Item 7

9th December 2022

West of Scotland Archaeology Service

Joint Committee

Report by WoSAS Manager

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WoSAS Risk Register Review 2022

Purpose of Report:

To advise Members of the revised assessment of the level of operational risk to the Service resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic and associated responses to it, and of possible mitigation measures undertaken and proposed to address those risks.

Recommendations:

Members are asked:

- That this report and the attached Risk Register (Annex 1) be noted.

***PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING**:*

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 At the Committee's meeting on 25 November 2021, the Service Manager reported that the WoSAS Risk Register had been updated to take account of previously unforeseen risks arising from the outbreak of a critical pandemic. Further revisions to the Risk Register have become necessary in light of the changes to business practice and to the evaluation of risks during the pandemic recovery period, and a commentary is provided for information.

2. WoSAS RISK REGISTER

2.1 A risk register is a record of information about identified risks. The WoSAS Risk Register is a live document used as a management tool which seeks to identify, quantify and categorise operational risks to the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, and to identify appropriate mitigation measures which can negate these risks or minimize their impacts. This information is presented in tabular form, along with additional information including commentary on the current status of the risks, and the body best placed to manage each risk.

2.2 The risks identified in the WoSAS Risk Register are grouped by category; Leadership, Partnership, Organisational, and Financial. The evaluation of each risk estimates the likely impact of the risk should it occur or be realised, and scores the risk according to the likelihood of that occurrence. The predicted severity of each unmitigated risk is presented in the table in "traffic light" warning colours.

2.3 The response to each risk sets out mechanisms or measures which can be used, either continuously or when required, to minimise or negate the risk, or to reduce the likelihood of its occurrence. The degree of estimated residual or managed risk if appropriate mitigation measures are employed successfully is also presented visually by colours. Finally, the perceived current status of the risk as "improving", "worsening", or "stable" is presented in shorthand by movement arrows.

3. PANDEMIC RECOVERY PERIOD REVIEW OF THE RISK REGISTER FOR 2022

3.1 The last review of the WoSAS Risk Register was undertaken by the manager of the Service in late 2021. It was apparent that the occurrence of a world-wide pandemic of an easily transmissible and potentially life-threatening disease had not been identified and consequently the impacts of the necessary healthcare responses on prevalent working practices had not been evaluated.

3.2 The uniform severe impacts on all businesses and organisations of the government's lockdown restrictions meant that the introduction of appropriate mitigation measures and operational changes was imperative, and these were implemented as emergency measures by all public bodies. The Service benefitted from the support of the host authority in the transition to Covid-safe working practices, and the description and evaluation of this operational risk and potential responses to it were entered in the Risk Register as Organisational Risk Heading O4. In November 2021 the status of the risk was estimated as "improving".

3.3 Reviewing the actions taken during the pandemic recovery period to date, it is possible to confirm the efficacy of the mitigation measures which had been previously proposed for managing this risk. When measures already in place are combined with ongoing action to further enhance service delivery resilience, for example through the introduction of upgraded computer software, the current status of the management of this risk can still be estimated as "improving".

3.4 The current review of existing risks to the Service identified the need for minor amendments to proposed mitigation and management measures for Partnership Risk P2, Organisational Risk O1, and Financial Risk F2. The amended entries for these risks are presented in the Risk Register table (Annex 1) in blue text and symbols. A change in the perceived status of Financial Risk F1, like Risk F2, from "improving" to "stable" is based on the uncertainties over future local government funding settlements in a period of rising inflation.

3.5 None of the amended entries in the Risk Register are currently so severe or so likely to occur as would require a change to their Current Risk Evaluation, and the proposed or ongoing mitigation measures are considered adequate to maintain the current estimates of the residual managed risks.

3.6 The information in the Risk Register will continue to be updated, and will help to inform Steering Group discussions on the finalised proposals for renewed service delivery which are to be brought to the Committee for consideration at a future meeting.

4 POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

Financial:	None.
Legal:	None.
Personnel:	None.
Procurement:	None.

Business Plan Objectives:

Maintain and update the HER:	Will continue to be sustained by management and mitigation of the identified risks.
Provide DM advice to Planning Officers:	Will continue to be sustained by management and mitigation of the identified risks.
Provide forward planning advice to councils:	Will continue to be sustained by management and mitigation of the identified risks.
Facilitate sustainable development:	Will continue to be sustained by management and mitigation of the identified risks.
Represent the interests of councils in consultations:	Will continue to be sustained by management and mitigation of the identified risks.
Provide HER information to researchers and public:	Will continue to be sustained by management and mitigation of the identified risks.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Members are asked:

- That this report and the attached Risk Register (Annex 1) be noted.

