

LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE (CPC) 2023 – RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: There is a requirement for Organisational Transformation which must be led and driven by the Leader and CEO.

The council has embarked on a process of renewal to ensure it continues to be fit for its purposes. This of course will be led by the Leader and the Chief Executive and will harness the enthusiasm of officers and councillors alike.

Recommendation 2: Prioritise the delivery of the Corporate Plan (clear vision) and accompanying narrative to ensure it is understood and well communicated internally and externally.

A new corporate plan is in preparation. It is scheduled to be considered by the Council Executive in April 2024. It will be accompanied by a series of actions that will demonstrate further the process of renewal and commitment to changes to which the CPC has referred.

Recommendation 3: Re-write the performance metrics to align to the corporate plan, using this data to underpin performance management and decision making.

Performance measures – both service based and those supporting the corporate plan are being revised; this is well advanced.

Recommendation 4: Ensure collective responsibility, involvement and ownership by members and officers to address the financial challenges ahead, to enable financial targets to be met.

A medium term financial strategy has been agreed and will be kept under review. The budget for 2024/2025 will be considered by Council on 7 March 2024 following extensive participation by councillors and officers and including public consultation.

Recommendation 5: Develop and deliver a training programme for all members and a learning and development programme for employees.

It is agreed that further training for members is needed. It is also agreed that training for employees will be developed further.

Recommendation 6: Build on existing (and develop new) partnerships in order to enable the delivery of Council priorities.

Agreed.

Recommendation 7: Accelerate the asset and income generation review.

Agreed in part. The asset and income review is progressing as quickly as possible and is not likely to be accelerated. Consideration of risk is embedded in EBC decision making; the degree of risk that is acceptable is issue dependent, balancing the achievement of objectives and the consequences of adverse outcomes.

Recommendation 8: Build on proposed constitutional changes to remove bureaucracy and get decision making to the right place, at the right level and at the right time.

The Constitution has been reviewed and proposals are expected to be considered by General Purposes Committee in May and subsequently.

Recommendation 9: Prioritise development of a Communications and Engagement Strategy.

The council continually explores ways to improve communication and engagement and has a good record of adopting new platforms, particularly in the social media arena. As part of this, proposals are included within the 2024/25 budget to discontinue EBC Today, the council's quarterly community magazine, and adopt new online e-Newsletter and Engagement platforms. These will offer open dialogue and feedback loops which will help extend audience, audience groups, and increase engagement leading to improved representation across the borough. Alongside this, the council is making other innovations and recently the council reintroduced a consultation on its draft budget.