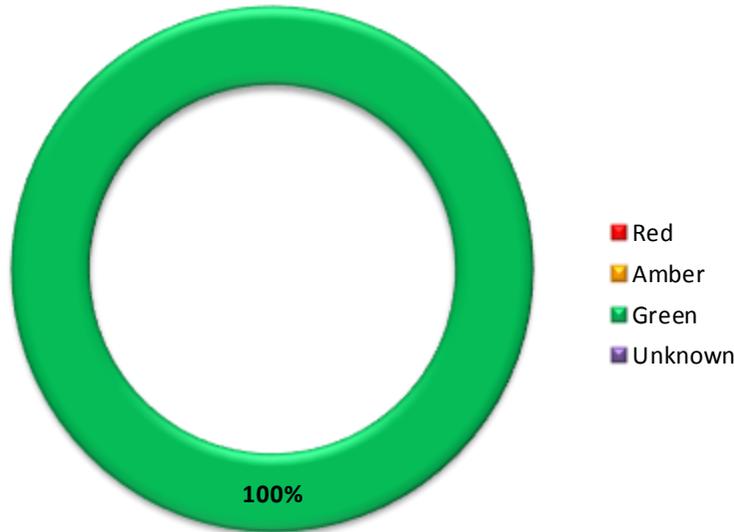
The amber assurance areas arise both directly from problems with Agresso in the case of payroll ledger entries and grant claim concerns and indirectly from Agresso issues in the case of VAT/tax compliance problems. Work is planned through the Agresso upgrade and the subsequent improvement roadmap for the system that will mitigate the direct concerns. The indirect concerns have been dealt with by assigning additional resources to the VAT function to minimise the risk of future

errors in our monthly returns. Liaison is being undertaken directly with HMRC on these matters.



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Audit & Risk Management



Overall Assurances

Green	Amber	Red
Risk Management		
Insurance		
Health & Safety		
Counter Fraud		
Investigations		
Whistleblowing		
Internal Audit		

Overall

The Audit and Risk Service continues to provide effective support and assurance to the Council. Our audit and risk delivery plans for 2017/18 are on track.

Feedback from Senior Management and the Audit Committee shows how we continue to provide insight and added value to the Council – protecting the business and giving an independent opinion on the Council's governance, risk and control environment. We play a key role in co-ordinating the Council's Annual Governance Statement – which was well received and approved by both the Corporate Management Board and the Audit Committee.

We have implemented the actions arising from the External Quality reviews undertaken in 2016 on the Audit and Risk Teams – demonstrating continuous improvement and compliance with our professional practice standards. We are piloting some key developments which will improve service delivery and be submitted for innovation awards during 2018/19.

During 2017/18 we have built capacity and capability through our workforce development plan. This includes:

- Supporting professional development



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- Working with Lincoln University to support work experience placements and a professional practice year
- Recruiting appropriately skilled staff
- Implementing our Quality Assurance Framework for the Service

Our Health and Safety team resources have been under pressure during the first half of the year due to long term absences – temporary resources will be engaged to ensure key priorities in the Health and Safety work plan will be delivered.

The Public Sector insurance market remains volatile. The Council's claims experience is challenging, with a number of high value claims (both historic and current). That said, we have strong arrangements in place to handle and defend claims. We continue to deliver an effective service but we need to implement a new IT system to be more effective and efficient – progress in delivering this project has been slow. Better arrangements also need to be put in place to improve our internal insurance premium charging arrangements – ensuring that the fund is sustainable long term and minimising volatility in charges to service areas. The Council's Insurance Strategy will be reviewed late 2017/18.

We delivered our saving target and operate within our approved budget. The insurance fund remains in a healthy position and is solvent.

Looking ahead to 2018/19 - we will be seeking some external assurance on the effectiveness of our Counter Fraud, Insurance and Health & Safety Teams.

Management of Risks

We regularly review our risk register and work within the Council's risk appetite of 'creative and aware'. We have no high red risks.

Our key issues that impact the management of our risks and the successful achievement of our business plan objectives are:

- **People** - ability recruit suitably qualified and experienced staff. We will be seeking to 'grow our own talent' through apprenticeships and career grades. Funding has been secured but progress has been slow to recruit as no apprenticeship framework is in place for our professional practice. Succession planning and career development remains a key priority for us.
- **Money** - the ability to deliver growth / income generation targets whilst operating within existing resources. The recruitment of a Business Development Manager continues – getting a person with the required skills and



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experience has proved problematic. We are currently reviewing our options.

- **IT** - poor quality of IT infrastructure and support. We have contingency arrangements in place but this issue continues to impact on staff morale, performance and their ability to deliver.

