

REPORT OF: STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

TO: EXECUTIVE

DATES: 25th JUNE 2015

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CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Executive's approval for the Council to take up the LGA's offer of a Corporate Peer Challenge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Executive is recommended to give approval for the Council's to take up the LGA's offer of a Corporate Peer Challenge.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3. A Corporate Peer Challenge will form part of the Council's continuous improvement work.

ISSUE

4. As part of their 'sector led improvement' support to local government, the Local Government Association (LGA) offers the delivery of a Corporate Peer Challenge. The Peer Challenge is designed to help Councils improve their performance.
5. The scope of a Peer Challenge is agreed with each Council and, if required, tailored to reflect local needs and specific requirements. That said, there is a core component that looks at issues of leadership, governance, corporate capacity and financial resilience.
6. Fundamentally, the Peer challenge is not an inspection like the former Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). In particular, it is not currently a mandatory requirement but the LGA does encourage Councils to have a Peer Challenge as it is considered to be an effective tool for improvement in a Council's performance.

7. The Peer challenge is conducted by senior/experienced officers (likely to led by a Chief Executive from another Council) and Councillors (who are likely to reflect the political make-up of the Council) supported by an LGA Peer Challenge Manager. For Council's like Pendle, the Peer Challenge is generally conducted over a 3-day period and involves the Peer Challenge Team reviewing Council's policies, strategies, performance as well as having discussions with a range of focus groups, eg representatives of the private sector, voluntary sector etc.
8. Further details of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge offer along with various questions/answers are provided in the LGA's explanatory note at [**Appendix A**](#).
9. In view of the recent changes in the political and senior officer leadership of the Council, a Corporate Peer Challenge is an ideal opportunity for the Council to have an external assessment of its present position as well as consider opportunities for any improvements that may be necessary given the challenges faced by the Council.
10. Subject to the Executive's agreement to take up the offer of a Corporate Peer Challenge and the availability of the Peer Challenge Team, it is envisaged that the Peer Challenge would take place in November 2015 (the precise timing will be agreed with the LGA but generally their preference is for a 4 to 6 month lead in period from when the decision to have Peer Challenge is agreed).

IMPLICATIONS

Policy

11. There are no policy implications arising from the contents of this report.

Financial

12. The Council is currently a subscriber to the LGA. The Corporate Peer Challenge is provided by the LGA at no additional cost to the Council.

Legal

13. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

14. There are no risk management implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Health and Safety:

15. There are no Health and Safety implications arising from this report.

Climate Change:

16. As with health and safety implications, there are no climate change implications arising directly from this report.

Community Safety:

17. There are no community safety issues arising directly from the contents of this report.

Equality and Diversity:

18. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the contents of this report.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – The LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge Offer

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None