

COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2018, 6.00 PM

SHIELD ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE, WEST PADDOCK, LEYLAND, PR25
1DH

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence**
- 2 Minutes of the last meeting** (Pages 3 - 8)

To confirm the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 July 2018 attached.
- 3 Declarations of Interest**

Members are requested to indicate at this stage in the proceedings any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest.
- 4 Mayors Announcements**
- 5 Report of Cabinet and Committees**
- 5a Minutes of the Governance Committee**

Meeting held on 26 July (to follow)
- 6 Vehicle Age Policy** (Pages 9 - 14)

Report of the Legal Services Manager/Interim Monitoring Officer attached.
- 7 Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan and response to Statutory Recommendation (Under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014)** (Pages 15 - 32)

Report of the Chief Executive attached.
- 8 Appointment of the Deputy Chief Executives and Shared Services Recruitment** (Pages 33 - 36)

Report of the Chief Executive attached.
- 9 Changes to Committee memberships and roles and responsibilities of the Cabinet 2018/19** (Pages 37 - 40)

Report of the Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services attached.

- 10 Questions to the Leader of the Council**
- 11 Questions to Members of the Cabinet**
- 12 Questions to Chairs of Committees and My Neighbourhood Areas**
- 13 Questions to Member Champions and Representatives on Outside Bodies**

Heather McManus
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Council Councillors John Rainsbury (Mayor), Carol Chisholm (Deputy Mayor), Jane Bell, Warren Bennett, David Bird, Renee Blow, Colin Clark, Colin Coulton, Malcolm Donoghue, Bill Evans, Derek Forrest, Paul Foster, Mary Green, Michael Green, Claire Hamilton, Harry Hancock, Jon Hesketh, Mick Higgins, David Howarth, Cliff Hughes, Ken Jones, Susan Jones, Jim Marsh, Keith Martin, Elizabeth Mawson, Caroline Moon, Jacqui Mort, Peter Mullineaux, Barbara Nathan, Mike Nathan, Mike Nelson, Rebecca Noblet, Alan Ogilvie, James Patten, Margaret Smith, Phil Smith, Susan Snape, David Suthers, Michael Titherington, Caleb Tomlinson, Matthew Tomlinson, Graham Walton, Karen Walton, Ian Watkinson, David Watts, Paul Wharton, Jonathan Woodcock, Linda Woollard and Barrie Yates

The minutes of this meeting will be available on the internet at www.southribble.gov.uk

Forthcoming Meetings

6.00 pm Wednesday, 5 December 2018 - Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

MINUTES OF COUNCIL

MEETING DATE Wednesday, 25 July 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors John Rainsbury (Mayor), Carol Chisholm (Deputy Mayor), Jane Bell, Warren Bennett, Renee Blow, Colin Coulton, Bill Evans, Derek Forrest, Mary Green, Michael Green, Harry Hancock, Jon Hesketh, Mick Higgins, David Howarth, Cliff Hughes, Ken Jones, Susan Jones, Jim Marsh, Keith Martin, Elizabeth Mawson, Caroline Moon, Jacqui Mort, Peter Mullineaux, Barbara Nathan, Mike Nathan, Mike Nelson, Alan Ogilvie, James Patten, Margaret Smith, Phil Smith, David Suthers, Michael Titherington, Caleb Tomlinson, Matthew Tomlinson, Graham Walton, Karen Walton, Ian Watkinson, David Watts, Paul Wharton, Jonathan Woodcock, David Wooldridge, Linda Woollard and Barrie Yates

OFFICERS: Helen Seechurn (Interim Deputy Chief Executive (Resources and Transformation)/Section 151 Officer) and Dave Whelan (Legal Services Manager/Interim Monitoring Officer)

OTHER MEMBERS: None

PUBLIC: 10

22 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Bird, Colin Clark, Mal Donoghue, Paul Foster, Claire Hamilton, Rebecca Noblet and Susan Snape.

23 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on Thursday, 17 May 2018 be approved as a correct record.

24 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

25 Mayors Announcements

The Mayor provided an update on the events he had recently attended and his forthcoming engagements.

26 Minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 21 June and 11 July 2018

The Council considered the approved minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 June 2018 and draft minutes of the Cabinet held on 11 July 2018.

It was moved by Councillor Mary Green, seconded by Councillor Caroline Moon and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the approved minutes of the Cabinet held on 21 June 2018 and draft minutes of the Cabinet held on 11 July be noted.

27 Minutes of the Governance Committee minutes - 29 May 2018

The Council considered the draft minutes of the Governance Committee held on 29 May 2018.

It was moved by Councillor Alan Ogilvie, seconded by Councillor Ian Watkinson and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the draft minutes of the Governance Committee on 29 May 2018 be noted.

28 Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 12 April and 28 June 2018

The Council considered the approved minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 April 2018 and draft minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 28 June 2018.

It was moved by Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, seconded by Councillor Colin Coulton and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the approved minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 April 2018 and draft minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 28 June 2018 be noted.

29 Annual Performance Report 2017/18

The Council considered a report by the Specialist Consultant which presented the annual performance report from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

It was moved by Councillor Caroline Moon, seconded by Councillor Mary Green and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the annual performance report from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 be noted.

30 Investment Property Strategy and associated funding

The Council considered a report by the Director of Planning and Property which included the Commercial Property Investment Portfolio Investment Strategy that had been agreed by the Cabinet on 21 June 2018.

In agreeing the strategy, Cabinet gave consideration to increasing the available funds to support the strategy from the £3.8M already agreed to £4.6M through utilising £0.8M from general reserves. The approval of Council was required to move £0.8M from general reserves to the investment property reserve to support the strategy.

It was moved by Councillor Warren Bennett, seconded by Councillor Caroline Moon and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the movement of £0.8M from general reserves to the investment property reserve be approved.

31 Review of Constitution Part 2Q -Review and Revision of the Constitution (formerly Article 16)

The Council considered a report by the Interim Monitoring Officer reviewing Part 2Q – Review of the Constitution (formerly Article 16), which had been considered by the Governance Committee on 29 May 2018.

It was moved by Councillor Alan Ogilvie, seconded by Councillor Ian Watkinson and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the draft Part 2Q – Review and Revision of the Constitution (formerly Article 16) as outlined at appendix B of the report be approved.

32 Review of Constitution Part 2P Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters - (formerly Article 15)

The Council considered a report by the Interim Monitoring Officer reviewing Part 2P - Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters (formerly Article 15), which had been considered by the Governance Committee on 29 May 2018.

It was moved by Councillor Alan Ogilvie, seconded by Councillor Ian Watkinson and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the draft Part 2P – Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters (formerly Article 15) as outlined at appendix B of the report be approved.

33 Review of Constitution Part 2N - Joint Arrangements (formerly Article 12)

The Council considered a report by the Interim Monitoring Officer reviewing Part 2N – Joint Arrangements (formerly Article 12), which had been considered by the Governance Committee on 29 May 2018.

It was moved by Councillor Alan Ogilvie, seconded by Ian Watkinson and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the draft Part N – Joint Arrangements (formerly Article 12) as outlined in appendix B of the report be approved.

34 Changes to Committee membership 2018/19

The Council considered a report by the Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services outlining Conservative Group changes to council and committee appointments for 2018/2019 and the use of reserve members for meetings of the Appointments and Employment Panel.