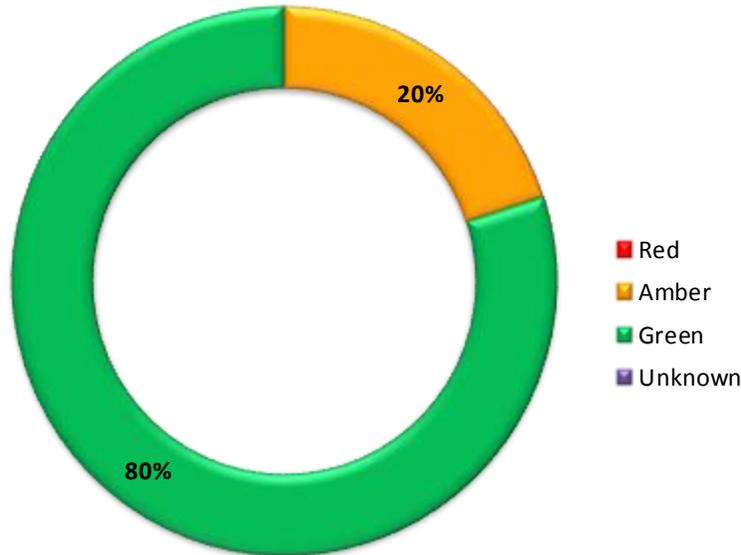
Lower Assurance

None



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Fire & Rescue



Overall Assurances

Green
 Planning
 Prevention
 Protection
 Response

Amber
 Resources

Red

Overall Comments

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue’s mission is ‘to make our communities safer, healthier and more resilient’ in order to improve wellbeing. It does this through a framework of 5 key strategies covering: planning, prevention, protection, response and resourcing. All are assessed as green, apart from resourcing, which is assessed as amber. Notwithstanding the overall ratings, each area has been impacted by the significant savings that have had to be made over the last 7 years resulting in limited capacity and resilience levels across the Service. Within this context, the ongoing changes resulting from the Blue Light Collaboration project, the fallout from the Grenfell fire inquiry and the challenges associated with maintaining a predominantly Retained Duty System workforce will need careful management.

Management of Risk

The Service’s Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process is the method by which it undertakes risk analysis, develops strategies and delivery mechanisms and provides assurance of activities in support of its mission. Two key planning documents form part of the IRMP process: the IRMP Baseline Document and the annual Service Plan. The former is a strategic document covering a period of at least 3 years. It identifies key community and corporate risks and outlines the strategies, as described above, for mitigating those risks. The Service Plan provides detail on how the Service delivers



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these strategies. A number of objectives are described within the Service Plan, as are the subordinate tasks and activities which the Service is required to undertake. Progress against each of the objectives is reported on a quarterly basis to the Performance Management Board.

Additional management assurance is undertaken through monthly Service Management Board meetings. These focus on strategic direction, implementation of policy and Service change and management of organisational performance.

The Service has an integrated Quality Assurance framework which provides a continual, systematic review of operational response capability. All fire stations are inspected annually as part of the Chief Fire Officer's inspection programme. Performance at incidents is regularly reviewed with key findings and learning points fed back to inform training and development priorities.

In accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England the Service produces an annual Statement of Assurance covering financial, governance and operational matters. The Statement of Assurance 2016-17 was published in November 2017 following submission to the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Third party assurance is drawn from a range of sources including:

- the Local Government Association and Chief Fire Officers Association Peer Challenge. The most recent Peer Challenge was conducted in September 2017.
- assessment of the Service's national resilience capabilities including reclassification of the UK International Search and Rescue team in May 16 and assurance of our Urban Search and Rescue team in October 2016.

Lower Assurances

Areas of risk for the Service include: the ongoing payroll issues associated with Agresso and the potential impact this has on the workforce; reduced capacity from both the centre and within the Service; the potential for further budget reductions and the development of Information Communications Technology to meet the needs of the Service.

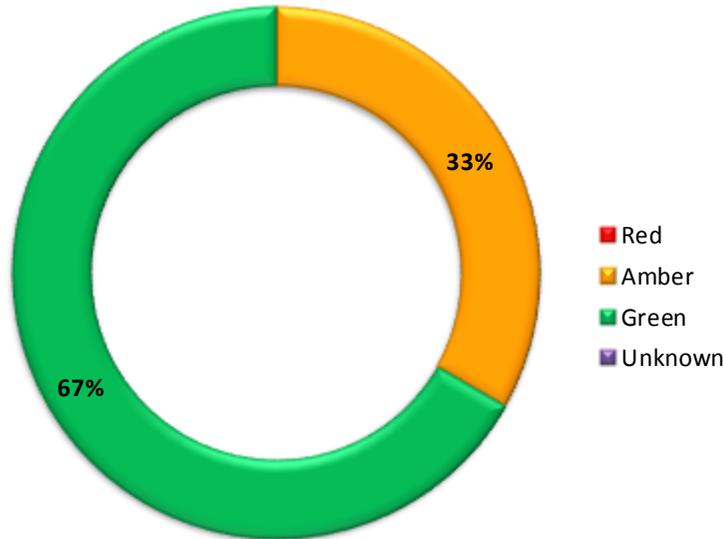


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Emergency Planning & Business Continuity