HMcB
West of Scotland Archaeology Service
30 November 2022

WOSAS Risk Register November 2022 Annex 1

RISK EVALUATION				CURRENT RISK EVALUATION			RESPONSE						STATUS
Risk Heading No.	Risk Description	Risk Effect	Owner	Probability (H/M/L)	Impact (H/M/L)	P + I Score	Approach	Mitigation	Residual Risk (RAG)	Owner	Completion Date	Comments	↑/↓
Leadership													
L1	Failure to maintain WoSAS's position as the lead Archaeological advisory service for West & Central Scotland	WoSAS becomes less relevant to partner Councils	Steering Group	L	M		Treat	• Strive to include in the Work Programme new ways: – To plan and design for the delivery of the WoSAS functions. – Identifying partner authorities' requirements.	Sustain low probability	Steering Group	Ongoing	Currently being treated through the update/replacement of MoA/SLA.	↔
L2	Failure to maintain the visibility of the WoSAS as the regional experts on Archaeology	WoSAS is overlooked by potential Council partners	Steering Group	M	M		Treat	• Ensure the Communications Strategy uses multiple tools to target identified audiences about the WoSAS's expertise. • Ensure the role of WoSAS is reflected in Council information-web/ strategy • Consider tie-in to wider policy streams e.g. tourism/ placemaking	Sustain low probability	Steering Group	Ongoing	Requires more input?	↔
L3	Failure to retain the ability to influence regional decision-makers about the role of WoSAS	Inability to influence actions and policies of others to support the delivery of a regional archaeological service	Steering Group	L	M		Treat	• Ensure robust business case is in place • Ensure partner authority's requirements are met	Sustain low probability	Steering Group	Ongoing	Currently being treated through the update/replacement of MoA/SLA.	↔
L4	Failure of the WoSAS Joint Committee to meet.	Partner Authorities breach the legal requirements of the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulation 2014.	Joint Committee Members/ Steering Group	L	**H**		Treat	• Ensure Joint Committee members are appraised of legal requirements • Ensure timely communications through Committee Clerks • Ensure that the necessary reports and accounts are available from the Host Authority finance department at the appropriate times	Sustain low probability	Steering Group/ WoSAS Manager	Ongoing	Procedures in place and monitored by Audit Scotland.	↔
L5	Partners withdrawing from the Partnership would have to replicate existing HER functions and maintenance to meet legal requirement to deliver spatial HE data to The Improvement Service Spatial Hub	Partner Authorities breach the legal requirements of Scottish Government's 2009 law enacting EU INSPIRE Directive on spatial data	Individual Partners	**H**	M		Treat	• Ensure partner authority's legal responsibilities are met • Ensure the role of WoSAS is understood within Partner authorities	Reduced probability and impact	Partners/ WoSAS Manager	Ongoing	Levels of understanding have improved due to current Service Delivery Review	↔
Partnership													
P1	Reduced level of attendance or level of representation at Steering Group meetings	Partner Authorities become disengaged and opportunities are lost for WoSAS	Steering Group / Individual Partners	**H**	M		Treat	• Meet with individual partners organisations to discuss representation and format of meetings • Explore options to improve representation of partner organisations through a Steering Group meeting discussion • Consider how to make Steering Group meetings more engaging for partner organisations	Reduced probability	Steering Group		Recent attendance has improved in response to current Service Delivery Review.	↔
P2	Narrow or stagnant Steering Group representation	A narrowing perspective on the breadth of value of WoSAS	Steering Group / Individual Partners	**H**	M		Treat	• Explore options to rotate representation of partner organisations through a Board meeting discussion • Make greater use of virtual meetings to make better use of officer time	Reduced probability	Steering Group/Host Authority		Requires more input?	↓
Organisational													
O1	Dependence on small Executive Team on whose contracts can be impacted upon by partner withdrawals. Lack of career progression opportunities	Staff departure or long term absences reduce ability to deliver service	Steering Group / Host Authority	**H**	**H**		Treat	• Plan for staff substitution or replacement in event of staff absence/vacancy • Investigate potential for changing contracts with partners to secure jobs • Investigate potential for 1 yr+ contract when recruiting • Develop knowledge of individuals who could provide emergency capacity • Seek secondees to bolster team capacity and develop expertise • Contingency funding • Recruit and train entry-level curatorial archaeologist to provide additional staffing and plan for staff succession	Reduced probability and impact	Steering Group/Host Authority		Some elements under review. Business case for succession planning recruitment as approved by WoSASJC has been accepted by Host Authority HR	↑
O2	Site-specific disaster recovery and resilience systems inadequate	A functioning office is lost for a protracted period with reduced ability to deliver work programme	Chair/ Manager	L	**H**		Treat	• Develop a Business Continuity & Recovery Plan • Maintain systems to highest affordable standards. • Maintain system of data backup.	Reduced impact	Steering Group Chair/ WoSAS Manager		Disaster Recovery Plan for HER data in place and upgraded.	↑
O3	The current 'Host Authority' withdraws its role from the Partnership	Employment and other supporting systems lost with reduced ability to deliver work programme	Steering Group / Host Authority	M	M		Treat	• Sustain good working relationship with current Host Authority • Agree with Partners the process that would be taken to identify and put in place a new host authority, in the event of the current arrangements ending.	Reduced probability and impact	Steering Group		Currently being treated through the update/replacement of MoA/SLA.	↔