It was moved by Councillor Mary Green, seconded by Councillor Caroline Moon and

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That:

- (1) Councillor Graham Walton be appointed to the Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) Councillors Mike Nathan and David Suthers be appointed to the Governance Committee
- (3) Councillor Michael Green be appointed to the Shared Services Joint Committee;
- (4) Councillor Cliff Hughes be appointed to the Shared Services Joint Committee – Appointment Panel;
- (5) the use of a reserve for each politically represented group for meetings of the Appointment and Employment Panel be approved;
- (6) the appointment of Councillor Karen Walton as the new Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure and Wellbeing and the change of appointments to various outside bodies as a result of this change be noted.

35 Questions to the Leader of the Council

(a) Written question from Councillor David Howarth

Councillor David Howarth had submitted the following written question:

Could the Leader please advise council why it was felt necessary to obtain external legal advice on the composition of the Appointment and Employment panel as to whether it complied with local government legislation, and what costs were incurred as a result?

Given that the advice received was that the composition of the panel was in breach of legislation appertaining to the composition of committees and therefore unconstitutional, could the Leader advise as to what impact this has on the validity of the appointments and decisions made by the panel in relation to the Senior Management Team, and is the council now left open to challenge?

The Leader of the Council provided the following response:

Earlier this year the council obtained external advice on its duties in respect of reviewing and determining the representation of political groups on its committees.

This advice related to the membership of all committees, not just the Appointment and Employment Panel.

The issue had been raised at the Improvement Reference Group. In any event it is always good practice to periodically review your practices and see if any changes/improvements can be made.

We obtained advice from a senior barrister. The cost of that advice was £1,485.

We do not consider that any decisions made by the previous membership of the Appointment and Employment Panel are in any way invalid or open to challenge.

(b) Question from Councillor Caleb Tomlinson

Councillor Caleb Tomlinson asked about concerns with cars parking on the new pavements on Station Road in Bamber Bridge. The Leader responded that it was a Lancashire County Council matter.

36 Questions to Members of the Cabinet

(a) Question to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Environment and Community Safety)

Councillor David Watts thanked the Cabinet Member for providing information about Withy Grove Park and Fields in Trust following being contacted by a local resident. The Cabinet Member was grateful for the issue being raised directly with her so that the matter could be dealt with appropriately.

Councillor Harry Hancock asked about residents not wishing to pay for green waste collections tipping the waste into the gutter and whether this was classed as fly tipping. The Cabinet Member agreed to investigate and report back.

Councillor Harry Hancock asked about where the Council cuts grass and leaves the cuttings on pavements which can block drains. The Cabinet Member responded that she shared the frustration and was already looking into the grass cutting service.

(b) Question to the Cabinet Member (Corporate Support and Community Engagement)

Councillor David Howarth asked the Cabinet Member about Pendle Council's view on unitary local government and is it something South Ribble was looking into. The Cabinet Member responded that it was not in his portfolio and that as it was not included in our corporate plan not something being considered.

37 Questions to Chairs of Committees and My Neighbourhood Areas

Question to the Planning Committee Chair

Councillor David Watts asked the Planning Committee Chair about the policy of not naming streets after living or dead people. The Planning Committee Chair

responded that the Council followed local and national guidance in not naming streets after living or dead people.

38 Questions to Member Champions and Representatives on Outside Bodies

There were no questions.

Chair

Date

REPORT TO	ON
Full Council	26 September 2018



TITLE	REPORT OF
Proposed changes to vehicle age policy	Legal Services Manager/Interim Monitoring Officer

Is this report confidential?	No
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To outline the proposed changes to the vehicle age policy relating to hackney carriage and private hire vehicles licensed by South Ribble Borough Council.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	x
Health and Wellbeing	x
Place	

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Council support the recommendation made by the General Licensing Committee to extend the vehicle age policy for private hire and hackney carriage vehicles to 6 years (on first registration) and 12 years (maximum age on renewal).
- 3.2 That Council note the air pollution concerns raised by Environmental Health and agree to instigate a consultation exercise as soon as practicable on an alternative age policy at the lower end of 4 years and 8 years.

4. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 4.1 Under the Council's current Licensing Policy different age limits are imposed for saloon vehicles as opposed to wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs). A table summarising what this differentiated age policy means in practice is set out below:

	Hackney Carriage		Private Hire	
	Maximum age on first registration (years)	Maximum age on renewal (years)	Maximum age on first registration (years)	Maximum age on renewal (years)
Saloon	4	8	4	8
WAV	6	12	6	12

4.2 At meetings of the Taxi Trade Forum during 2017, the Borough's licensed trade queried whether this differentiated approach remained justifiable (given that - in the trade's view - historic factors which previously underpinned this approach were no longer applicable). As a result, the General Licensing Committee agreed to set up a working group to consider the matter in detail. This working group consisted of members of the General Licensing Committee, as well as trade and voluntary group representation. The working group recommended that the current differentiated age policy as set out above should be abandoned and replaced by a standardised age policy. If adopted, this would mean that the proposed age limits for all vehicles (whether saloon or wheelchair accessible) would be 6 years on first application and up to 12 years on renewal. This would provide parity to all licensed vehicles.

4.3 The table below illustrates the proposed age policy:

	Hackney Carriage		Private Hire	
	Maximum age on first registration (years)	Maximum age on renewal (years)	Maximum age on first registration (years)	Maximum age on renewal (years)
Saloon and WAV	6	12	6	12

4.4 The working group produced a detailed report setting out its methodology and the rationale for concluding that a standardised age policy was the way forward. This report was presented to the General Licensing Committee on 10 April 2018, when it was agreed that the proposed change of approach should be subject to a period of formal consultation. (A formal period of consultation is a mandatory precursor to any change to the Licensing Policy).

5.0 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

5.1 The public consultation took place between the 1st May and the 28th May 2018. There were 9 responses, 8 of the consultees were in support of the changes and 1 was against.

5.2 Summary of comments:

Of the 8 responses in agreement of the change to the policy, the following comments were made:

"I am Totally in Agreement, Not only would it give us a better Per vehicle Value on a levy such as Preston were you can license almost any vehicle, but it may also make the problem of owners/operators registering out of Borough in order to use older vehicles in our Borough"

"Is a welcome step towards being seen to helping drivers with affordable costs"

"I welcome the change and hopefully it will allow drivers to actually make a living"

"I think that would be an excellent idea to introduce a new age limit"

"I am in favour of the proposal. I hope my view will be taken into consideration in any future discussions".

5.3 Only one objection to the consultation was received with the following comments made:

"The taxi fleets of South Ribble should be something to be proud of, it is modern and perceived by customers as a positive and gives operators an advantage over competition from taxi fleets from other areas who operate a less forward thinking age limit policy."

"Most modern vehicles have more airbags (more for the passengers), Lane departure warning (an alarm sounds if the car strays out of lane without the use of an indicator), Collision avoidance breaking (the car applies the brakes before the driver if an impending collision is detected), Advances in pedestrian protection in the event of a car versus pedestrian accident."

"In summary, we are happy with the current age policy and cannot see any benefit in change, only negatives."

6. AIR POLLUTION CONCERNS RAISED BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

6.1 Prior to the consultation responses being brought before the General Licensing Committee, the Council's Environmental Health Department raised concerns about the proposed changes (albeit these comments were submitted outside the consultation window). They stated:

"The existing policy in relation to the age of taxis licensed by the authority was introduced with the aim of providing the taxi fleet licensed by the Council is reliable with better safety features and is more environmentally friendly. The relaxation of this policy allows for operators to extend the life of older more polluting and potential less safe vehicles. "

"As part of the Council's commitment to improving Air Quality, currently a key priority within the Corporate plan, an action has been progressed which ultimately supported the previous decision to restrict the age of the taxi fleet within South Ribble. This action has been presented to and agreed by DEFRA as a suitable policy to help reduce the harmful impact of poor air quality on the population of South Ribble."