Lincolnshire Resilience Forum

Business Continuity promotion to voluntary sector and SMEs



Overall Assurances

Green

Duties relating to the Civil Contingencies Act

Emergency Planning & Business Continuity provision to Districts

Amber

Emergency Response

Business Continuity

Red

Overall Comments

Over the last twelve months, the service has dealt with an unprecedented amount of emergencies with fewer resources due to restructure and staff long term sickness. This has had an impact on both core business and the ability to respond to prolonged emergencies.

The County Council must be able to maintain its own critical functions during any disruption to business, and has a number of lead roles and responsibilities in any civil emergency under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. These include the welfare of victims and evacuees, provision of emergency shelter, coordination of the voluntary sector and also a community leadership role. The council would also lead on all recovery efforts.

We must also have plans in place to restore impacted critical services in the event of disruptive or emergency events; these have been successfully utilised on a number of occasions during the past year in response to emergencies and business continuity challenges. The council continues to build resilience



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and capacity to meet its duties, including arrangements for mutual aid from neighboring counties and district & borough authorities, and further strengthening of our command, control and coordination', through the strategic and tactical rotas, delivery of bespoke training and implementation of recommendations from the LRF's command & control review. The Service will produce portfolios for all LCC commanders and will explore options for job descriptions as highlighted in our recent internal audit report. The service was pleased to receive an overall rating of high assurance.

We have continued to work with both the organised voluntary sector and communities to strengthen local responses that can complement the council's roles and responsibilities which have resulted in an MOU and Capabilities document and a policy for dealing with spontaneous volunteers which is regarded as good practice nationally and has been shared with many other local authorities.

We continue to be a key contributor to the design and delivery of multi-agency training & exercising which is essential to testing plans, rehearsing people in key roles and enhancing arrangements for multi-agency coordination in the county. The service is currently part of a multi-agency team reviewing all areas of LRF Command and Control training packages.

The service continues to have an influence on national resilience planning and policy. This includes its ongoing work with lead Government departments, flood risk agencies and

other coastal counties to coordinate responses to Tidal Surge, and develop good practice in relation to the coordination of the voluntary sector (including 'spontaneous volunteers') on behalf of all partners.

The council remains the driving force behind the Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a partnership held in high regard nationally. This partnership continues to be well led by the Chief Constable assisted by Chief Fire Officer, Executive Director. There remains excellent commitment at senior and political level (including scrutiny) within the council for the resilience agenda.

The service was invited to visit the Grenfell Tower in the aftermath of the fire as guests of Ealing Borough Council. Many lessons were learned from the visit and a report written containing nine recommendations for the council to consider, these were later accepted by both Corporate Management Board and Informal Executive.

Business Continuity incidents earlier this year highlighted several new areas of both criticality and vulnerability. Many lessons were learned that required incorporation into future business continuity planning arrangements. LCC now has an Executive Director in the role of BC Champion and a corporate BC group has been established as part of the EP & BC Service ongoing review of BC arrangement across the organisation, this group were used to great effect during the co-ordination of the last BC incident.



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The volume, type and diverse nature of emergencies affecting the UK and the county over the past twelve months have resulted in some core business activities highlighted in the service plan not being completed. The service will ensure that these are carried forward into the next plan and that mutual aid opportunities regarding LRF partnership working and support from neighbouring counties are continually explored going forward.

