#### **AGENDA ITEM**

REPORT TO AUDIT COMMITTEE 25 NOVEMBER 2019

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & BUSINESS SERVICES

#### CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE REPORT

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The Committee is reminded that quarterly reports on the Corporate Risk Register are presented for the purpose of reviewing the key risks that have been identified as having the potential to deflect services from achieving their objectives over the next 12 months and beyond. They also set out the actions being taken to ensure that the risks, and possible adverse outcomes, are minimised.

As a reminder, risks are scored on a scale of one to five for both 'impact' and 'likelihood'. The scores are multiplied to generate a total score and any risks with a score of 15 or above are included in detail in this update. All other risks on the strategic risk register are reported in summary detail only.

#### **DETAIL**

- 1. The Committee has requested that, in the absence of substantial changes to the register, quarterly reporting should be confined to highlighting significant additions and amendments since the previous update.
- 2. Appendix A provides details of the high level strategic risk register and an initial risk score. The next stage of the process will be to document all controls and identify desired outcomes. This work continues and members will be provided with a full update in December 2019.
- 3. Appendix A also shows the detailed risk report for those risks scoring 15 and above at the time of the last update. The reports are as yet incomplete they need updating to show desired outcomes and action plan owners/implementation dates. Work will continue with relevant officers to identify and update these, discussions will take place with respective management teams during the new financial year. This work is linked to a wider piece of work around reviewing the service planning process and identification of key governance controls. More information on this will be provided at the December 2019 update.
- 4. Members are aware we have been revising the risk management process, Appendix B shows a sample of the format. The list of risks will be updated to reflect any changes to the Council Plan. Members will note a more comprehensive lsit of controls along with a RAG status and impact. Future years audit plans will be structured around these controls providing a more integrated approach to audit and risk management.
- 5. There have been no amendments to the register:

#### FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

#### **Financial**

The successful identification, assessment and management of risks are fundamental to proper performance of the Council's fiscal duties and responsibilities.

#### Legal

Where applicable, legal implications have been identified and considered as an integral part of the assessment of risks referred to in this report.

#### **Risk Assessment**

As the risk management programme is achieving its objectives and the recently completed independent review of how well the Council manages its risks concluded there is a high level of maturity with systems and procedures well embedded and working, this can be considered a low risk area.

#### **COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Environment**

Good risk management practice supports the Council's objectives for securing a safe and attractive environment for current and future generations.

#### **Community Safety and Well-Being**

Effective risk management is an essential element of fulfilling objectives in relation to community safety and well-being and a key component of the safer communities' strategy.

Health )
Economic Regeneration )
Education and Lifelong Learning )
Arts and Culture )

Where applicable, implications for these platform areas have been identified and considered as an integral part of the assessment of risks referred to in this report.

#### **Consultation Including Ward/Councillors**

No consultations have taken place specifically in relation to the risk management aspects of the topics covered in this report.

J Danks Deputy Chief Executive

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#### **Background Papers**

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL

SBC Guidance for Strategic Risk Identification and Assessment.

### Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Not Ward specific.

#### **Property**

Where applicable, implications in relation to the Council's property have been identified and considered as an integral part of the assessment of risks referred to in this report.