"Members will be aware that there are currently five declared Air Quality Management Areas within South Ribble all of which have been declared due to the likely exceedance of the Nitrogen Dioxide objective level. The principal source of which is vehicle emissions. Currently it is recognised that 4.5% of all premature deaths in South Ribble are due to poor air quality."

"The taxi fleet makes up a significant portion of the fleet with individual vehicles potential driving around the borough and through the most polluted areas throughout the day and significantly more than the average car."

"The council has a statutory duty to help improve the air quality within the borough the current policy on restricting the age of taxi's helps towards this goal. If the trade are looking for equality and parity we suggest that the age policy should be brought down to lower limit i.e. any vehicle

coming onto the fleet must be no more than 4 years old and must not remain on as a licensed vehicle past 8 years old.”

“It is the view of the air quality steering group involving cross party membership, Public Health Lancashire and other stakeholders that instead of relaxing the age policy the council should be considering tighten the requirements and offering additional incentives to reduce the emissions from this element of the fleet. To this end the Steering group recommends that the policy is not relaxed and will be bring forward additional measures in the future to encourage the use of alternative low emission vehicles as part of the fleet.”

7. DECISION OF THE GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

At the meeting, members were provided with further information from Public Health England, who are looking to commence discussions with local districts in the Lancashire area to develop a consistent approach in respect of age limits on vehicles, bearing in mind the air quality impact. GLC were of the view that the air pollution concerns have not been fully investigated and did not come out during the previous consultation. The approach to be taken by Public Health England could provide further information which would assist in a future consultation.

Although, some concerns were raised in respect of air quality, the decision of the Committee was that the approach of the Working Group to bring parity for all licensed vehicles was sound.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Members should note that if they approve the proposal, then this would mean that the policy is implemented within 4 weeks of the Councils final decision. In light of the concerns raised by the Environmental Health department and the further work to be carried out by Public Health England, if members are minded to decrease the age policy in the future, then a full consultation process will be required in respect of any new proposal with detailed information.

9. COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

There are no financial implications arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.

10. COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

Please see the comments made at paragraph 8 of the report.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

▶ HR & Organisational Development	None
▶ ICT / Technology	None
▶ Property & Asset Management	None
▶ Risk	None

▶ Equality & Diversity	None
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12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Working Group report
Report to GLC April 2018

13. APPENDICES

N/A

David Whelan
Licensing Manger/Interim Monitoring Officer

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Mark Marshall	01772 625401	13 th September 2018

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REPORT TO	ON
Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Council	30 August 2018 12 September 2018 26 September 2018

TITLE	REPORT OF
Corporate Peer Challenge Action plan and response to Statutory Recommendation (under s24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014).	Chief Executive

Is this report confidential?	No
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to consider this report which provides an update on the progress on the recommendations from the LGA Peer review from 2017 and the recent revisit in March 2018. The report also addresses the recommendations recently made by the council's external Auditors, Grant Thornton, which was concluded within the Annual Audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2017/18. The external auditors have issued a statutory recommendation for the council to set out how it has progressed with its implementation of the LGA Findings. Under the relevant regulation, the Council is required to submit a formal response within prescribed timelines.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

For Council to:

- Accept the recommendation made by the external auditor;
- Note the actions completed with regard to implementation of the recommendations made following the LGA Corporate Peer Review; and
- Provide a formal response to the external auditors advising that all actions recommended within the Original Peer review visit, and Actions suggested in the revisited Peer review have been actioned and are either complete, or are currently in implementation.

3. BACKGROUND

In March 2017, the Council invited the Local Government Association to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge. Following this review, several issues were raised as concern to the council, which included

- Staff morale was extremely low, with little confidence in the senior management team.
- The Governance arrangements were considered weak, with improvements required.
- The Council's financial position was poor, with a significant medium term gap in funding which was identified within the medium term financial strategy.
- Officer member relations was considered to be poor and unhealthy.
- There was limited confidence in performance management of any major projects or change programmes.

Following this review, the Councils set up a cross party Improvement Reference Group (IRG) and an action plan was agreed for 2017/2018.

In July 2017, the council appointed a permanent Head of Paid Service, and in August 2017, priorities were set for the new Head of Paid Service to progress and implement the IRG Action plan

By March 2018 (within an eight month period), all of the actions within the IRG work programme had been either completed, or where in implementation mode. Some examples of progress (which are not exclusive) include:

- The Council developed , agreed and implemented a Transformation/ Organisational strategy for the 2017/18 financial year.
- A 5 year Corporate plan, following a full consultation process has been adopted by the Council.
- The council approved, for the first time, a 5 year medium term financial strategy.
- Governance committee set up review group and have a rolling programme of updating the Council's Constitution.
- The council has carried out a cultural mapping exercise , to baseline the current position on Staff Morale.
- A new officer leadership structure was approved by full council in Nov 2017, with the shared services structure having an amended structure approved in March 2018.
- The council has implemented a new leadership development programme.
- A new officer / member protocol has been developed and agreed.
- A robust Project management framework has been put in place, and is currently being used for the implementation of all Corporate Priority projects.

In early 2018, the council invited a follow up review from the LGA Peer challenge, and a number of key recommendations were made in a letter to the Council dated the 16th March 2018.

The Peer review feedback was considered by the IRG on the 19th March and a revised work plan was considered for the Group for the 2018/19 financial year.

Through April and May of 2018, the council's political leadership changed, with a new Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet being elected in May.

On the 16th May, the conservative Peer, working to the IRG notified the council that he needed to step down from the position due to his commitments nationally, however, the LGA sourced a new Conservative Peer in June 2018, and on the 10th July, the council commenced with its IRG meetings with new Peers in place. On the 10th July, a revised programme of works was agreed in line with the peer revisit.

On the 26 July 2018 the Governance Committee approved the annual Statement of Accounts 2017/18 and considered the External Audit (Grant Thornton) Audit Findings Report for 2017/18. This year, the external auditors have strengthened their opinion by making a statutory recommendation under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Under this regulation, the Council must consider a formal response to the recommendation and inform the external auditors of their decision.

This report brings together the outcomes of both reviews and provides a formal response to the auditor's statutory recommendation.

4. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	X
Health and Wellbeing	
Place	

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
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5. LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE Revisit

As detailed above, in March 2017, the LGA were invited by the Council to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge. Peer challenge is one of the key tools to support sector led improvement and is tailored to meet individual council needs. The peer team provide feedback as critical friends and include both member and officer peers. Unlike external audit, the LGA peer review team are not formal inspectors and the review is feedback to the council.

The outcome of this review recognised the Council was in a challenging place although it concluded overall “the scale of the challenge is manageable providing capacity is addressed but will require clear leadership, good planning and a strong sense of pace”. At that time the Council officer structure was operating in the absence of a permanent head of paid service and followed a significant corporate governance failure.

A follow up visit in March 2018 reflected progress made in implementing the recommendations almost one year on which are set out within the background to this report. The follow up visit overall found the council had made good progress in taking forward a number of recommendations however, assurance was sought that the Council should progress at pace with its implementation plan.