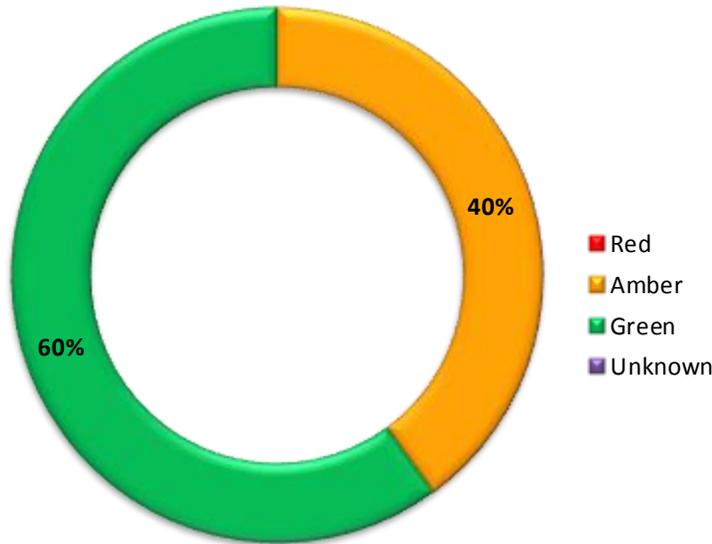
Priorities going forward include:

- Strengthening the resilience and preparedness of the County Council.
- Determining roles and responsibilities for IT disaster recovery, and exercising those arrangements at an early opportunity
- Identification of further joint working and collaboration opportunities with partners within the county.
- Implement a new Business Continuity Management System for the County Council.
- Include all critical services and key critical contractors and suppliers in future Business Continuity Planning.
- Identify and map key departmental interdependencies through Business continuity planning



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Safer Communities



Overall Comments

Safer Communities is involved in two core areas of business Trading Standards and Community Safety. It is pleasing to report that for the first time since the resource reductions were made in 2011, the Trading Standards Service now has a green rating. This has been achieved by adopting a prioritization process both to reactive and planned work. This process was subject to an internal audit and was in general found to be working well. The areas of reduced assurance that have been identified, are around new areas of work primarily the recommissioning of Domestic Abuse victim services, work with victims of scams and some fundamental changes to the Community Safety Partnership following a review. A number of staffing issues have been experienced over the last 12 months; being a small service of around 36 fte this has had a significant impact.

Management of Risk

A comprehensive risk register for the Safer Communities service is maintained and reviewed at regular intervals by the management team. Individual projects will have specific risk registers; this has been particularly important for the recommissioning of Domestic Abuse Victim services as this is a pooled budget approach across adults, children and safer communities. Guidance is always sought from relevant specialists including people management, commercial procurement, legal and information governance.

Overall Assurances

Green	Amber	Red
Trading Standards	Commissioning & Contract Management	
Safeguarding / Partnerships Community Safety	Domestic Homicide Reviews	



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The risks involved in the enforcement and prosecution process are managed through a sign off procedure and working closely with legal services and where necessary counsel opinion is sought, this is relevant to a large fraud case that is currently ongoing.

Lower Assurances

There are always inherent risks when working in partnership, change processes and starting a new project due to the control factors around the unknowns. The areas of lower assurance all fall into these categories.

Domestic Abuse Victims Services-this process has both a project group and Programme Board made up of officers from across the relevant areas of LCC and for the latter elected member involvement.

Domestic Homicide-this process managed by LCC on behalf of the Community Safety Partnership is currently managing 9 open reviews only one new one was instigated in 2017.

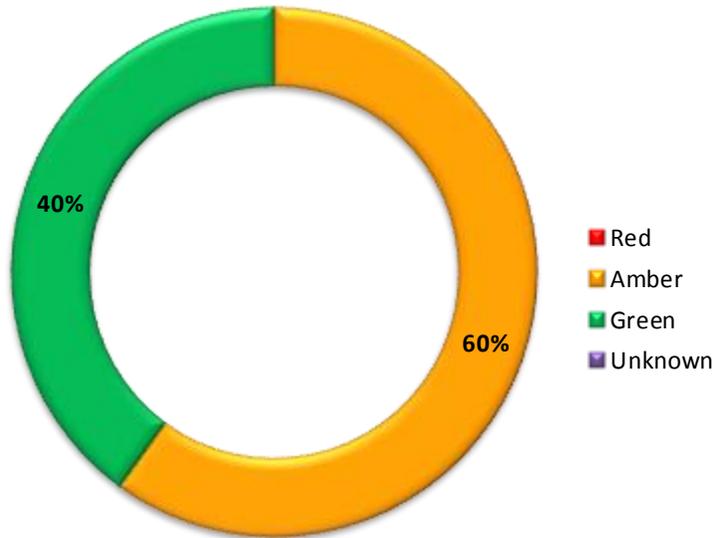
Trading Standards Scams Project-involves identifying vulnerable victims of fraud and then working with other agencies to support and help them recover. The project is reliant on good cooperation with a number of agencies but particularly the police and adult social care. Governance arrangements are still to be developed for this.

Avian Flu- this disease is now endemic in wild bird populations in our European neighbours. Migrating birds can cause the spread of the disease into commercial flocks of chickens, ducks and geese. Lincolnshire has one of the highest proportions of this type of business in the country. Animal disease control is led by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) but local support is requested from Trading Standards to manage outbreaks such as the one near Louth in the winter of 2016. This risk will be ongoing.



