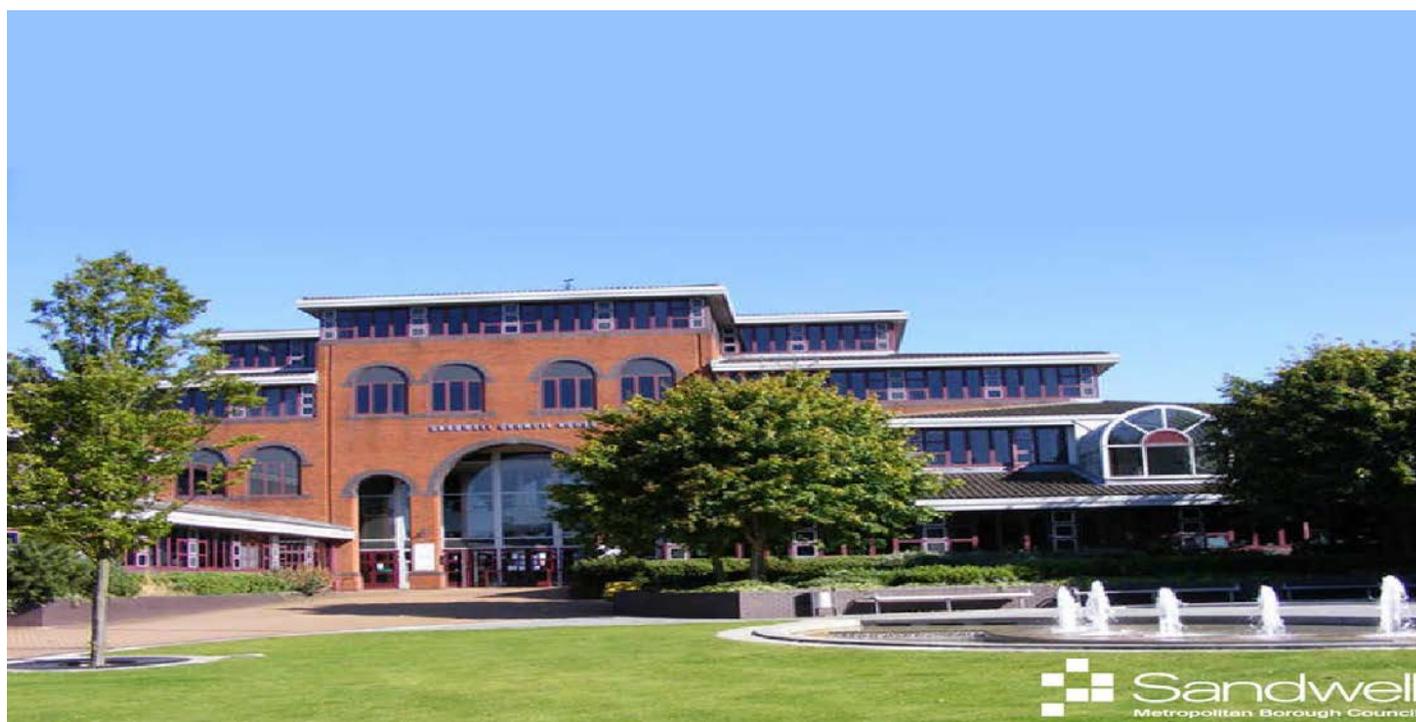


Appendix A

Profile of Current Strategic Risk Scores

RED	5, 6,
AMBER	1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12
GREEN	3, 10