The following recommendations were made:

- The need for political leadership and the robust implementation of officer/member protocol
- Implementing the new senior management structure
- Developing leadership potential of the new senior team
- Aligning political and officer processes to ensure decisions are implemented with no last minute changes
- Reviewing the governance committee with a view to separating the audit and general governance function
- Implementing with Chorley the agreed approach to shared services
- Improving internal communication and clarity with staff about the vision and next steps for transformation.
- Renewing the focus and commitment to the Improvement Reference Group (and agreeing a timeframe when the IRG should be stepped down).

As detailed above, the IRG considered these findings in March 2018, and have subsequently set a plan in place to ensure delivery is implemented at pace. It should be noted that the IRG meetings are held in private, but all agendas and minutes are forwarded to the Council's External Auditors, Grant Thornton.

Appendix A details the Actions captured by the Peer review, and provides an update on the current status.

It can be noted that, to date, all actions are either addressed and any outstanding actions to address from the LGA Peer review recommendations are included within the improvement model.

6. STATUTORY RECOMMENDATION

Recently, the Governance Committee 26 July 2018 approved the annual Statement of Accounts 2017/18 and considered the External Auditors (Grant Thornton) Audit Findings Report for 2017/18.

The external audit opinion consists of two elements. The first in relation to audit of the financial statements and the second in relation to the council's arrangements for securing value for money (VfM). At that meeting the Annual Audit had not been concluded although the final opinion with regard to the financial statements is expected to be unqualified. The VfM conclusion however will remain as an "except for" conclusion which has been in place since the financial year 2015/16.

This year however the external auditors have strengthened their opinion by making a statutory recommendation under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. A copy of the statutory recommendation will also be forwarded by the external auditor to the Secretary of State.

The Statutory Recommendation as set out in the Audit Findings Report:

Recommendation made under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act").

The Council needs to:

- Make demonstrable progress in relation to the eight recommendations that are made in the letter dated 16 March 2018 to the Chief Executive from the Local Government Association (LGA) in relation to the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge follow up visit to South Ribble Borough Council.
 - In particular, the two recommendations in relation to the management structure should be implemented as a matter of urgency which are to place particular focus in the short term upon:
 - Implementing the new senior management structure
 - Developing the leadership potential of the new senior team to take forward the place, strategic finance and transformation agendas
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Under this regulation, the Council must consider a formal response to the recommendation and inform the external auditors of their decision. External Audit have requested that a meeting of full Council considers its response to the following questions:

- (a) Whether the report requires the authority to take any action or whether the recommendation is to be accepted, and
- (b) What, if any, action to take in response to the report or recommendation.

Other minor matters have been raised by external audit as part of their Audit Findings Report. With regard to the presentation of monitoring reports, members will see in the coming weeks a refreshed approach to the presentation of budget monitoring with a focus on service financial performance with greater accountability by budget holders as recommended by the LGA.

Finally, concerns were raised with regard to developing detailed project plans for the schemes highlighted in the medium term financial strategy. The council does have a new Project management system and framework in place, which captures all major projects. This will be reported through our Performance management programme throughout the year to Members.

7. CONTEXT OF EXTERNAL AUDIT OPINION

In forming their professional opinion, external audit assess activity over the financial year up to 31 March 2018 which is concurrent with the findings of the follow up peer review. It is common practice for External Audit to also take a forward view, to fully assess the 2017/18 position. This year, it is disappointing to note that the Auditors have chosen to forward look at the council's S151 position, but not forward look as to the significant progress being made on the Management restructure.

Officers are also concerned that the Auditor has raised issues of strategic capacity with regards financial matters, however, the Council financial position during 2017/18 has significantly strengthened. There appears to be no recognition that this council has moved from a deficit position to a positive position, and that for the first time, the Council has an approved 5 year medium term financial strategy.

Notwithstanding the above, if we take the audit as a position statement for 2017/18, it can be demonstrated that the March position has been significantly progressed, with actions now completed, and in progress of implementation.

8. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

Discussions have taken place with Grant Thornton as part of the finalisation of the Statement of Accounts 2017/18 and also with the LGA through the IRG.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The overall financial health of the council is intrinsic within the report, there are no additional financial pressures arising from this report.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The report is submitted to full Council in accordance with the Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

11. COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

- 11.1 The external auditor has given an unqualified opinion in relation to the Council's 2017/18 financial statements. With regard to the 2017/18 VFM qualification, the section 24 external audit recommendations relate to progress made in implementing the 8 recommendations from the latest LGA Peer Review with particular emphasis on the new senior management structure and leadership development. The action plan sets out the progress made and future plans with timelines. The action plan as presented doesn't impact on the Council's financial overall position.
- 11.2 The actions still in progress with regard to the Section 24 recommendation will be monitored by the Council's Internal Audit Service to provide the necessary assurances to External Audit in respect of their timely implementation.

12. COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 12.1 As is referred to above the council's External Auditors have decided – with regard to the Value for Money assessment – to make a recommendation pursuant to the provisions of Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. As we know the Value of Money assessment has been a qualified one since the financial year 2015/2016. However, by making a formal recommendation this year the External auditors have decided to strengthen the expression of their concerns. In accordance with the relevant statutory provisions it is necessary for this council to formally consider this recommendation, decide whether it accepts it and decide what, if any action it will take. This is a task for full Council to perform.
- 12.2 Whilst it is true to say that the audit carried out was an assessment of where the council was for the year ending 31st of March 2018 and that progress has been made since then to implement the relevant recommendations emerging from the LGA Peer Challenge nevertheless it is strongly advisable that we take on board the recommendation from External Audit and commit ourselves to completing all outstanding actions as soon as possible.

13. OTHER IMPLICATIONS: HR & Organisational Development

As set out in the body of the report there are significant HR & Organisational Development implications with some of the recommendations from the LGA. These are being addressed with the Council shift with their model of culture and with the new appointments within the Leadership team.

14. OTHER IMPLICATIONS: ICT / Technology

The Council are currently reviewing its approach to the ICT Strategy, as set out in the Action Plan, and with the appropriate systems in place ICT will be a key tool in improving communications.

15. OTHER IMPLICATIONS: Property & Asset Management

There is a significant programme of improving property assets to create a more efficient and effective environment to allow for flexible working.

16. OTHER IMPLICATIONS: Risk

There is a complex programme of improvement detailed within this report and the action plan. The Overall programme will be placed on the Council's project management system and the risk register.

17. OTHER IMPLICATIONS: Equality & Diversity

Equality and diversity implications have been considered as part of the restructure which has been addressed within previous papers to Cabinet (November 2017 & March 2018).

18. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Audit Findings report 2017/18

19 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Action Plan

Appendix B: LGA Letter

ELT Member's Name Heather McManus

Job Title: Chief executive

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Heather McManus	01772 625301	26 September 2018

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Appendix A

South Ribble Borough Council - Peer Review / S24 Recommendations Action Plan				
	LGA Peer Review Recommendation	Action taken	Timeline	Comment
1	Political leadership - Robust implementation of officer/member protocol	Member officer protocol has been developed through cross-party working, this was approved by council on 21st March 2018 subsequently individual member/officer commitment has been made through formal signature.	Council approved the member/officer protocol on 21 st March 2018 and as of June 2018, 98% - Member sign up 100% - Officer sign up	Ongoing monitoring through standards committee. Complaints received Nov 15/ Oct. 16 - 12 Nov 16/Oct. 17 - 23 Nov 17- present - 7
2	Implementing the new senior management structure	Council approved the new leadership structure in November 2017 with the amended shared services structure in March 2018. Budgetary provision was made to implement 1st April 2018. Internal recruitment was completed with effect from 1st April 2018. External adverts had a closing date of 10th August 2018 with interviews in progress.. The shared services structure was amended on the 21st March 2018. Job descriptions are currently being developed (see point 6). A shared services appointments panel has been convened on the 6th Sept 2018	Internal recruitment process completed November 17 - March 18 . Internal appointments made 1st April 2018. External appointments interview dates > DCE Offered 31st August > AD positions - 24th & 25th September	
3	Developing the leadership potential of the new senior team to take forward the place, strategic finance and transformation agendas	In August 2017, upon the appointment of the Chief Exec South Ribble Borough Council undertook a review of the current operating structure with a view to ensuring operations in the future fully meet the Council's culture and delivery focus in the most efficient and effective way. Issues of the previous 2 years also needed to be addressed. The restructure of Senior Leadership and Management posts was proposed moving from a transactional structure to a transformational structure. External independent employee support was engaged by the Council to support managers who roles were affected by the proposed changes. The support provided was bespoke on an individual basis and in the context of the changes that took place. The council has developed a new leadership model based on the principles of high performing teams which we have codesigned with the leadership team, and branded it as ' Blended Working' . This new model centres around development of individuals , and is value based . there is a comprehensive programme in place to drive this through all levels of the organisation. The leadership model now drives through all recruitments made within the council. The recruitment approach developed has been externally validated by Veredus' Occupational Psychologists. Menrva has worked with Veredus (SRBC appointed external recruitment partner), to co-design the final recruitment programme design and run the recruitment Assessment. Leadership Development Programme 2018: South Ribble Borough Council are undertaking a transformational developmental change programme with a view to ensuring operations in the future fully meet the Council's culture and delivery focus in the most efficient and effective way. Operations are being restructured and recruitment for some Senior Leadership roles is continuing. The development support is focused on embedding the South Ribble Blended Way of Working within the Senior Leadership Team, with the Cabinet, Members and other Key Stakeholders and with Staff across the Council as a whole. Support is being provided for the Senior Leadership Team as a Group and as individuals as they develop in their new roles and start to transfer learning and embed a Blended Way of Working in their teams. The development approach to be informed by and directly aligned with the Cultural Mapping Work recently undertaken across the Council. Member Development Programme: Develop the culture of the Members forum with guidance from the member to member information within the Member Officer Protocol. Review the Member Charter and provide the members with a workshop in due course.	Leadership On-going development of cultural mapping. Review our Developmental Appraisal Plan - January 2019. Members Provide workshops for Members to develop and implement the Member Charter.	The Shared Services developments (listed in action point 6) will be influential in developing the leadership team.
4	Aligning political and officer processes to ensure decisions are implemented with no last minute changes	Senior officer meetings programmed to clear all council reports. Portfolio holder discussions take place to confirm reports. Shadow cabinet briefings introduced on all cleared cabinet reports. Pre-cabinet briefings take place. The council also has robust decision making processes in place (see attached flow chart)	Working Example Extended Leadership Team (Report Clearing Meeting) - 14th August 2018 Cabinet Workshop - 14th August 2018 Shadow Cabinet Briefing - 7th September 2018 Cabinet Meeting - 12th September 2018	The timeline was already in existence but the briefing of shadow cabinet has been introduced since the peer review revisit.
5	Reviewing the governance committee with a view to separating the audit and general governance function	A draft paper is currently with governance committee to review. (see attached) The governance committee has already set up a task group to review before formal consultation by the committee.	Task group meeting 6th September 2018	Governance Committee formal consideration on 20th September 2018.

Appendix A

6	Implementing with Chorley the agreed approach to shared services	Council approved the revised shared services structure in March 2018. Draft job descriptions are being co-created with existing staff central to the shared services journey. An action plan is being developed to test future shared services opportunities. External capacity is being sourced to strengthen the existing shared services legal agreement. Chorley have agreed to implement the Council new leadership model and recruitment process for the shared services appointments.	March 2018 approval. Draft job description to the next shared services appointments panel 6th Sept with timescale for approval as follows: - Shared Services Appointments Panel Training: Early October 2018 - Assessment Centre (Day 1 & Day 2): October 2018 - Shared Services Appointment Panel Internal Appointment decisions and next steps: October 2018 - External Recruitment (if required) November 2018	Dates and timings to be agreed at meeting on 6th September with a view for commissions to commence November 2018.
7	Improving internal communication and clarity with staff about the vision and next steps for transformation	<p>Cultural mapping process proposed by the staff feedback was to introduce a "TLC" approach to communications. This represents a requirement that communication is timely, clear in language and consistent in message. There have been ongoing staff briefings with regards to any real time and significant staff communication e.g. shared services.</p> <p>We have in place key messages from the leadership team posted on Connect and through face to face team meetings. The CEO continues to have an open door policy introduced on her appointment in August 2017.</p> <p>A transformation space on Connect has been created by members of the extended lead hip team and regular updates take place.</p> <p>The CEO has a blog.</p> <p>We have invested in ICT software communications solution (Attain) which will link direct to all staff .</p> <p>We have introduced an all staff distribution list.</p> <p>The council is also in the process of setting up a formal JCC with the unions, to contribute to the communications strategy.</p> <p>Transformation - an effective organisation sits transformation at the heart of its delivery model . the Council's approach to its corporate planning , and working up new and efficient ways of working is a responsibility of each and every officer in the council. To implement this , a cultural mapping exercise has taken place . out of this work, the leadership development work , and the creation of blended Blended working, teams are encouraged to develop new ideas, and transformational service delivery options . The staff have developed a concept called "white space" which allows for new service models to be developed on the lean principles of providing effective services. Teams challenge themselves around service delivery .. and options are developed from a ' whole team' approach .</p> <p>the method of transformation , allows change to be embedded within teams, with teams taking ownership of the Change.</p> <p>The communication of this new way of working has been delivered through "Market street" sessions, where all staff have had the opportunity to discuss and debate transformation projects that have taken place, and all of the above communication forum detailed above.</p>	<p>'Cultural Baseline' – an understanding of where the organisation is now and how it could build on existing initiatives and be purposeful in developing its culture and engaging the workforce into the future.</p> <p>The Chief Executive wanted to co-create the design of the intervention.</p> <p>The key outcomes were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an independent observation of where the organisation is now, - observations on areas for focus to move the organisation forward - the 'What next?' <p>It was also agreed we would generate a quantitative 'baseline score' for where the organisation is now and the telling of the Story around where the organisation has been and where it is now.</p> <p>Shared services departments were briefed on 19th & 20th June 2018 and are ongoing.</p> <p>Key messages on Connect are bi-weekly for leadership team.</p> <p>Open door policy is actively used by all layers of organisation.</p> <p>Transformation section on Connect is updated as and when.</p> <p>The CEO blog is released as and when required. Investment in the ICT system Attain is to be rolled out in 18/19.</p>	Our communication model has consciously shifted from a top down, tell and inform model, to a grass - roots, two way communication, involvement and engagement space.
8	Renewing the focus and commitment to the Improvement Reference Group (and agreeing a timeframe when the IRG should be stepped down)	Regular IRG meetings took place in 2017/18 and are planned for 2018/19. At its meeting in March 2018 , the IRG considered the actions set out in the Peer review , and have subsequently met in July, and agreed a work plan for the coming year.	Schedule of meetings (2017 - 2018) 15th May 2017 13th June 2017 24th July 2017 24th August 2017 18th September 2017 30th October 2017 5th December 2017 8th January 2018 19th March 2018 10th July 2018 TBC August 2018 TBC September 2018	The IRG will monitor this action plan and there will be several workshop sessions scheduled to pick up on the following areas: - Leadership - Member & Officer Relations - Member Behaviour



Heather McManus
Chief Executive
South Ribble Borough Council
Civic Centre
West Paddock
Leyland;
PR25 1DH

16 March 2018

Dear Heather,

Re: LGA Corporate Peer Challenge follow up visit to South Ribble Borough Council

As part of the original LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) in March 2017, South Ribble Borough Council (SRBC) asked the peer team to make a follow up visit approximately 12 months later to help review and assess progress in response to the peer challenge feedback and recommendations.