Appendix A

# Strategic Risk Register

November 2019

No.	Risk	Description	Current Risk
1	Financial Management	Financial resources may not be available to pay creditors, support the Council's corporate planning processes, financial strategy and annual budgets.	16
2	Human Resources	The skills, expertise and level of human resources available may not be sufficient to support the overall aims of the organisation.	12
3	Information Governance	Failure to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of personal and corporate information and data.	16
4	Children and Young People Outcomes	Failure to provide improve life chances, provide opportunities and education for children and young people, particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable to poor outcomes.	16
5	Safeguarding Children	Children and young people of Stockton-on-Tees may not be safe, protected and cared for.	20
6	Prosperous Communities	Failure to ensure we have diverse, cohesive, caring and vibrant communities, who are provided with skills and opportunities to achieve economic prosperity.	16
7	Development Control	Developments within the borough may not be controlled and managed in line with regulations and council objectives.	8
8	Democratic Process	Failure to deliver effective and high quality Electoral Registration, Elections, Committee Administration and Member Support Services and to promote democratic engagement within the borough.	8
9	Communications	Failure to deliver effective communication, consultation and engagement.	6
10	Health and Wellbeing – Residents	Failure to promote and protect health and wellbeing across the borough and to reduce inequalities.	12
11	Safeguarding Adults	Adults of Stockton-on-Tees may not be safe, protected and cared for.	10
12	Housing	Failure to address the housing requirements of the borough and provide affordable, high-quality housing.	6
13	Physical Assets	The Council may not optimize the use of physical assets.	6
14	Economic Growth	Failure to encourage regeneration, support enterprise and improve development opportunities for new and existing businesses across the borough.	8
15	Highways, Transport and Environment	Failure to maintain and deliver an effective and safe highways and transport network, which meets the needs of the borough.	12
16	Culture and Leisure	People may not be provided with opportunities to experience and participate in sporting or cultural activities.	3
17	Community Safety	Failure to provide a safe Stockton-on-Tees, where all residents are able to live their lives in a borough free from crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.	12

18	Refuse and Waste	Refuse and waste may not be managed effectively to maximize recycling and minimise waste.	12
19	Green Spaces	Failure to provide a clean, green and attractive environment throughout the borough.	4
20	Registrars and Bereavement	Failure to provide the statutory registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships for the district of Stockton, and provide a burial and advice service for Stockton Cemeteries and residents.	6
21	ICT Infrastructure	The Council may not have a resilient and flexible ICT infrastructure.	12
22	Fraud and Corruption	Failure to detect or prevent fraud and corruption.	8

Overall Risk Score =	Impact Score X	Likelihood Score
1 - 3	Very Low	Should be addressed by existing management systems and routine daily activities.
4 - 8	Low	Should be addressed by existing management systems and routine daily activities.
9 - 12	Medium	Contingency plan in place tested where possible and regularly reviewed - requires active risk management at service area level and should feature on Service Group Risk Register.
15 - 20	High	As 'Medium' above – Action Plan to reduce risk to as low a level as possible within 12 months - should feature on Corporate Risk Register.
21 - 25	Catastrophic	As 'Medium' above – requires active risk management and control measures at Service Group/Corporate level - Action Plan to reduce risk to as low a level as possible within 6 months - should feature on Corporate Risk Register.

Financial Managemer

Financial resources may not be available to pay creditors, support the Council's corporate planning processes, financial strategy and annua budgets.

Causes	Implications	Risk Status					
Reduction in government funding leading to the necessity to deliver savings and efficiencies.  Lack of certainty in funding post 2020.  Individual service pressures for example rising number of looked after children; increasing demands on Adults' services.  External pressures e.g. adapting to the demands and opportunities created by climate change.	Potentially a significant impact on reputation, service delivery, and achievement of Council objectives.	long term a possible prodifficult. Characteristics approach a predicting to Council is eximitigate the Costs to suppressure on ways to mathrough use to fund the	pproach to find tect front-line anges to the find ition post 2020 and plan over these change exploring alterrate impact of looked abudgets. The ke as many explorion of technology	nancial plann services. How financial posit 0 remains und the medium s which should native investm w level of inte After Children Smarter Work fficiencies an by and LEAN rests associated	ning to deliver wever, saving tion are extrent certain, howe to long terminal dent such as perest rates on a are now over king programinal d savings as peviews. Further d with the Glo	management savings and verse becoming with the impactor of the	wherever ng more d the a managed h and t. The s to estments. ear, placing to consider ample s required
Retention of business rates.		Current Risk Desired Outcome			ne		
Low level of interest rates.		Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score
		4	4	16	-	-	-

Controls	Required Actions	Owner and Target Date
Prepare and deliver a balanced and sustainable Medium Term Financial Plan.	Close monitoring of future changes to Local Government Finance.	Ongoing
Ongoing monitoring and delivery of savings and efficiency targets, including the Big Picture savings	2. Monitor delivery of savings programme.	Ongoing
programme, use of technology.	<ol><li>Ensure all contracts are appropriate, deliver value for money and required outcomes.</li></ol>	Ongoing
Maximise and safeguard income for the council, including effective treasury management strategy, debt recovery, maximize funding opportunites.	Operational review of services.	Ongoing

•	Effective use of resources and assets, including
	procurement strategies, Smarter Working programme,
	Asset strategies.