Summary Children’s Services Directorate Risk Register @ August 2019



Ambition 1
High aspirations



Ambition 2
Healthy lives



Ambition 3
Skills



Ambition 4
High quality education



Ambition 5
Safe communities



Ambition 6
Excellent and affordable public transport



Ambition 7
Housing to meet needs



Ambition 8
Community life, leisure centres & entertainment



Ambition 9
Location of choice for business and growth



Ambition 10
Reputation for getting things done

Children's services directorate business plan priorities

1. Children, young people and families are aspirational, resilient, ambitious and safeguarded	2. Sandwell's children to be healthy and active	3. Good school places	4. Best start in life and school readiness	5. Children to be well prepared for adulthood	6. Career opportunities
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Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous score (March 2019)	Direction of travel	Current score (Aug 2019)	Target score and date	Comment
001 05/16	<p>Impact of Reductions to Funding</p> <p>If the directorate does not plan and identify innovative new ways of dealing with the uncertainties and significant reductions imposed by central government on schools funding, then this will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and schools unable to operate within a balanced budget School improvement strategy not being delivered Ineffective service delivery being provided by the directorate More schools converting to academies and the inability to support the remaining Sandwell schools effectively <p>Risk owner – Chris Ward</p> <p>Directorate priorities impacted: 1, 3, 4 and 5</p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	8* (amber)	<p>This risk is linked to the strategic risk 027 around council finances but considers the impact on schools resulting from the central government reductions in schools funding over recent years which show a 2.5% reduction per pupil in 2017/18 and a 2.4% reduction for 2018/19. At present the measures in place to manage the risk include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular monthly budget monitoring meetings Service level agreements with schools for the provision of council services Regular review of council services provided to schools to ensure they remain effective <p>The further options that could be considered by the council include the identification of alternative funding options and the development of a single SLA for schools providing a whole suite of services (as opposed to the current arrangements in place whereby individual SLAs are available for each school depending on the level of services provided).</p>