The peers used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met and material that they had read before and at the time of their visit to SRBC on 31st January to 1st of February 2018.

Process and peer team

Peer challenge is one of the key tools to support sector-led improvement. It is tailored to meet individual councils' needs, and designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The peer team provide feedback as critical friends, not as assessors, consultants or inspectors.

The following members of the original peer team participated in the follow up visit:

- Alan Goodrum - LGA Associate (Lead peer)
- Cllr Peter Fleming - Leader, Sevenoaks District Council (Conservative)
- Sharon Taylor - Leader, Stevenage Borough Council (Labour)

Claire Hogan, LGA Principal Adviser, North West, was the Peer Challenge Manager for the follow up visit.

In March 2017, the LGA peer team made a number of recommendations to help the council to address its main challenges. (The recommendations made at that time can be found at Appendix A). This feedback letter reflects on progress made in implementing the recommendations almost one year later.

Appendix B

To inform our work the peer team spent 2 days on site at SRBC, during which time we spoke to: Elected members from across political parties, senior managers and officers from across the council, trade union representatives, strategic partners and members of the Improvement Reference Group.

We would like to thank you for inviting us back to provide further challenge to the council. We hope that our feedback helps to support continuous improvement at SRBC.

Summary of findings and observations

Overall SRBC has made some progress in taking forward a number of the recommendations that the peer review team made in 2017; including the establishment of an Improvement Reference Group, the recruitment of a new Chief Executive and a new organisational structure, albeit that implementation of this is still in the early stages. Crucially, resident satisfaction and trust in the council remains high and South Ribble continues to be a good place to live with good core council services.

There was some evidence that political leadership was improving for example, in developing the vision and corporate plan and improved governance processes. There has been considerable member engagement in developing a new vision and Corporate Plan for the borough and this is well supported across the council. Importantly, the council is now perceived by a number of partners as beginning to be more 'outward focused' which is crucial if ambitions for wider economic growth are to be achieved.

However, despite some progress, a number of areas still require attention. Overall the pace of change remains too slow and further progress is clearly being hampered by the lack of permanent senior capacity. Ongoing political issues are still causing some distraction and are delaying the improvement journey. There is a need to further develop the medium term financial strategy to take account of key strategic risks and the team also felt that the added capacity and benefits of having an Improvement Reference Group (IRG) are not being utilised as effectively as they might.

The feedback (below) provides further detail on the findings from the peer review team and makes a number of suggestions and recommendations for consideration by the council.

Leadership and corporate governance

The political leadership of the council has improved since the initial CPC with steps taken by the administration to take ownership of improvement. Members have developed a clear strategic vision and a new corporate plan which sets out major strategic challenges, a positive picture for the place and clear priorities for the council.

Appendix B

A member survey was conducted (September 2017) the findings from which are currently being addressed. Progress was also evident in a number of areas including both scrutiny and licensing and positive steps have been taken to improve governance arrangements; with the review of the constitution and the development of a new officer member protocol. However it will be important to ensure that the protocol is implemented and that a robust process is in place to monitor its impact. The council must be clear about its approach to transparent public reporting and provide greater clarity on where monitoring reports are taken and how issues raised are addressed.

As the council moves forward with its improvement and transformation, it should consider again the recommendation made in the initial CPC report to review the role of the governance committee. The team felt strongly that the committee still appears to have a dual role operating as a traditional audit committee whilst also addressing wider governance issues. As part of the ongoing constitution review it may be beneficial for the council to consider separating the functions.

The appointment of the new Chief Executive has provided greater stability within the council and staff from across the organisation fed back positively on her fresh approach. However the CEX lacks sufficient resources in the form of permanent senior management capacity and this is hampering the ability to deliver members' vision for the borough. The immediate implementation of the agreed senior management structure is key to addressing this situation and should be a priority for the council.

Understandably, the new CEX initially invested time building relationships with the administration and has more recently begun to engage a wider group of members. This work needs to be built upon by the CEX and senior officers to ensure better working relationships with all elected members across the council.

Some partners recognise that the council is beginning to embrace opportunities for collaborative working. There was evidence of collaboration and leadership across Lancashire with developments in relation to both the City Deal and the joint development framework. Within the borough there was also evidence of greater involvement and leadership from the council through the work of the South Ribble Partnership.

These changes present the beginning of a positive shift in the perceptions to those gleaned in March 2017, when partner agencies described the council as a somewhat un-dynamic and a risk averse partner to work with, with a low level of ambition and limited capacity to drive change through partnerships. It is important to continue to develop this 'outward facing approach' to ensure that the council maximises the opportunities of closer collaborative working both locally and across Lancashire.

Whilst these perceptions (which were often attributable to both the Leader and the new CEX's approach) are a step in the right direction, the view from a number of partners was often with the caveat that the pace is too slow and is hindered by the lack of permanent senior capacity within the council. As above, the implementation of

Appendix B

the senior management team structure would help to address the lack of pace and would help to ensure the perceptions of partners continues to improve.

Improvement journey

The team were pleased to see evidence of the implementation of some good transformational programmes, such as the Health, wellbeing and Leisure campus. It was also good to see that the council has taken up the Peers' earlier recommendation to establish an Improvement Reference Group, with members from different political groups, senior officers and the LGA (although noting that this is not independently chaired). The IRG is intended to bring capacity and focus to the improvement journey.

However, the IRG is not currently being utilised by the council in a way that maximises its impact and the team perceived a lack of 'buy in' by the council. It is recommended therefore that the council renews its focus and commitment to the IRG, recognises it as an important mechanism through which to maintain the emphasis on improvement and develops a clear timeline for when objectives in the improvement plan should be met and the IRG stood down.

When renewing the focus of the IRG the council may wish to consider linking activity to key milestones within the improvement plan. This would help to provide a 'themed' focus each time the group meets and could result a reduction in the number of meetings. There is concern that currently, updates to the IRG tend to be about future plans and process rather than updates on activity and impact. A reduced number but more focused series of meetings would allow for a more forensic look at progress under key themes; ensuring an action focused approach. The work of the IRG could also be communicated more effectively across the Council.

Political issues are still causing a notable distraction (although not to the same degree as in March 2017) and considerable energy and officer capacity continues to be expended addressing these political tensions at a time when senior capacity is particularly scarce.

One area of transformation in which progress has not been as swift at the team had anticipated is the implementation of the shared working arrangements with Chorley Council as a result of delays on decision-making. Initial work on this has previously delivered significant savings and it remains as a key pillar in the MTFs. To ensure progress is made at pace it is recommended that outstanding decisions in relation to this are expedited to enable clear work streams and project plans to be developed and enacted in the immediate short term and to provide clarity about the next steps. It would be helpful too if the councils' two communications teams work closely to ensure clear and consistent messages about the shared arrangements are conveyed to councillors, the workforce and residents alike.

