

CORPORATE PEER REVIEW

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **4th March 2014**

From: **Corporate Director: Customer Service and Transformation**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward plan ref: **N/a** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To receive the report compiled by the Local Government Association Peer Review Team.**

Recommendation: **Cabinet is recommended to:**

- **Receive the report compiled by the Local Government Association Peer Review Team**
- **Note its content**
- **Approve the action plan.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 When changes to the nationally imposed inspection and assessment regime for local government were implemented, the Local Government Association (LGA) developed a new approach to local government. This was built on certain principles including:
- Councils are responsible for their own performance and improvement; and
 - Councils have a collective responsibility for the performance of the sector as a whole.
- 1.2 Although inspection and assessment are still in place for specific services, the LGA developed a methodology which allowed for sector-led improvement through sharing best practice and peer reviews involving elected members and officers.
- 1.3 Cambridgeshire County Council invited the LGA to conduct a Corporate Peer Challenge in October 2013.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The Peer Review Challenge Team was made up of two elected members, two senior local government officers and a senior manager from BT, supported by a LGA Programme Manager.
- 2.2 The Peer Challenge covers core components which are described in the report.
- 2.3 In addition, the Council asked the Peer Team to focus on four specific areas and the Team's opinions on these are also contained in the report.
- 2.4 They conducted their review through a series of interviews with individuals, members and senior officers and interviews/workshops with front-line staff, middle managers, key partners and members of the public and also observed meetings.
- 2.5 The experience of the Challenge was felt to be positive and the Peer Challenge team commented on several strengths in the Council, including the quality, loyalty and commitment of staff.
- 2.6 Their initial findings were presented on 18th October 2013 and their full report published afterwards (attached as Appendix B). An action plan (Appendix A) has been drawn up which describes how the Review recommendations will be taken forward.
- 2.7 The action plan will be monitored by the Strategic Management Team.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING

- 3.1 The Corporate Peer Challenge was commissioned to assess the Council's overall capacity and resources to deliver services against a backdrop of significant growth. The Review included views on how these align with corporate priorities and ways of working.

4. **SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no significant implications for any of the specified categories associated with the Challenge in implementing the action plan. Officers will highlight any implications. However, the over-arching expectation is that this will be done within existing resources and will inform future business planning.

Source Documents	Location
None	

LGA Peer Review October 2013: Action Plan

Peer Review Statement	Action	Lead Officer
Political and Managerial Leadership		
The Key Recommendations made by the Peer Challenge Team, based on their findings, are detailed below. The Peer Challenge Team believes these will help improve and develop the County Council's effectiveness and capacity to deliver future ambitions and plans.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider carefully how the successful meetings between Group Leaders become a sustainable process that develops a consensus around leadership and direction for CCC, particularly in terms of some of the very tough financial and service decisions CCC will have to make. Ensure there is a robust analysis of the real 'cost to the business' of the proposed model of governance and its impact on effective decision making Building on current work - develop a structured process across CCC and partners to identify realistic savings across the system (using community budget approaches) especially in terms of prevention and early help. 	<p>These meetings are well established and take place regularly. It is acknowledged that a consensus may not always be possible but the aim is to ensure that all Group Leaders are aware of the challenges facing the Council and can play a role in determining the corporate approach to this.</p> <p>This has been acknowledged by the Constitution and Ethics Committee and the County Council in determining the new governance arrangements. Costs have been estimated and will continue to be refined as the guidance and protocols are developed.</p> <p>This will be pursued via a range of avenues, including the Cambridgeshire Public Service Board.</p>	<p>Chief Executive, Group Leaders</p> <p>Chief Executive, Director of Law, Property and Governance.</p> <p>Chief Executive, Executive Director, CFA</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look again at the scale of ambition to reconfirm the priorities of the organisation within the financial resources available to it • Ensure there is a robust analysis of the scale of requirements for corporate capacity and capability to deliver the Council's business plan and other key activities such as City Deal • Consider a formal engagement process with all staff to develop ideas around efficiencies and innovation • Ensure that the formal arrangements between LGSS and CCC are focused on delivering value to CCC 	<p>During the Business Plan process for 2014/5 to 2018/19 the Council's priorities were reconfirmed. Each year thereafter these priorities will be reviewed and amended according to the results of that review.</p> <p>Each Director has to address the need to provide sufficient resources to deliver services within the Business Plan and to take forward major initiatives. In addition, the development of a comprehensive workforce strategy that covers skills, ensures succession planning and supports knowledge and skills transfer from employees leaving the organisation and from consultants/contractors will support Directors to maintain an adequate resource base.</p> <p>A sustainable scheme that encourages ideas and innovation from employees and is linked to a recognition award is being investigated.</p> <p>Working with LGSS, Service Level Agreements have been developed for full implementation from April 2014. These form a starting point to ensure that LGSS priorities are focussed on those of CCC and therefore deliver further savings/efficiencies.</p>	<p>Chief Executive, SMT, elected members</p> <p>Corporate Leadership Team, Director of People, Transformation and Transactions</p> <p>Director, Customer Service & Transformation, Head of People</p> <p>CCC Client role will be carried out by the Director, Customer Service & Transformation</p>
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