

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

FINAL POSITION STATEMENT – JUNE 2023

Pendle Borough Council welcomed a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) from the Local Government Association (LGA) in February 2022. The peer team was made up of a number of experienced elected members and senior officers from authorities across the country. The CPC recognised the progress being made across the council and was supportive of the work underway in relation to regeneration and transformation. The peer team made a number of recommendations in relation to the following areas:

1. Corporate Plan, Vision and Priorities

Use the proposed review of the Strategic Plan, later this year, to define and articulate a clearer, shared vision and priorities for both the Council and place with officers, members and partners and ensure resources are aligned to this.

2. Performance Management Framework

Review the Council's performance management framework to ensure that it is aligned to the re-set of the Council vision and strategic priorities. It is important that this is focussed on helping the Council measure what matters most.

3. Performance Appraisals

Implement /fully roll out the revised performance development appraisal process and ensure this reaches all staff. This will provide opportunities to identify development needs in support of the Council's transformation programme.

4. Organisational Structure and Governance

Ensure both the proposed leadership and management re-structure and review of governance and decision making are aligned to the Strategic Plan. It is important that the Council's strategic vision and priorities are used to guide future ways of working.

5. Governance and decision making

Identify and source independent peer support for the proposed review of governance and decision making e.g., Local Government Association, Planning Advisory Service or Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

The peer team's observations on areas to consider in the proposed review are as follows:

- Planning – Consider the cost, capacity, speed of decision making and public perceptions/experience of the current approach involving both area committees and Policy and Resources Committee
- Policy and Resources Committee - ensure this committee is able to focus on the bigger, strategic issues facing the Council and that it does not become pre-occupied with routine planning applications
- Call In – review the call-in procedure to ensure it is still being used as intended e.g., in exceptional circumstances
- Election Cycle –the peer team heard from some members and officers who are keen to explore (acknowledging that this was looked at previously) the potential, working within the required legal framework, of four yearly elections. This is in the context of the on-going financial challenges facing the Council and the need to ensure any party in control is able to take longer term, bold and difficult decisions
- Protocol for streaming and recording meetings - consider developing approaches to improve accountability, transparency and public access

6. Medium Term Financial Strategy

Ensure strong, strategic decision making to meet the financial challenges ahead. This includes the proposed transformation programme which will include looking at the future strategic leisure offer for Pendle and Liberata Contract.

7. Capital Budget

Ensure project and programme management capacity to maintain momentum on delivery of capital projects.

8. Transformation

Ensure clear and frequent internal communication and engagement on the purpose and progress of the transformation programme. The Council should ensure the whole organisation has a focus, commitment and relentless drive on the transformation programme in order to meet the financial challenges ahead.

9. Strategic Housing

Use the review of the Strategic Plan (to be undertaken later this year) and new ways of working developed through the transformation programme, to bring a renewed focus on delivering the Council's strategic housing priorities. Progress on the Pendle Local Plan Part 2, including the borough's agreed housing requirement, will be key.

Progress since the CPC

Following the CPC, the Council developed and agreed an action plan (this was agreed by Policy and Resources Committee in June 2022) which set out a series of specific actions to address each of the recommendations above. The action plan with progress on delivery is set out below.

Significant progress has been on the majority of the actions, with strong progress made on a comprehensive and exciting *This is Pendle* engagement programme involving the community, businesses, partners and members on the new corporate plan. This valuable feedback will now be used to develop a new four-year plan which will be considered alongside the budget in February 2023. The council is now using a more focused and aligned performance framework which focuses more closely on corporate priorities and a refreshed staff appraisal scheme has recently been launched. A new post of Director of Place has been created to reflect the more out-facing emphasis of both the existing and emerging corporate plans, where strategic leadership is required on a range of place, regeneration, community and well-being projects. The role has been offered to an experienced local government director who will be starting in early 2023 and will work alongside the newly appointed Director of Resources with S.151 responsibility (the former Chief Finance Officer (s.151) was successful in moving into this enhanced role).

Steady progress is being made on strategic finance and the Medium Term Financial Strategy with regular monitoring reports, a base budget review having been undertaken, and initial work undertaken on re-profiling the capital programme with further more detailed work underway. Likewise, transformation programme updates are being taken through Policy and Resources Committee and a comprehensive programme around engaging staff in this work is being delivered. A full review of the Local Plan has commenced and the council has commissioned new housing need and employment land studies.

Work is continuing on the governance and decision-making block of recommendations, with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny working alongside the council to provide support on the move to the Executive model of decision making in May 2023. Members have not been able to agree on the scheme of delegation for a single planning committee (which would also deal with the strategic focus of Policy and Resources Committee) and the actions around recording of meetings have not been progressed. Members are still to consider 4-yearly elections.

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE –ACTION PLAN 2022/23 – Progress Review Update (June 2023)

	Key Recommendation and Required Action	Milestones	Milestone Due Date	Leads	June 2023
1.	<p>Corporate Plan, Vision and Priorities</p> <p>Use the proposed review of the Corporate Plan, later this year, to define and articulate a clearer, shared vision and priorities for both the Council and Place with officers, members and partners and ensure resources are aligned to this.</p>	<p>Develop Pendle Profile, hold workshop with Members, and hold engagement sessions with partners and targeted groups.</p> <p>Agree priorities with Members.</p> <p>Carry out further consultations.</p> <p>Produce draft Plan alongside Medium Term Financial Plan.</p> <p>Approval of Plan at Budget Council meeting.</p>	<p>September 2022</p> <p>September 2022</p> <p>October 2022</p> <p>January 2023</p> <p>February 2023</p>	<p>Council Leader Chief Executive Director of Resources Localities and Policy Manager</p>	<p>Pendle profile developed June 2022.</p> <p>First workshop held with Leadership Group on 20.6.22 followed by Staff conferences held July-Aug 2022</p> <p>This is Pendle: In-Situ commissioned to deliver community engagement sessions which took place in Sept/Oct 2022.</p> <p>Partner session Nov 2022 and sessions with business sector Nov/Dec 2022</p> <p>Online survey ran from late Aug-early Nov.</p> <p>Member update held on 22.11.22</p>