The team felt that there is a need to progress with business transformation and ensure that a greater sense of urgency is portrayed; with regular performance and monitoring updates being taken to cabinet/council (and IRG beforehand).

Organisational capacity and culture

Poor staff morale was a significant issue identified in the initial CPC and there has been some progress in tackling this. Frontline staff reported feeling proud of the borough and have shown continued resilience and commitment to delivering good services.

Considerable time and effort has been placed in developing a new approach to organisational development (OD) which is beginning to have positive outcomes. A number of staff that were spoken to reported feeling more empowered and engaged. The development of a new flexi time system and the use of the 'whitespace' were cited as positive examples. The engagement and visibility of the new CEX to staff was also well received and the council's ambitions for transformation were welcomed, with staff commenting that *"It's like we have had a big spring clean"* and *"It's exciting but daunting"*.

However, despite the emerging benefits of the new inclusive staff focussed approach to transformation, frustration remains amongst the staff about the pace of change, the sense of urgency and about the lack of clear messaging in relation to next steps. It was felt that greater clarity is needed about key transformational messages and that these need to be consistently communicated between senior officers and members at pace. It was also acknowledged by staff that the biggest barrier to progress is the lack of a permanent senior officer cohort. While interim managers are highly respected personally, it was acknowledged that the interim nature of the current appointments creates uncertainty and risk. The need for stability and certainty remains.

This frustration is heightened by the continuing political tensions that are delaying progress. There was acknowledgement amongst staff that this continues to contribute to negative external perceptions of the council.

One issue identified by the team as an ongoing area to address, is the lack of capacity and skills of the right kind and at the right level for ongoing transformation. For instance the team felt that in order to achieve the aims outlined in its transformation plan there remains a need to ensure officers with greater commercial and coherent programme management skills and experience are in post.

Also vital is the need to embed and sustain the positive approach to OD within the transformation programme; as the two should not be mutually exclusive. Also aligned to transformation programme is the need to scope and plan (now) the member induction plan for 2019. This will help to ensure that member development is integral to the wider approach to transformation and that the developing 'One team' approach includes members too. If developed, the council should also consider taking the new member induction plan to the IRG for external challenge and input.

Financial planning and viability

Appendix B

The underlying financial position at SRBC remains sound and there is no 'burning platform' which the council needs to address. Like others within the local government sector, the council has tough financial decisions to make but fortunately does have options from which to choose in terms of ongoing savings, income generation and council tax.

Evidence from the medium term financial strategy highlights good practice for the development of the council's capital programme utilising £9.2m reserves. The council is also better than average on value for money compared to other borough councils nationally in a range of areas, including; spend on benefits administration, culture/sport, environmental services, economic development and planning.

Despite this generally positive position there remains insufficient assurance about the implementation of the MTFS and in particular about the £300k savings linked to the shared services plans identified for 2018/2019. There is concern about the over reliance on reserves to balance the revenue budget and a serious risk to planned savings that emerged as a result of deferred decision making (including the decision not to implement / increase relating to car park charges).

Overall there is a need to develop a coherent approach to corporate, financial planning and strategic risk. In particular, to give greater assurance, robust clear and concise processes are needed to monitor and review the implementation of the MTFS, with greater clarity about where and when progress updates will be reported

Summary of recommendations

SRBC has made progress since the peer team's initial visit in March 2017. However as noted above (and as acknowledged in the council's self-assessment document) further action, at pace, is required to ensure that this progress is built upon with a greater sense of urgency.

To ensure the council achieves its vision that '*South Ribble is and continues to be recognised nationally as the best place in the UK*' the team suggests that the council places particular focus in the short term upon:

- Political leadership, to resolve the ongoing political tensions. For example through robust implementation of the new officer/member protocol.
- Implementing the new senior management structure
- Developing the leadership potential of the new senior team to take forward the place, strategic finance and transformation agendas
- Aligning political and officer processes to ensure decisions are implemented with no last minute changes
- Reviewing the governance committee; with a view to separating the audit and general governance functions.
- Implementing, with Chorley, the agreed approach to shared services
- Improving internal communication and clarity with staff about the vision and next steps for transformation; utilising different channels of communication and not over relying on CEX engagement sessions.

Appendix B

- Renewing the focus of, and commitment to the Improvement Reference Group (and agreeing a timeframe for when the IRG can be stood down). This will help to ensure that this invaluable resource is utilised to best effect and that the focus on improvement within the council is maintained.

Next steps

We appreciate that the council will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions with the senior managerial and political leadership in order to determine how the organisation wishes to move forward.

Your LGA Principal Adviser, Gill Taylor, will be happy to work with you to identify any additional support the LGA can offer to help you respond to the points set out in this letter. Gill can be contacted on 07789 512173 or gill.taylor@local.gov.uk

Claire Hogan – LGA North West Principal Adviser
On behalf of the Peer Challenge Team

Recommendations from the 2017 LGA Corporate Peer Challenge for South Ribble Borough Council

I. The political Administration needs to lead the Council coherently, effectively, visibly and take ownership of the improvement to take the Council forward positively.

II. Agree a clear vision for the Borough which tackles its major strategic challenges and sets out a positive future picture for the place and clear priorities for the Council.

III. Develop robust plans to bridge the financial gap in the Council's medium term financial plan, focused around firm project plans.

IV. All political parties to seek to gain consensus on the Council's strategic issues to improve the political stability of the Council.

V. Senior Members to ensure strong standards of personal behaviour in order to provide stronger leadership of the Council.

VI. Progress the permanent appointment of the Council's Chief Executive and permanent appointment of the statutory officers, and design the organisation around the key priorities.

VII. Senior Members to lead the improvement journey the Council has begun and demonstrate greater ownership of the Improvement Plan.

VIII. Establish an Improvement Reference Group to ensure appropriate pace and external challenge of the improvement agenda.

REPORT TO	ON
Council	26 September 2018



TITLE	REPORT OF
Appointment of the Deputy Chief Executives and Shared Services Recruitment	Chief Executive

Is this report confidential?	No
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the Council on the recent decision of the Appointment and Employment Panel to appoint to the Deputy Chief Executive – Regeneration & Growth and Deputy Chief Executive – Resources & Shared Services Transformation (Section 151 Officer) posts. The report also updates on the steps being taken to recruit to the Shared Services posts with Chorley Borough Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Council notes the appointment of Gregg Stott to the Deputy Chief Executive – Regeneration and Growth post from 5 November 2018.
- 2.2 Council notes the appointment of Tim Povall to the Deputy Chief Executive – Resources and Shared Services Transformation post from 3 December 2018.
- 2.3 Council endorses the temporary Section 151 Officer arrangements outlined in the report until the substantive postholder takes up post.
- 2.4 Council notes the progress being made with making appointments to the Shared Services posts.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	✓
Health and Wellbeing	
Place	

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
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4. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

As part of transforming the Council to deliver our corporate plan and ambitions for the Borough we have been recruiting to the two Deputy Chief Executive posts within the agreed leadership structure. As these posts are designated chief officers the Appointment & Employment Panel has overseen the recruitment process and agreed appointments

5. PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

Deputy Chief Executive Posts

5.1 A rigorous and inclusive recruitment process was undertaken involving Members, employees and stakeholders to assess a very strong field of candidates against the professional experience and key competences required as part of the Council's values and leadership principles. The process was supported by specialist advisers from Veredus and MENRVA.