- Monitoring income from investment properties.
- Maintain and deliver the Capital Programme.
- Timely and effective financial performance reporting and monitoring.
- Good understanding and interpretation of changes to funding regimes and analysis of the Government annual budget statements, this is supplemented by external expert advice.
- Payment of creditors.
- Robust governance framework.
- Adequate insurance coverage.
- Compliance with relevant accounting principles and standards to satisfy legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Availability of financial information systems.

## 5. Maximise Council Tax, Business Rate, and commercial rents income.

- 6. Close monitoring of the impact of 100% business rate retention.
- 7. Implement Smarter Working programme.
- 8. Provide a positive annual opinion statement to Audit Committee.
- 9. Annual statement of Accounts prepared to statutory deadlines and free from material errors.

#### Ongoing

Ongoing - Continued Government Delays

Ongoing

30 June 2020

31 July 2019

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#### Information Governance

Failure to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of personal and corporate information and data.

Causes	Implications	Risk Status					
Non-compliance with legislation and best practice standards.  Human error.  Deliberate attack.	If the Council does not effectively manage personal data, a penalty of up to 4% of turnover may be levied by the Information Commissioner.  Detrimental impact on end user/customer.  Service disruption.	It is crucial that the Council has a robust information governance framework in place to effectively manage information security and protect personal data. The scale and pace of structural and technological change within the organisation presents new challenges. The likelihood remains high however progress has been made in the delivery of awareness training to officers and Members. Compliance with the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which apply in the UK from 25 May 2018, needs to be effectively understood and managed to control the likelihood of risk. Results of audit work suggest there is still work needed in this area.				personal le within the n however officers and egulation ectively	
	Detentially major reputational	Current Risk Desired Outcome					ne
	Potentially major reputational damage.	Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score
		4	4	16	4	2	8

Controls	Required Actions	Owner and Target Date
Compliance with legislation and information publication requirements.	Completion of Information Asset Registers and associated action plans.	Services, supported by Information Governance team – Work is ongoing to address identified actions.
<ul> <li>Information management policies, strategies, processes and procedures (Employees Guide to Information Security, Data Protection, Records Management, Information Classification and Handling Guidelines).</li> </ul>	2. Policies and online training are being updated.	Information Governance team - December 2019
<ul> <li>Information Asset Registers are in place, enabling appropriate improvement action plans to be developed to mitigate risks.</li> </ul>	<ol> <li>Finalise completion of the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) Information Governance Toolkit.</li> </ol>	Information Governance team leading – March 2020.
Regular monitoring of information governance by Corporate Governance Group.		

	<ul> <li>Completion of mandatory online (4 Learning)         Information Security awareness course for all staff with access to the network.     </li> </ul>	Review management of electronic records, Microsoft     365 will significantly change how electronic data is     stored and managed.	March 2021
,	Titus Labs message classification for Outlook.		
,	Automatic email encryption.		
,	<ul> <li>Encryption of removable media – laptops, tablets, USB devices.</li> </ul>		
,	Information security incident management process incorporating lessons learned improvement action plans. Breaches and incidents are recorded.		
,	Shredding contract for secure disposal of information.		
,	• Egress secure workspace facility.		
,	Business continuity arrangements in place covering availability of information.		
,	Data quality management process is in place to identify corporate and service specific improvements that are required. Included in new system implementation is a review of processes to force data quality standards.		