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Business Support



Overall Comments

Business Support provides a multi-disciplinary support services providing both front line customer facing services as well as back office activities. The service is provided across the majority of Council business areas. The service focuses on cross skilling staff to promote excellent service provision whilst building resilience and improving processes to develop a more efficient authority.

Management of Risk

There are no high risk (Red) areas across Business Support.

From October 2017, following the transfer of 0-19 Children's Health services into the Council, Business Support took responsibility of providing the Single Point of Access (SPA) for services users and professionals to contact the authority for new referrals, advice and support. A number of staff from Health working in the SPA resigned before transferring over resulting in a loss of knowledge and skills. These posts have now been filled however it will take some time to train and gain experience in this area. Processes are being reviewed and ongoing actions have been identified to improve service which is being managed through a Transitions Board with oversight from Children's Services.

Support provision to Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding is a core function of Business Support. Extensive work has

Overall Assurances

Green	Amber	Red
Child & Adult Safeguarding Conferences	Single Point of Access	
Audit of Customer Finances	Purchasing & Requisitioning	
	Income Management	



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been completed with both Adult Care and Children's Services and specialist teams are now in place to support regulated conferences and meetings to ensure core performance targets are achieved. Workflow is regularly monitored and reported on to service to provide third party assurance. Improvements are continuously made to ensure production of quality case reports and to improve statutory reporting. The resourcing of the team has been increased to meet growing demands, with new staff supported through a comprehensive training programme which operates across Business Support to ensure appropriate skills are in place.

Business Support provides local financial support functions including requisitioning, recoding of invoices and payment requests all processed within Agresso. All staff undertake specific training prior to access being granted to the system. Agresso reports provide regular data to managers highlighting where peaks in transactions exist within the system, or where transactions are outside of LCC performance timescales. Managers use these reports to address performance, compliance issues or to instigate reallocation of tasks in order to meet the deadlines. It is not anticipated there will a significant impact on financial support compliance through the impending Agresso upgrade to Business World On!

In terms of Imprest and cash handling, all staff complete extensive training to ensure they are fully compliant with the Agresso processes. The Business Support management team

continue to work closely with finance and audit to ensure that this income collection is compliant, in particular within areas of high income collection. Income audits are undertaken by managers and reported. In addition, Team Leaders are required to complete monthly audit returns to confirm Imprest accounts have been reconciled.

The Business Support Customer Finance Team focuses on the audit and verification of financial assessments, personal budgets and direct payments in recovering overpaid or unused monies from service users. The team has been strengthened through increased resource which has been funded by Adult Care. Ongoing skills development and management of performance means this team now consistently exceeds key performance indicators, which is reported to Adult Care and Community Safety DMT.

An emerging risk has been identified around the corporate review of the current recruitment service jointly provided through LCC and Serco. This review may lead to decisions being made as to where recruitment work-tasks sit which may place additional pressures on Business Support if sufficient resource is not funded to enable possible increased workloads to be managed.

Lower Assurances

The impact of the final year of the Fundamental Budget Review and the requirement to make further significant



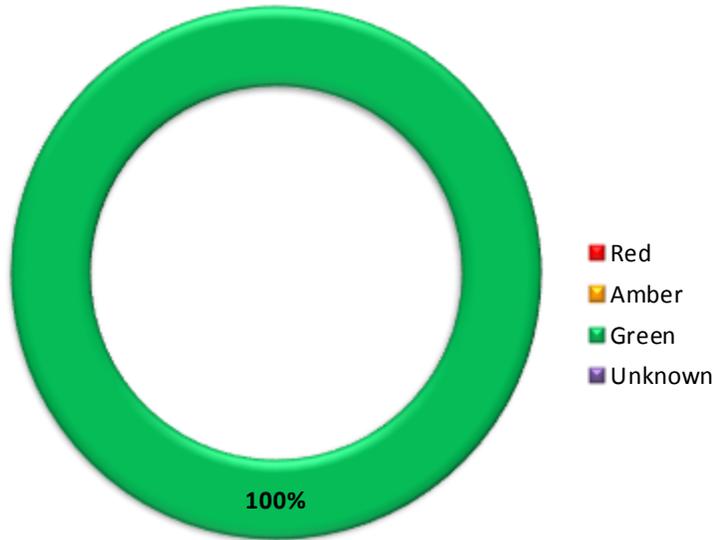
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savings to the service is an ongoing risk. The savings predicted to be achieved through the implementation of Agresso and Mosaic have not materialised, and in some areas have created greater and longer workloads. Savings can now only be achieved through reducing headcount which would cause significant disruption impacting on staff morale during a period of intense change at a time when workloads continue to increase. This could ultimately lead to higher levels of absence and turnover, increased errors rates in work, reduced flexibility to meet service needs and inability to achieve core service indicators. This is being managed by close working with service areas to understand and define their support needs, changing how work is completed and challenging historic arrangements. These changes are intrinsically linked to the corporate property strategy by rationalising sites and creating opportunities to co-locate support staff to enable efficiencies to be realised.