WOSAS Risk Register November 2022 Annex 1

RISK EVALUATION				CURRENT RISK EVALUATION			RESPONSE						STATUS
Risk Heading No.	Risk Description	Risk Effect	Owner	Probability (H/M/L)	Impact (H/M/L)	P + I Score	Approach	Mitigation	Residual Risk (RAG)	Owner	Completion Date	Comments	↑/↓
O4	National emergency or health crisis affects service resilience In operation through restricted access to systems and/or digital resources	A reduction in service performance and/or response times. Reduction in the range of services that can be provided.	Host Authority/ Manager	M	H			• Review and revise technical specifications of IT systems supporting the services • Enhance flexibility through capacity for remote/hybrid working • Add resilience through enhanced mobile IT hardware solutions	Reduced impact	Host Authority/ WoSAS Manager		Currently being addressed as part of the host authority's update/replacement of PC equipment in response to Covid	↑
Financial													
F1	One or more Partner Authorities unable to contribute to the core budget due to financial constraints	Insufficient budget to sustain current staff levels	Steering Group / Manager	**H**	**H**		Treat	• Provide partner organisations with early notification of budget contributions and hold individual discussions • Make the case for delivery of Regional Archaeological service within a Business and Action Plan • Demonstrate linkages between WoSAS work and other mainstream agendas • Seek new funding options • Prepare a plan for use in the event of a partner giving notice to withdraw.	Reduced *probability* and impact	Partners/WoSAS Manager		Currently being treated through the update/replacement of MoA/SLA. Will be affected by Local Govt pay settlement. Will be impacted by LA funding following Covid crisis	↔
F2	Failure to attract sufficient project income required to support the core budget	Insufficient budget to sustain current staff levels	Steering Group / Manager	M	**H**		Treat	• Identify potential project work that WoSAS can deliver for a wider audience or customer base that brings funding in. • Identify potential project work for Partners (additional to core Work Programme) or external organisations (within remit) that funds staff costs • Consider scope and scale of fees on *Access to Information and Fee Charging Policy*	Reduced probability and impact	WoSAS Manager		~~Participation in a possible SW Scotland Regional Research Framework Project (3 Ayrshire Councils + D&GC) under discussion.~~	↔
F3	Insufficient financial reserves to offset any liabilities of the Partnership	Partner Authorities have to find additional financial resources to settle liabilities	Steering Group / Manager	M	M		Treat	• Ensure that the necessary reserves target is updated through discussion with Host Authority finance and HR departments • Ensure reserves are protected and sufficient through financial reporting and budgetary planning	Reduced probability	Host authority/ WoSAS Manager	Ongoing	Approved Reserves Policy in place and annually reviewed.	↔
F4	Ability to share an office and office resources with Host authority is removed	Overhead costs for staff team increase.	Chair/ Manager	M	M		Treat	• Retain good working relationship with Host Authority Planning Service • Ensure the mutual financial and working benefits of a shared office are recognised by Partner organisations	Reduced probability	Chair/ WoSAS Manager	Ongoing	Currently being treated through the update/replacement of MoA/SLA.	↔
F5	Partners withdrawing from the Partnership would have to replicate HER functions and maintenance to meet legal requirement to deliver spatial HE data to The Improvement Service and their HE roles and responsibilities under planning legislation	Additional procurement costs relating to standalone data management and updating issues for historic environment data for the Authority area, and staffing costs for planning expertise/advice element currently procured jointly	Individual Partners	**H**	M		Treat	• Ensure partner authority's legal and quasi-legal responsibilities are met • Ensure the role of WoSAS is understood within Partner authorities • Ensure cost-savings delivered through joint-working arrangements are understood and quantified in benchmarking exercises	Reduced probability and impact	Partners/ WoSAS Manager	Ongoing	Levels of understanding have improved due to discussions related to current Service Delivery Review.	↑