4		Children and Young People Outcomes			Failure to provide improve life chances, provide opportunities and education for children and young people, particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable to poor outcomes.						
Causes		Implications		Risk Status							
Unpredictable level of demand for services for LAC; high number and complexity of external residential placements.  Challenging economic climate with financial constraint.  Loss of education funding to the local authority as schools convert to academies.		Failure to provide every the best start in life.  Social impacts associate poor educational attain and reduced health and being.  Reputational damage.  Financial cost of external placements.	The level of risk has increased in response to the February 20 area SEND inspection which identified many strengths but a particular areas for focus, impacting on provision and outcoment, and young people with SEND.  Achievements have been made around school performant of social workers and performance of residential care home standard of early years provision, early help services and the has had a positive impact; reducing the number of children Council remains on track to deliver required number of places.				ths but also fond outcomes  rformance, regree homes. The sand the Children in near of places in better outcomes a Council Tay children's hear costly out outcome the costly outcome the cos	recruitment The high hildren's Hub need. The in relation to stcomes for Tax homes and of borough ating to the ts. There are			
			training. There are issues to address relating to communication information sharing between partners which may create bard support.								
				Current Risk Desired Outcome			ne				
				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score		
				4	4	16	-	-	-		

Controls	Required Actions	Owner and Target Date
Strategies and plans in place, including Children and Young People plan, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Early Help Strategy, Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy, Youth Justice Plan.	Written Statement of Action in response to the joint area inspection of SEND.	12 August 2019
Governance framework	2. Delivery of Children and Young People's Plan.	Ongoing
Effective partnership working.	Delivery of Ofsted recommendations.	Ongoing
Engagement of children and young people in shaping service delivery.	<ol> <li>Develop delivery plans for family hubs.</li> <li>Creating opportunities specifically targeted at care</li> </ol>	Ongoing Ongoing
Support individuals and families through provision of information, effective prevention work and early help approach.	<ul><li>leavers.</li><li>6. Address key themes from the recent peer challenge.</li></ul>	Ongoing
Delivery of sufficient, good quality childcare places for targeted groups.		
Care leavers are supported into suitable housing and employment or training.		
Ensuring sufficient school places are available to meet the needs of children and young people within the borough.		
Effective administration and co-ordination of school admissions.		
Evaluation of school performance and pupil attainment; providing support and intervention to expedite improvement.		
Internal monitoring of Children's Centres' performance.		
Provision of support to children, parents and schools to encourage attendance and reduce exclusion.		
Educational Psychology Service.		
School Workforce Development.		
High quality children's homes and placements.		

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#### **Safeguarding Children**

Children and young people of Stockton-on-Tees may not be safe, protected and cared for.

20

Causes	Implications	Risk Status						
			10 Ofstad insp	action of obj	ldrop/s social		idontified	
Failure to protect a child or young person from death or serious harm as a result of increased referral activity and workload pressures, leading to either a failing in policies / procedures, personnel or partnerships.	Ineffective safeguarding has potentially critical implications for individuals (Children, responsible officers/members), and the reputation of the organisation.	the need fo particularly assessment experiencin rates of re-re	The May 2019 Ofsted inspection of children's social care services identified the need for significant improvement in some areas of social care, particularly around management oversight and quality assurance. Whilst assessment of need is completed in a timely manner, some children are experiencing unnecessary delays in their assessed needs being met and the rates of re-referral are high.					
		Demand pressures continue to be high as a result of high referral activit high number of child protection plans and a high number of looked after children. The number of LAC increasing last year by 17%. Successful roll of Signs of Safety approach to support planning has had a positive effereducing the number of CPP; however there are some signs of increase the number being subject to a CPP for a subsequent time.					ked after oful roll out ve effect,	
		Strong multi-agency partnership working provides a coordinated apparent and immediate safeguarding concerns are quickly addressed.						
		Recruitment and retention of experienced social workers continues to be a challenge although social work vacancy rates and staff turnover have reduced, providing stability.						
		Current Risk Desired Outcome			ne			
		Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score	

Controls	Required Actions	Owner and Target Date
Compliance with statutory obligations.	Delivery of SLSCB Strategic Plan.	Ongoing
Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB).	Implementation of Ofsted recommendations.	Ongoing