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Registrars, Celebratory & Coroner's Services



Overall Assurances

Green	Amber	Red
Registrar & Celebratory Services		
Coroner's Service		

Overall Comments

Customer satisfaction within the Registration Service continues to be very high as highlighted in the annual customer survey with the responses rated as Excellent, Very Good and Satisfactory at 100% for the second year running. 96.2% rating the service as Very Good or Excellent. In addition the service attained the Government's standards in Customer Service Excellence noting only one partial compliance in relation to the lack of credit/debit card payment facility. The service has met its statutory responsibilities evidenced by the submission of the Annual Performance Report to the General Register Office.

The Coroner's Service has developed significantly over the last 12 month on its route to transformation with significant developments anticipated in 2018. 2015, 2016 and 2017 have seen a significantly higher caseload than 2014 and this provides some challenges in terms of capacity and financial resources for a demand led service.

Management of Risk

A comprehensive Risk Register and Business Continuity Plan are maintained for both service areas. Individual risk registers are prepared for new projects as appropriate seeking guidance from subject specialists e.g. data protection colleagues and procurement colleagues. Within the Coroner's Service changes to process and procedure continue to be



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adopted which have improved timescales for bereaved families.

The increasing complexity of the law in relation to interpretation of existing historic legislation to meet the needs of an ever diverse society will continue to provide potential challenge to both the Registration Service and Coroners. There is the increasing threat of judicial review recognising the status and decision making of Coroner as an independent judicial office holder and registration officers as statutory officers in law.

Effective and comprehensive training for all involved in the service will be essential.

Lower Assurances

Coroner's Service – Since August 2017 the merger of the two existing Coroner Areas into one combined area has provided greater opportunities to improve service provision, streamline processes and reduce costs. This will be monitored continually to evidence and document improvements and financial savings and will be supported by a new IT platform and case management system in 2018.

Financial risk management in relation to Long Inquest payments have reduced significantly and will be alleviated with the appointment of the Area Coroner.



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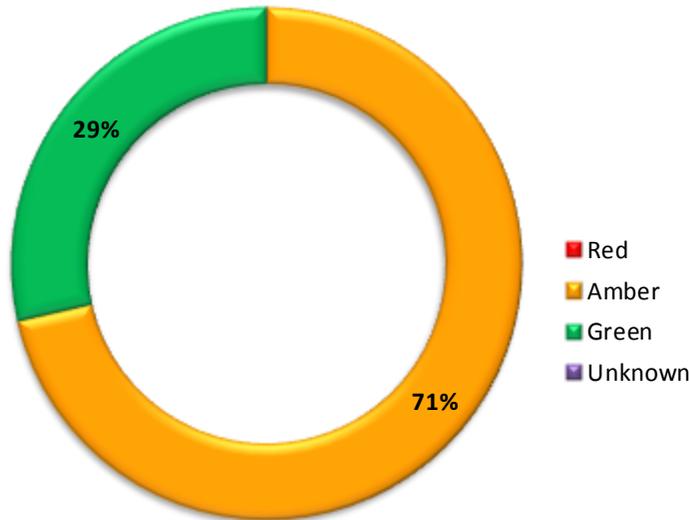
Key Projects

Coroners Case Management system

Upgrade to MIMS system

Review of Health & Safety Inspection processes
Blue Light South Park Campus
Future Control Project

Trading Standards Scams Project
Recommissioning of DA support service to standard & medium risk victims & for IDVA
Income Gateway (Zipporah replacement & website improvements)



Overall Assurances

Green

Upgrade of IT and Communication equipment at County Emergency Centre
Fire Appliance Replacement
Introduction of Medical Examiners

Amber

Property Company
Pension Fund Asset Pooling
Upgrade of Agresso to Business World On!

