



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
26 July 2018

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

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1. Summary

This report presents Council with the report of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge which took place between Monday 24 April 2018 and Thursday 26 April 2018. The Peer Team were led by a Council Chief Executive and was made up of senior officers from other Council's and a Peer Member. Following three and a half days of intensive work the Peer Team provided feedback on their findings on Thursday 26 April, making 11 recommendations.

A workshop session for Members to discuss the recommendations and the areas for action identified in the report and to identify their priorities will be taking place on Thursday 26 July 2018 following Council.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- A. Endorse the Corporate Peer Challenge report
- B. Agree the recommendations made by Corporate Peer Challenge Team
- C. Take part in a workshop session following Council on Thursday 26 July 2018 to consider the recommendations and specific areas for action and prioritise them.
- D. Agree that progress in delivering agreed and prioritised recommendations is incorporated into the quarterly corporate performance management reports

Report

3. Opportunity Risk Appraisal

- 3.1 The Corporate Peer Challenge provides a useful and proven approach to identify risks and opportunities for the Council, with a particular corporate focus. Because the Council is able to build on the core CPC areas of focus and identify additional areas relevant to the Council's priorities and issues, this provides further opportunities to gain particular insights and knowledge to help plan how to address them.

4. Financial Appraisal

- 4.1 There are no financial requirements directly related to this report. All actions which may be taken to deliver agreed recommendations are expected to be able to be delivered through business as usual, existing planned activity, and transformation programmes and projects.

5. About the Corporate Peer Challenge

- 5.1 Corporate Peer Challenge is not an inspection. The Council invited the LGA to carry out the Peer Challenge, recognising that they are improvement focused and tailored to meet individual Council's needs.
- 5.2 The Peer Team were on site from Monday 24 April 2018 to Thursday 26 April 2018. In completing their work they met with over 125 people, through more than 50 meetings, and completed additional research and reading and visited some key sites in the area.
- 5.3 The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge is based around 5 key components which are considered to be critical to a council's performance and improvement.
- Understanding of the local place and priority setting: Does the council understand its local context and place and use that to inform a clear vision and set of priorities?
 - Leadership of Place: Does the council provide effective leadership of place through its elected members, officers and constructive relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders?
 - Organisational leadership and governance: Is there effective political and managerial leadership supported by good governance and decision-making arrangements that respond to key challenges and enable change and transformation to be implemented?

- Financial planning and viability: Does the council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?
- Capacity to deliver: Is organisational capacity aligned with priorities and does the council influence, enable and leverage external capacity to focus on agreed outcomes?

5.4 As part of the five core components, the Council asked the peer team to consider/review/provide feedback on the following:

- The Council’s plan for taking out costs by transformation, in particular digital transformation which is expected to deliver £10m of savings.
- Growth and whether the Council’s proposals for economic growth are robust
- The Council’s Commercial Activity Plan
- How well the Council is working with its NHS and other partners for example in delivering the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)

6.0 Summary of Corporate Peer Challenge recommendations

6.1 The Corporate Peer Challenge report presents 11 recommendations to the Council. They are set out in full on pages 3 and 4 of the report, attached at appendix 1. The following provides the summary view.

1	Ensure you have a clear and well communicated vision which is underpinned by evidence and owned by the Cabinet and SMT.
2	Given the level of risk within the financial strategy, develop detailed implementation plans to provide assurance that savings will be achieved.
3	Strengthen the investment in the joint Cabinet/SMT Team to help deliver better outcomes and model the desired culture. Adopt a whole Council approach.
4	Be clearer about your specific priorities and outcomes, communicate them and focus resources accordingly.
5	Define and develop the Council’s reputation and brand. Plan cohesively all communications and marketing.
6	Prioritise completion of key strategies and communicate them. Clarify accountability for delivery and measure impact.
7	Determine the Council’s future role with Health and the STP.
8	Develop a package of training and development opportunities for Cabinet Members.
9	Continue to build relationships with businesses and other partners/stakeholders to add capacity to deliver the ambitions

	for Shropshire.
10	Strengthen staff engagement and recognition to support the culture required to deliver transformation.
11	Celebrate success!

6.2 In addition to the recommendations, the report also sets out some specific areas for action in the written sections. Addressing these actions will help to deliver the recommendations, and it is important that they receive equal consideration.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Peer Challenge was a significant procedure for the Council. It required preparation and the willingness to embrace feedback and critical friend challenge from people from outside of the Council, both from the Peer team and from partners and other external stakeholders
- 7.2 The Council requested the Corporate Peer Challenge because of the recognition that external insights would be constructive and help inform how to plan for a progress in the next three to five years. The expectation was that the process would be challenging and that learning would take place.
- 7.3 The recommendations and the specific areas for action within the report provide the basis for the Council to consider how it wants to proceed. The next stage is to decide whether all of the recommendations are agreed, and to prioritise them to ensure that energy and resources are focused on those judged the most important.
- 7.4 In order to do this a workshop session for all Members has been arranged to follow the meeting of Council on the 26 July 2018. The aim is to provide Members with a timely opportunity to consider the agreed recommendations and specific areas for action in more detail, prioritising them and thereby informing the development of the actions that will be taken to deliver them.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet Member
Cllr Peter Nutting
Local Member
All
Appendices
Appendix 1 – Shropshire Council Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report