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<ul> <li>Effective multi-agency arrangements.</li> <li>Policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</li> </ul>	Development of new local safeguarding arrangements to ensure compliance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017	Ongoing
Communication and raising awareness of safeguarding.	Safely reduce the number of children needing to be in care.	Ongoing
Effective recruitment, retention and supervision of persons who work with children.		
Compliance with DBS policy.		
Timely assessment of need.		
Targeted intervention where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare.		
<ul> <li>Reviews of serious cases, management reviews and reviews of child deaths provide feedback and identify areas for improvement.</li> </ul>		
Quality assurance framework: Self review. monthly casework auditing and themed audits identify areas for improvement; annual team health checks assess the performance of individual teams; Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) scrutiny review; Case tracking through the Children's Social Care Performance Clinic.		
Performance indicators and reporting identify areas of demand pressure.		
Children's hub managing referrals.		

#### **Prosperous Communities**

Failure to ensure we have diverse, cohesive, caring and vibrant communities, who are provided with opportunities to achieve economic prosperity.

Causes
Universal Credit.
Failure to effectively engage with the communities we serve.

Failure to manage expectations.

Democratic pressures.

Environmental factors.

**Implications** 

Social impact on outcomes and life chances as a result of financial difficulties and family poverty.

Negative financial impact on the local economy.

Alienation and disengagement of the community.

#### Risk Status

There are multiple factors that drive poverty and limit life chances. An effective approach to tackling these requires a long term and sustained commitment from all partner agencies. Within Stockton-on-Tees, an increasing elderly population, growing diversity of communities, and continuing public sector budget reductions presents ongoing challenges. The impact and likelihood are high, however a large amount of mitigation work is being undertaken by the Council and partner organisations. A range of programmes and activities are in place to assist with finding employment and further learning. As a result of our energy efficiency work the last 6 years has seen a reduction of 48% of households blighted by fuel poverty. The introduction of Universal Credit continues to cause concern.

Current Risk		Desired Outcome			
Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score
4	4	16	-	-	-

Controls	Required Actions	Owner and Target Date
<ul> <li>Regular monitoring of welfare reform activity and impacts.</li> <li>Provide support and resource to Tees Credit Union which will support those most affected by welfare</li> </ul>	<ol> <li>Evaluation of the implications of Universal Credit.</li> <li>Raise and maintain the profile of fuel poverty and affordable warmth.</li> </ol>	Ongoing Ongoing
<ul> <li>reform changes.</li> <li>Back on Track Scheme provides support to residents in crisis situations as well as those settling into the community.</li> </ul>		
Tackling Family Poverty Framework in place.		
Effective partnership working with agencies, including Housing and Advice Services; fuel poverty programme.		

- Strategic planning to minimise the impact of climate change and extreme weather events on communities; and to harness future opportunities to enable communities to prosper.
- Stockton Strategic Partnership draws together representatives to ensure that we engage with our communities, meet local needs and priorities by planning and working together effectively.
- Multi-disciplinary Service undertake assessment and support people to access welfare support and benefits.
- Welfare Right service, aimed at ensuring that people are aware of and receiving their maximum entitlement to state welfare benefits.
- Contract in place with Stockton Advice and Information Services (SDAIS) for the provision of borough wide advice and information services.
- Regular review of service provisions and reporting to Members.
- In-house bailiff service to assist in recovery of Council Tax arrears, providing a customer focused, holistic approach to debt recovery that will help to maximise customers' income and mitigate the impact of changes to bailiff legislation.
- Learning and Skills Service offers community courses, apprenticeships, study programmes and assistance for those looking to access employment.
- Effective performance monitoring of subcontracted Learning and Skills provision through our Quality Assurance policy and procedures including Observation of Teaching Learning and Assessment and the self-assessment process.
- Lottery Funded Stockton Welfare Advice Network (SWAN) provides free online information on a range of issues affecting the people living in Stockton Borough.

**187** Financial Management The authority may not adequately plan in the medium term and effectively manage the day to day finances of the organisation.