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002 01/19	<p>Implementation of Synergy System</p> <p>If the council does not implement the Synergy education management information system to the required specification and within the appropriate timescales then this will require the continued and extended use of the current Capita system and result in increased financial costs of running the two systems. In addition, the current system will become unsupported.</p> <p>Risk owner – Sue Moore Priorities impacted: 4 and 5</p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green) April 2020	<p>The Capita ONE system is the main education system that is used by the directorate and provides a wide range of statutory and non-statutory functions to the directorate including data on admissions; SEN; free school meals; attendance, etc.</p> <p>The system has been in place since 1993 and following Cabinet approval a procurement exercise was undertaken in 2018 to ensure that any education system was able to provide the current and future needs of the service. The procurement exercise resulted in the award of a contract for a new system provided by Synergy which commenced on 1 January 2019, with a view to implementation of the new system (and terminating the contract on the current system) by 1 April 2020.</p> <p>In order to manage the risk project management arrangements are in place including a project board; project plan, risk register, regular communications and briefings with staff and training of super users.</p> <p>One of the major tasks involved in the project is naturally the data migration plan which is resource intensive and involves data cleansing of all files to ensure that there is only one central record of data. This is a key determinant of the timely implementation of the new system. The project board is monitoring this aspect with close attention and is using this to drive the current risk assessment.</p>																																					
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003 03/17	<p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</p> <p>If the council does not effectively deliver the SEND development plan then the most vulnerable young people will not receive the support and services they are entitled to and may not reach their full potential.</p> <p>Risk owner – Mel Barnett</p> <p>Priorities impacted: 1, 4 and 5</p>	8 (amber)		6 (green)	4 (green) March 2020	<p>In January 2017, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) undertook an inspection of the local area's SEND provision. The inspection raised a number of significant concerns specifically highlighting failures of partner organisations to deliver adequate support and service to children with SEND. As a result, in July 2017 a written statement of action (WSOA) was drafted by the SEND partnership Board for implementation, to address the improvements required. The Board has since this time been responsible for monitoring and evidencing progress against the WSOA via regular formal monitoring visits by Ofsted and NHS England.</p> <p>In March 2019, Ofsted and CQC revisited the Sandwell local area to establish whether sufficient progress had been made against the WSOA. The visit concluded that sufficient progress had been made against all weaknesses identified and action areas in the written statement. As a result, the inspectors have also recommended that the formal monitoring visits by DfE and NHS England (the decision makers) cease.</p> <p>The risk will remain on the directorate register to ensure current measures to manage the risk, including partnership engagement; the SEND Board; improvement plans and the virtual office, continue to be implemented and progress in this area continues to be made.</p>																																
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05 03/18	<p>High Needs Block</p> <p>If the council continues to face increased funding requirements for its high needs block then this will result in significant adverse impact on schools' budgets.</p> <p>Risk owner – Sue Moore</p> <p>Priorities impacted: 1, 4 and 5</p>	12 (Red)		12 (Red)	8 (amber) April 2020	<p>This risk is a national risk around the ongoing rise in children and young people with SEND and Education, Health Care Plans (EHCP) and therefore an increasing demand for additional support services for these young people.</p> <p>The increased demand arises from a combination of factors including population growth, advances in medicine which mean children with special needs live longer, better diagnosis of conditions such as autism and extension of the service for children with SEND to age 25 (the latter which took effect from 2014). In addition, the high needs block also funds children in Alternative Provision which includes pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools (which has also experienced sharp increases in recent years).</p> <p>Since 2013/14 the way in which funding has been allocated to schools via the Dedicated Schools Grant also changed whereby it is now divided into three separate blocks- high needs being one of those. This came with the added condition that local authorities cannot move money from one block to the other without the agreement of the Schools Forum and if the amount to be moved was in excess of 0.5% of the school's block then permission from the secretary of state would need to be sought.</p> <p>As such, there is little control the council has over managing this risk other than the measures currently in place which include the schools forum, the ongoing financial monitoring, a review of Alternative Provision and the review and refresh of the EVOLVE strategy which is Sandwell's strategy to develop provision for SEND children and a plan showing how additional any government funding is being used.</p> <p>The government has recently announced the possibility of additional funding for High Needs Block in 2020/21 which may go some way to mitigate against the rising costs of provision. We await details of how this would impact on local funding.</p>																																
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06 03/18	<p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport</p> <p>If the council does not consider options on how to manage the increasing upwards trajectory of costs in respect of SEND transport then this will significantly impact service budgets and the provision of other services across the directorate.</p> <p>Risk owner – Lesley Hagger Priorities impacted: 2, 3 and 4</p>	8 (amber)		12 (red)	8 (amber) December 2019	<p>This risk is a subset of the above risk and has been identified separately as a result of its significance. The Council has a statutory duty to provide transport assistance to eligible pupils with SEND. The current financial position in this area is challenging, whereby the costs for transport continue to exceed the planned budget due to increasing demand and pressures against current policy provision. There have been ongoing pressures against the SEN transport budget for several years which have historically been covered by savings across the directorate.</p> <p>The risk assessment has been informed by the current outturn forecast position for SEN transport which is an overspend of £1.765m. The reasons for this overspend arise from an increase in the number of children who are eligible for this transport; the increase in the statutory age at which SEN transport must be provided from 18 to 25 years and problems with two suppliers which meant that those contracts had to be reallocated/re-tendered leading to higher prices.</p> <p>Other mitigating actions that have been taken are the introduction of a dynamic purchasing system in 2016 and a revision to the travel policy in 2014 so that only statutory age children were eligible. A further change to the current travel policy will be presented to Cabinet in August which should generate cost efficiencies, but these are unlikely to materialise until 2020/21. A detailed review is currently underway into how these pressures will be managed. An update will be provided to Cabinet as part of the quarterly budget monitoring reports.</p>																															
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07 04/18	<p>Client function for the Sandwell Children's Trust Contract</p> <p>If the council does not establish a client function role then it may be unable to effectively monitor the service delivery contract and the service support agreement between the council and the Sandwell Children's Trust.</p> <p>Risk owner – Lesley Hagger Priorities impacted: 1 and 4</p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green)	At the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in July 2019, the Committee requested detailed information about this risk. The strategic risk register update report provides these details.																															