Red

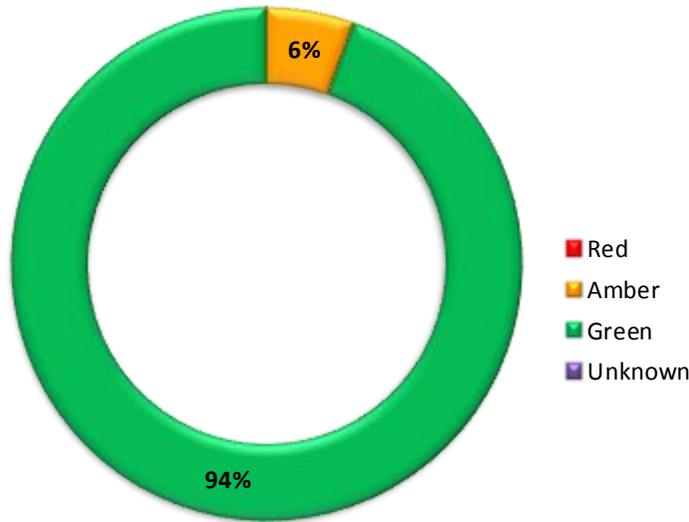
Overall Comments and Management of Risk

All key projects affecting the Directorate services or which we are managing or being progressed on behalf of the wider Council have been identified above. Depending on the scale and complexity appropriate resources have been engaged to progress and manage these projects and all are progressing satisfactory with no critical issues that need highlighting at this stage.



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Key Partnerships



Ambulance Conveyance
Lincolnshire Road Safety
Partnership
Arson Task Force

Primary Authority
Schemes
Blue Light Collaboration

Community Safety
Partnership
Lincolnshire District
Councils
Lincolnshire Police

Trading Standards East
Midlands
Office of the Police &
Crime Commissioner
GRO

UK Visa & Immigration
Service
DWP

Overall Assurances

Green

Greater Lincolnshire One
Public Estate
City of Bradford
Metropolitan Council
(WYPF)
Assurance Lincolnshire
Lincolnshire Resilience
Forum
EMAS & LIVES: Co-
Responders / Joint

Amber

Border to Coast
Pension Partnership

Red

Overall Comments and Management of Risks

All partnerships are working effectively. The establishment of the Border to the Coast Pension Pooling Partnership is

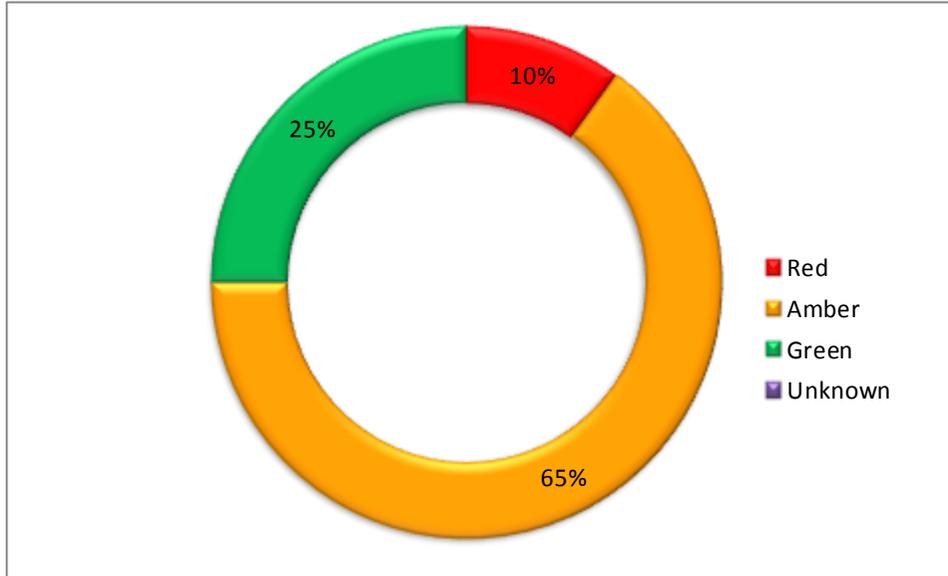


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working to tight timescales but satisfactory progress is being made and additional resources have now been recruited.



Key Risks



Governance

Governance - Agresso

Budget - LCC

Strategic Risks

Council's highest rated Strategic Risks for this area of the business

Resilience (Business Continuity)

As part of the agreed fundamental review of the strategic risk register the regular updating of the register is being placed on hold to ensure full consideration is given to existing strategic risks, new emerging risks and any impacts from the increase in risk appetite statements from 4 to 5 is taken into account. The current strategic risks remain in place.



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Operational & Emerging Risks

As indicated above further work will continue in 2018 to complete the business continuity review and continued improvements through the Agresso Roadmap.