#### **Current Status** Causes Reduction in government funding leading to the necessity to The Council requires a strong approach to financial management and a long term deliver savings and efficiencies. Lack of certainty in funding approach to financial planning to deliver savings and wherever possible protect post 2020. Individual service pressures for example rising front-line services. However, savings are becoming more difficult. Changes to the number of looked after children; increasing demands on financial position are extremely likely and the funding position post 2020 remains uncertain, however we have a managed approach and plan over the medium to Adults' services. External pressures e.g. adapting to the demands and opportunities created by climate change. long term to dealing with and predicting these changes which should help Retention of business rates. Low level of interest rates. manage the impact. The Council is exploring alternative investment such as **Implications** property funds to mitigate the impact of low level of interest rates on short term investments. Costs to support Looked After Children are now over £20m per year, Potentially a significant impact on reputation, service delivery, placing pressure on budgets. The Smarter Working programme continues to and achievement of Council objectives. consider ways to make as many efficiencies and savings as possible for example through use of technology and LEAN reviews. Further borrowing is required to fund the additional costs associated with the Globe Theatre. Additional borrowing of £6.5m is required at a cost of £325k per year. **Desired Outcome Current Assessment** Likelihood Total Likelihood Impact **Impact** Total 4 16 4 0 0 0

RAG	Controls	Impact
	Deliver the efficiency programme in place with identified lead responsibilities	14
	Treasury Management Strategy meets the Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code of Practice.	13
	Delivery of contract management plans	9
	Delivery of tender management plan	9
	Ensure accurate in-year financial monitoring	21
	Ensure accurate monitoring of capital programme and schemes	16
	Financial appraisal completed as part of business case/options appraisal	11
	Focussed financial support to commercial ventures	20
	Maintain formula and support for funding schools and high needs	16
	Debt Management of commercial properties is effective	6
	Clear budget process and timetable is in place	20

Clear contract procedure rules	11
Operate clear arrangements for billing and collection of council tax and business rates	18
Operate Stockton Collections arrangements and bad debt arrangements in compliance with relevant legislation.	8
Provide insurance underwriting support to services	3
Undertake forward planning and projections of external factors in respect of income and expenditure and feed into MTFP.	18
Prepare and submit financial returns by deadlines - RA/RO/Capital	13
Costs and demand for services are monitored to ensure the best use of resources.	9
Ensure specifications are clear and include all requirements for safe care	8
Secure and effective arrangements for the collection, recording and recovery of income in respect of land charges.	6
Financial information is updated in a timely manner and recorded accurately within Business World On!	11
Standard exception reports are produced for subsequent investigation and clearance.	8
A Creditors procedure manual is held and all staff are aware of this manual.	6
Invoice certification procedures should confirm that: goods and services have been received; prices have been checked; discounts have been taken and the invoice has not been paid before.	13
All invoices/requisitions are expenditure coded.	11
The authority complies with HMRC CIS scheme.	13
Invoices give details of what the debts relate to, the goods and services provided and dates of provision, and are coded to the correct service.	10
Arrears recovery procedures are clearly defined and implemented in all cases. Reminder and recovery action periods are suitable for the types of debtor involved. Like debtors are treated equally.	11
Standing orders/financial regulations require the reasons for all sundry debtor write-offs exceeding £x to be reported to committee. Write-offs below this amount may be authorised by a nominated officer when all recovery procedures have been unsuccessful.	8
A master record of periodical income records the amount and due dates of all sums which become due under the terms of leases, rents, licences, and wayleaves etc., amendments may be made to the master record by nominated officers only (on standard forms controlled by the Finance department) and certified by authorised officers.	11
A record is kept of all accounts which are not dispatched at the time the accounts are raised. This record indicates why this action was taken, and where appropriate, records the agreement of the budget holder.	8
Regular reconciliations are performed between the total credits in the debtor's system and the Main Accounting system.	8
Amendments and credits can only occur with the authorisation of the responsible officer for the cost centre whose account was originally credited in error.	8

Required Actions	Target Date
	3 - 1