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08 03/18	<p>Business Continuity in Sandwell Schools</p> <p>If the council has not put in place arrangements that provide assurance that suitable business continuity plans are in place then in the event of an unplanned emergency which forces a school closure, schools will be unable to operate and the council will fail in its statutory duty to provide school places.</p> <p>Risk owner – Sue Moore Priorities impacted: 1, 3 and 4</p>	9 (amber)		9 (amber)	9* (amber)	<p>To ensure that the directorate has effective business continuity plans in place, the service needs to obtain assurances that sufficient and suitable arrangements are in place in all Sandwell schools in the event of an unplanned emergency such as a partial or full school closure. Measures to manage this risk include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools' business continuity plans which are reviewed by Internal Audit as part of their review of the school A single point of contact for schools to report a closure due to weather or other emergencies A review plan to be prepared after each school closure to ensure any lessons learned are captured Assurances from academies that suitable arrangements and plans are in place to cover any increased financial costs if pupils need to be relocated in the event of a school closure. 																															
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09 04/18	<p>Children Missing Education and from Education (CME and CMfE)</p> <p>If the council does not have effective mechanisms in place to track CME and CMfE then it will fail in its safeguarding duties.</p> <p>Risk owner – Chris Ward Priorities impacted: 1, 2 and 4</p>	8 (amber)		8 (amber)	4 (green)	<p>Children missing education (CME) are children and young people who are not on a school roll and not in receipt of education at school or otherwise (electively home educated/alternative provision).</p> <p>Children missing from education (CMfE) are children and young people on a school roll and not in receipt of full-time education (on part-time timetables etc.).</p> <p>The council's Attendance Service provides support to schools and families to reduce lost learning, maintain safeguarding and improving life chances for children and young people.</p> <p>Measures in place to manage this risk include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education staff based in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub • Outreach officers focusing on CME/CMfE • A dedicated Elective Home Education (EHE – parents who choose to educate their child at home) officer in post • Forums for schools safeguarding/attendance leads • Sandwell Transition Education Partnership Service centre which supports new to the UK pupils and their families • Curiosity in identifying/referring CME/CMfE/EHE 																														
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10 07/16	<p>Apprenticeship Levy</p> <p>If the council (including schools) does not put in place effective arrangements to use the resources it will have available from the introduction of the apprenticeship levy, then it will be unable to maximise benefits and its use of resources and will miss out on the opportunities available through the fund.</p> <p>Risk owner – Kelly Thomas Priorities impacted: 5 and 6</p>	9 (amber)		6 (green)	6 (green) Achieved	<p>This risk has been transferred from the strategic risk register in July 2019 as a result of the effective mitigations in place that have managed this risk down since it was identified.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Levy introduced on 1 April 2017 requires all public sector bodies with a workforce of 250 or more, to provide apprentice opportunities equating to at least 2.3% of their workforce. For 2018/19, the target figure (which has been recalculated based upon recent guidance provided by the National Apprenticeship Service) equates to 199 apprenticeships for the council. In the last update to the Apprenticeship Board, the actual performance for the year to 31 March 2019 showed that 207 apprenticeships had been placed during the year.</p> <p>For 2019/20, the council is further increasing the numbers of apprenticeships, particularly with existing staff as part of the workforce and officer development plans, as there are areas yet to take full advantage of the funding that is available through the levy.</p> <p>In addition, to ensure that there are no unspent funds being returned to government, a report to Cabinet in June 2019 approved funds to be transferred to local businesses to use for apprenticeships.</p>																														
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Risk Ref	Risk Title and Description	Previous score (March 2019)	Direction of travel	Current score (Aug 2019)	Target score and date	Comment																															
11 08/19	<p>Impact of School Academisation</p> <p>If the council does not effectively manage schools that have received an academy order prior to the conversion date then this will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools unable to operate within a balanced budget and the overspend/debt remaining with the council upon conversion Increased risk of school staff redundancy and associated redundancy costs for the council Associated costs for school buildings which may not have been maintained to the expected standard prior to conversion falling to the council. <p>All risks above increase where the council is not contracted to provide services from council HR, Finance or Repairs and Maintenance teams.</p> <p>Risk owner – Chris Ward</p> <p>Priorities impacted: 1, 3 and 4</p>	n/a	n/a	8 (amber)	6 (green) September 2020	<p>This risk is linked to the strategic risk 027 around council finances but considers the impact on schools resulting from the implementation of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework for schools which comes in to force on 1 September 2019.</p> <p>At present the measures in place to manage the risk include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-discipline Task Groups are put in place for all schools in Special Measures or that are likely to fail an inspection Governing Body are strengthened or removed entirely dependent on performance (using LA powers of intervention) Contingency Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has been agreed by Schools Forum up to a maximum of £125,000 per school in difficulty to assist with costs. Monthly monitoring reports of school balances are held by Schools Finance Team and are reported to the Director. Annual Health and Safety reports are completed for buildings maintenance and recommendations for essential work are highlighted to school governing bodies where they do not buy in to the council repairs and maintenance account. 																															
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12 04/19	<p>Regional Adoption Agency</p> <p>If the council does not put in place an effective arrangement to monitor the delivery of the contract with the Regional Adoption Agency, Adoption@Heart, then it may not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver the best outcomes for children • achieve a good Ofsted outcome • ensure value for money. <p>Risk owner – Lesley Hagger Priorities impacted: 1, 2, and 5</p>	n/a	n/a	8 (amber)	4 (green)	<p>All local authorities are required to transfer their adoption services into Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) arrangements by 2020 at the latest. With set-up funding from the Department for Education, Sandwell has worked with Wolverhampton, Dudley and Walsall to create Adoption@Heart, a Black Country RAA, which went live on 1 April 2019. This required the transfer of services out of Sandwell Children’s Trust and into Adoption@Heart.</p> <p>These regional arrangements are intended to improve outcomes for children by speeding up the adoption process, recruiting a wider pool of adopters and improving post-adoption support. There is a potential risk the new regional arrangements do not deliver against these intentions. There is a further potential risk that the expenditure exceeds the budget available.</p> <p>These risks are mitigated through the governance arrangements in place which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A monthly Operational Partnership Board meeting (attended by Sandwell Children’s Trust’s Operations Director, and, once in post, Sandwell Council’s Contracts and Client Manager) • A quarterly Strategic Commissioning Board meeting, attended by the Executive Director of Children’s Services and the CEO of Sandwell Children’s Trust. <p>Additionally, the RAA will report to Sandwell’s Children’s Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis, and the Corporate Parenting Board. A Black Country meeting of Lead Members from the four local authorities will also meet twice yearly to ensure additional oversight.</p>																															
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* These are risks which are likely to remain amber over the medium term due to the longer term nature of these risks and the continued uncertainties. As such these risks do not have target dates.