

REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	21st June 2017

Jan 2017



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	AUTHOR	<i>Agenda item No.</i>
Corporate Peer Challenge Report and Improvement Plan	Leader	Joanne Platt Interim Corporate Improvement Manager	

Is this report a KEY DECISION	No
Is this report on the Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present the report from the recent LGA Corporate Peer Challenge to Cabinet and to seek approval of a new Corporate Improvement Plan to incorporate the recommendations in the report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Cabinet approves the new Corporate Improvement Plan attached at **Appendix 2** (subject to the Scrutiny Committee's comments, with any changes arising therefrom being agreed in consultation with the Leader).

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Clean, green and safe		Strong and healthy communities	
Strong South Ribble in the heart of prosperous Lancashire		Efficient, effective and exceptional council	✓

4. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

A key component of the Corporate Improvement Plan approved by Cabinet in February 2017 was the Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) (commissioned by the Local Government Association), which took place during the last week of March.

The final report (**Appendix 1**) was received by the Council in April and this has already been shared with all members, staff and the partners who took part in the CPC.

5. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The CPC report contains a number of recommendations to be delivered over the next 6-months. Cabinet members have now considered the recommendations in the report and a new Corporate Improvement Plan has been developed.

5.1 Improvement priorities

Some activities are more important than others and priority has therefore been given to addressing these, as follows:

A cross party **Improvement Reference Group** (IRG) chaired by the Leader of the Council has been established. The group is a partnership between the Council and the Local Government Association the purpose of which is to provide oversight, support and challenge to the Council's improvement and transformation journey. The Group held its first meeting on 15th May and has scheduled further meetings each month until November.

A programme of **member training and personal development** activities focusing on roles and responsibilities and member conduct is being developed and will be rolled out over the course of the next 6-months. This is in addition to the member development plan currently being developed to underpin the Council's new Organisational Development Strategy.

A series of **externally facilitated workshops** has been commissioned by the LGA for delivery in June and July.

Detailed project plans to achieve the savings identified in the 2017-20 **medium-term financial strategy** (MTFS) (including the dates for key decisions on garden waste, car parking charges, leisure, shared services and transformation projects) have been developed.

5.2 Other improvement activities

Work will start over the summer to agree **a clear vision** for the Borough to tackle the key strategic challenges facing the Council. This will be underpinned by clear priorities (set out in a new corporate plan), a **new MTFS** for 2018-20 and a **Transformation Programme**.

The **organisational structure** will be re-designed around these key priorities under the leadership of the new permanent Chief Executive.

A new **Leadership Development Programme** for senior and middle managers and a new **Member Development Plan** for all members (incorporating personal development plans for everyone) will be designed and rolled out as a key element of the new Organisational Development Strategy.

The Council's values will also be reviewed to reflect a new organisational culture based on pace and agility, ambition, innovation, transformation, empowerment and delivery, as identified in the CPC report.

6. Corporate Improvement Plan

The existing Corporate Improvement Plan (which was approved by Cabinet in February 2017) arose to address the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Licensing and issues identified during the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement. Many of the actions contained within that plan have been completed and a summary of the key achievements is set out below.

Governance:

- Officer and member working group established and new terms of reference agreed for Cabinet, Scrutiny, Governance and Standards Committees.
- Work programmes agreed for Scrutiny, Governance and Standards Committees
- Social media policy for members approved
- Review of Democratic Services completed and a new Committee Management System is being implemented

Engagement:

- Residents' Survey completed
- New Communications' Strategy approved and being delivered
- New Customer Feedback policy in place

Other:

- New style Corporate Plan and Corporate Risk Register in place
- Principles for new Organisational Development Strategy agreed
- A new permanent Chief Executive has been appointed
- An independent review gave the Council's Licensing Service a clean bill of health
- The Council's approach to Safeguarding has been independently endorsed by the Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Board
- The Corporate Peer Challenge has taken place

6.1 New Improvement Plan

A new Improvement Plan covering the key recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge has been produced. This is attached at **Appendix 2**.

The key themes of the new plan are:

- (i) Strong and effective political and managerial leadership;
- (ii) The development of a clear and concise vision for the future of the Borough and the Council;
- (iii) Delivery of the MTFs, including business transformation, shared services and the review of leisure.

A review of different models for the operation of the Governance Committee will also be considered as part of this plan.

Workshops will be arranged for all members to get engaged with the Vision, delivered by the Peers and a programme of support is being developed for the leading political groups and for the opposition.

Focus will now be on the new improvement plan although the Council's original Corporate Improvement Plan will be reported on an exception basis.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None – the Council needs to act on the recommendations of the CPC if it is to move forward.

8. WIDER IMPLICATIONS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION

8.1 Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

The costs associated with delivering the externally facilitated sessions can be accommodated within the Council's existing revenue budget.

8.2 Comments of the Monitoring Officer

Clearly it is vitally important that Cabinet should agree an amended Improvement Plan on the back of the report of the Corporate Peer Challenge and that the Council should get on with its implementation as soon as practicable. As part of the Annual Governance Statement process we will need to demonstrate the improvement journey that we are on.

8.3 Other implications:

Risk	Failure to address the issues identified in the CPC report (including delivery of the MTFs) will adversely affect the Council's reputation and its financial standing and viability in the future.
Equality	None
HR	Leadership development activities identified within the new Improvement Plan will positively impact on managers and staff. Resources to support delivery of the Improvement Plan are in place.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Scrutiny Review of Licensing
Annual Governance Statement 2016-17
Corporate Improvement Plan 2016-17

Appendix 1: Corporate Peer Challenge Report

Appendix 2: Corporate Improvement Plan 2017-18