5.2 After carefully considering all the assessment information the Appointment and Employment Panel unanimously agreed to appoint:

- ▶ Gregg Stott to the post of Deputy Chief Executive – Regeneration & Growth
- ▶ Tim Povall to the post of Deputy Chief Executive – Resources & Shared Services Transformation (Section 151 Officer)

5.3 Gregg Stott is due to start with us on Monday, 5 November 2018 and Tim Povall on Monday, 3 December 2018.

5.4 The Appointment and Employment Panel has been advised that our current Interim Section 151 Officer's contract comes to an end on 3 October 2018. The Panel considered a number of options to ensure this important statutory role was fulfilled until the new Deputy Chief Executive/Section 151 Officer takes up post were discussed, including making further interim arrangements.

5.5 Since the Appointment and Employment Panel met, we have contacted Chorley Borough Council about providing interim Section 151 Officer support. Gary Hall, Chief Executive of Chorley Borough Council has been approached and provisionally agreed to take up this role on a temporary part-time basis until the substantive postholder takes up post. Gary Hall has indicated that he will be appointing Jane Blundell as Deputy Section 151 Officer.

Shared Services Posts

5.6 The Council continues to move at pace to recruit to the posts within the Shared Services structure with Chorley Borough Council.

5.7 The Shared Services Appointments Panel has met and agreed the job roles for the Director of Finance & Assurance Services (Section 151 Officer), Director of Legal, HR & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer), Assistant Director of Finance & Assurance Services (Deputy Section 151 Officer) and Assistant Director of Legal (Deputy Monitoring Officer).

5.8 An internal recruitment process for the shared services posts will be carried out as part of the first phase followed by an external process, with one internal post being 'ring-fenced'. This recruitment process will be undertaken at pace to ensure these posts are filled as soon as possible.

6. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

6.1 None as a result of this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications as the costs can be contained within existing revenue budgets.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None as a result of this report.

9. COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

9.1 The two Deputy Chief Executive posts were created as part of the Senior Management restructure and are therefore budgeted for a full year in 2018/19. The in-year savings to date have been partly offset by interim staff costs for the Deputy Chief Executive (Resources & Shared Services Transformation)/Section 151 Officer post and associated recruitment costs. There is still sufficient staffing budget remaining to fund the proposed temporary arrangements in relation to the s151 Officer role.

10. COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

10.1 There are no concerns to raise from a Monitoring Officer perspective. The report will help to ensure that important posts in the management team are filled and that we are legally compliant with regard to the statutory officer roles.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

▶ HR & Organisational Development	Our approach to the leadership recruitment reflects our organisational values and leadership principles.
▶ ICT / Technology	None as a result of this report.
▶ Property & Asset Management	None as a result of this report.
▶ Risk	None as a result of this report.
▶ Equality & Diversity	None as a result of this report.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Minutes of the Appointment and Employment Panel meeting on 31 August 2018.

13. APPENDICES

There are no appendices to this report.

Heather McManus
Chief Executive

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Heather McManus	01772 625301	13/09/18

REPORT TO	ON
Council	26 September 2018



TITLE	REPORT OF
Changes to Committee memberships and roles and responsibilities of the Cabinet 2018/19	Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services

Is this report confidential?	No
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to note the changes to the Cabinet and Member Champion roles and responsibilities, following the resignation of Councillor Michael Green as Cabinet Member (Corporate Support and Community Engagement), and to approve the Conservative Group changes to Council appointments for 2018/19.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To approve the appointment of Councillor Michael Green to the Governance Committee.
- 2.2 To approve the appointment of Councillor Mary Green to the Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee.
- 2.3 To approve the appointments of Councillor Caroline Moon and Rebecca Noblet as Reserves on the Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee.
- 2.4 To note the changes to the roles and responsibilities of the Cabinet following the resignation of Councillor Michael Green as Cabinet Member for Corporate Support and Community Engagement.
- 2.5 To note the changes to the Member Champion roles.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	X
Health and Wellbeing	X
Place	X

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	X
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5. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

Following the appointments to the various Committee Memberships and appointments to outside bodies at the First Business Meeting of the Council on 17 May 2018, there are some proposed changes by the Conservative Group to the memberships as follows:

Committee/Outside Body	Proposed appointment(s):	Previous appointment(s):
Governance Committee	Councillor Michael Green	Councillor Mike Nathan
Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee	Councillor Mary Green Councillor Caroline Moon (Reserve) Councillor Rebecca Noblet (Reserve)	Councillor Rebecca Noblet Councillor Mary Green (Reserve) Vacant

The Leader of the Council has also assigned additional responsibilities to her Cabinet following the resignation of Councillor Michael Green as Cabinet Member for Corporate Support and Community engagement. The roles and responsibilities of the Cabinet are as follows:

Leader of the Council – Councillor Mary Green

- Corporate Policy
- Corporate Strategy
- Strategic Partnerships
- Public Service Reform
- Strategic Personnel and Organisational Development
- Visual Appearance of the Borough
- National, Regional and Sub-Regional Borough Promotion
- Gateway and Customer Services
- Effective Communications and Public Relations
- Mayoralty and Legal and Democratic Services
- Member Induction and Development
- Cultural Services and Events

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Environment and Community Safety)

- Corporate Performance
- Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion, Monitoring and Performance
- Waste Collection
- Recycling Promotion and Development
- Management of Parks and Open Spaces
- Street Cleansing
- Grounds Maintenance
- Streetscene
- Environmental Crime
- Community Safety
- Community engagement
- Shared Services

Cabinet Member (Assets and Transformation)

- Business Transformation

- Risk Management Control and Assurance (Asset Management and Property Services)
- Investment Portfolios
- Acquisitions and Disposal
- IT
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

Cabinet Member (Public Health, Leisure and Wellbeing)

- Public Health
- Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- Environmental Health
- Licensing
- Children and Young People’s Partnership
- Leisure Services

Cabinet Member (Finance)

- Strategic Financial Planning and Development
- Strategic Procurement
- Revenue and Budget Monitoring and Review
- Financial Governance
- Capital Programme Monitoring and Review
- S106 Agreements
- Revenue and Benefits

Cabinet Member (Strategic Planning, Housing and Economic Growth)

- Planning Policies and Strategies
- Development Framework Proposals and Plans
- Development of Parks and Open Spaces
- Transportation
- Homelessness
- Car Parking
- Economic Regeneration, Planning and Implementation
- Local Business Growth and Inward Investment

Two additional Member Champions have also been appointed by the Leader of the Council as follows:

Councillor Rebecca Noblet – Member Champion (Finance and Rural Communities)
 Councillor Michael Green – Member Champion (Community Engagement and Communications)

10. COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

10.1 There are no financial implications of the report.

11. COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

11.1 It is for the Leader of the Council to determine the membership of her Cabinet and their respective roles. It is for Council to approve the membership of committees.

12. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

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▶ HR & Organisational Development	There are no HR and Organisational Development implications arising from this report.
▶ ICT / Technology	There are no ICT/Technology implications arising from the report.
▶ Property & Asset Management	There are no Property and Asset Management implications arising from the report.
▶ Risk	Failure to have robust and effective decision making arrangements in place could leave the Council open to challenge.
▶ Equality & Diversity	There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from the report.

13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS (or There are no background papers to this report)

There are no background papers to the report.

14. APPENDICES (or There are no appendices to this report)

None

Darren Cranshaw
Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Dianne Scambler	01772 625309	18 September 2018