The Council has updated its financial strategy and is in the process of setting a two year budget through to the end of the March 2020, which is the end of the Government's current four year spending review period. Whilst the Council is planning beyond March 2020 there are a number of critical national reviews that affect local government finance and that need to conclude before then. These include the Fair Funding review on needs and resources, the localisation of business rate income, the next spending review and the Green Paper review of adult social care funding (including the existing Better Care Fund). These all mean that the future funding support for our services from the Government will continue to be uncertain and it is likely that budgets will continue to be under pressure.



Corporate Governance

Our Combined Assurance model focuses on assurance against critical systems, projects, risks and partnerships. This helps the organisation to understand corporately where it's performing well and where improvements are required. Many of the Council's critical services and systems underpin a sound corporate governance framework. In this section we set out how the Council has approached corporate governance, complied with guidance and obtained assurance on its significant governance issues.

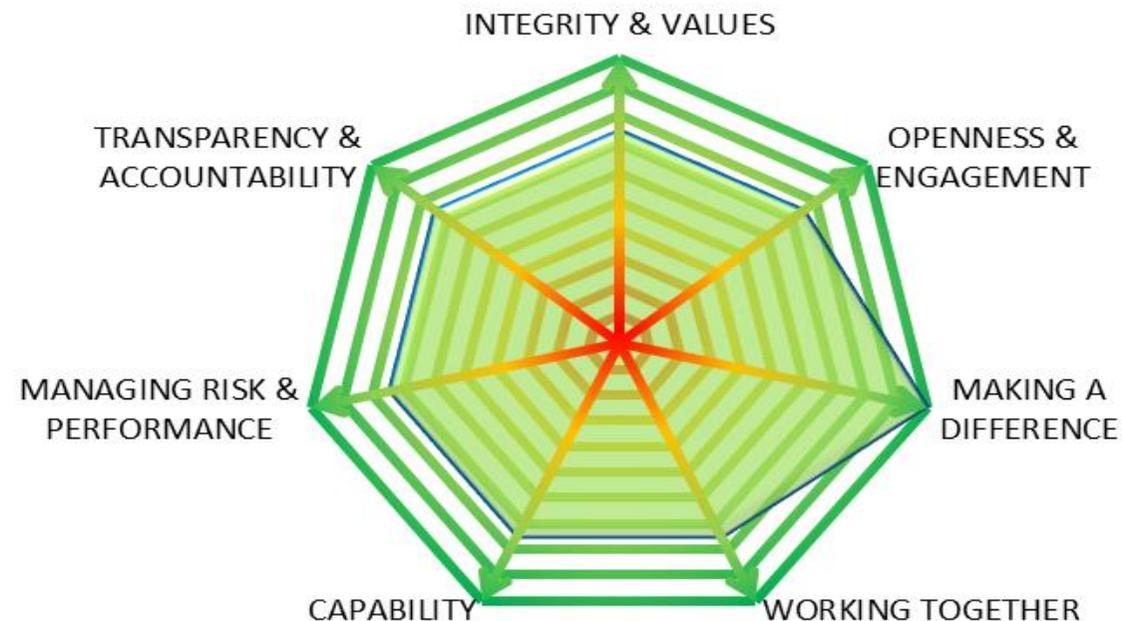
The Council must ensure that it meets the highest standards and that governance arrangements are not only sound but are seen to be sound. It is crucial that leaders and chief executives keep their governance arrangements up to date and relevant. Councils should develop a local Governance Code which reflects the "delivering good governance in local government framework (CIPFA/SOLACE 2016)" (the framework).

The framework defines the principles that should underpin the governance of each local government organisation. It provides a structure to help individual authorities with their approach to governance. Whatever form of arrangements are in place, authorities should therefore test their governance

structures and partnerships against the principles contained in the Framework.

At Lincolnshire County Council this was independently assessed during November 2016 and assurance given over the evidence supporting good governance arrangements for each of the 7 Principles. All assurances were high or substantial.

Evidence Supporting Good Governance



The assessment identified some areas for improvement in relation to governance arrangements for collaborative working



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(partnerships) and ethical governance. Audit work is underway to support improvements and provide further assurance in both of these key areas.

During 2017/18 the Council is working to address the matters identified and is monitoring implementation and operation as part of performance management – which is reported to the Council's Corporate Management Board and to the Executive. The Audit Committee are also helping with independent assurance during the year.

Annual Governance Statement

The assessment against the code, among other things, helped to inform the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2016/17. Overall this confirmed that the Council has the appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure good governance is maintained. The review did identify a number of areas for improvement.

Key Improvement Area
IT Governance
Financial Sustainability
Financial Control Environment
Market Supply (Adult Social Care)
SERCO Contract – Lessons Learnt
Delivery of Support Services and Improvement – SERCO
Collaborative Working – Governance Arrangements



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