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					Updated Plan was not signed off at February 2023 Council Meeting and will require further revisions post local elections.
2.	Performance Management Framework Review the Council's performance management framework to ensure that it is aligned to the re-set of the Council vision and strategic priorities. It is important that this is focussed on helping the Council measure what matters most. Based on the revised Corporate priorities for 2022/23 review risk registers and service plans to reflect these. Establish quarterly performance clinics and submit quarterly reports to Policy and Resources Committee.	Quarter 1 report to Policy and Resources Committee. Quarter 2 report to Policy and Resources Committee. Quarter 3 report to Policy and Resources Committee. Quarter 4 report to Policy and Resources Committee.	July 2022 October 2022 January 2023 May 2023	Chief Executive Director of Resources	The Corporate Priorities have been reset and agreed. Service Plans are being updated to set out agreed Key Actions and Milestones to link them to key dates that can be tracked via Performance Clinics. Q1 & Q2 Reports have been taken to P&R Committee
3.	Performance Appraisals Implement/fully roll out the revised performance development appraisal process and ensure this reaches all	Research best practice and develop process. Undertake communication to staff, training and	July 2022 September 2022	Chief Executive HR Manager Service Managers	A new Appraisal process has been signed off and training delivered across the Council in November 2022.

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	staff. This will provide opportunities to identify development needs in support of the Council's Transformation programme.	<p>implementation of new process.</p> <p>Review and evaluate new process.</p> <p>Add any new values to process to run from April 2023.</p>	<p>January 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p>		Now needs to be implemented by Managers and staff.
4.	<p>Organisational Structure and Governance</p> <p>Ensure both the proposed leadership and management re-structure and review of governance and decision making are aligned to the Corporate Plan. It is important that the Council's strategic vision and priorities are used to guide future ways of working.</p>	<p>Draw up draft revised structure.</p> <p>Consult employees and trade unions.</p> <p>Obtain Committee/Council approval.</p> <p>Implement new structure</p>	<p>July 2022</p> <p>September 2022</p> <p>December 2022</p> <p>March 2023</p>	Chief Executive HR Manager	<p>New Structure agreed and Director of Resources in Place from September 2022.</p> <p>Director of Place role to be appointed in November 2022.</p>
5.	<p>Governance and Decision Making</p> <p>Identify and source independent peer support for the proposed review of governance and decision making e.g. Local Government Association, Planning Advisory</p>			Council Leader Chief Executive	

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	<p>Service or Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The peer team's observations on areas to consider in the proposed review are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning – consider cost, capacity, speed of decision making and public perceptions/experience of the current approach involving both Area Committees and Policy and Resources Committee • Policy and Resources Committee – ensure this committee is able to focus on the bigger, strategic issues facing the Council and that it does not become pre-occupied with routine planning applications and other non- strategic or operational matters • Call In – review the call in procedure to ensure it is still being used as intended e.g. in exceptional circumstances 	<p>Report to Council on move to Planning Committee.</p> <p>Implement change to Planning Committee.</p> <p>Report to Council on change from Committee System to Executive Leader/Cabinet arrangement.</p> <p>Report to Council on revisions to Constitution needed to implement change from May 2023.</p> <p>Report to Council on possible changes.</p>	<p>May 2022</p> <p>September 2022</p> <p>May 2022</p> <p>December 2022</p> <p>July 2022</p>	<p>Corporate Director Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager Head of Democratic Services</p> <p>Council Leader Chief Executive Head of Legal Services (MO)</p> <p>Corporate Director</p> <p>Council Leader</p>	<p>Separate Development Management Committee implemented with Area Committees retaining planning delegations.</p> <p>New Call in arrangements were taken to Council in August where the Motion was lost changes to the Call in procedure were not agreed.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election Cycle- the peer team heard from some members and officers who are keen to explore (acknowledging that this was looked at previously) the potential, working within the required legal framework, of four yearly elections. This is in the context of the ongoing financial challenges facing the Council and the need to ensure any party in control is able to take longer term, bold and difficult decisions • Protocol for streaming and recording meetings- consider developing approaches to improve accountability, transparency and public access 	<p>Report to Council on possible change.</p> <p>Report to Policy and Resources Committee and Council</p>	<p>July 2022</p> <p>September 2022</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Director of Resources Head of Democratic Services</p>	<p>Not agreed.</p> <p>Options for Live Streaming to be discussed and agreed by Executive in June 2023.</p>
6.	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy</p> <p>Ensure strong, strategic decision making to meet the financial challenges ahead. This includes the proposed transformation programme</p>	<p>Initial report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy to Policy and Resources Committee.</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>Council Leader Chief Executive Director of Resources Transformation Director</p>	<p>Medium Term Forecast was signed off at February 2023 Council.</p> <p>Q1 and Q2 Revenue and Capital Budget</p>

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	<p>which will include looking at the future strategic Leisure offer for Pendle and the Liberata Contract which includes many of the Council's strategic services</p> <p>Update the Medium Term Financial Strategy to align with the 2022/23 new corporate priorities whilst also reflecting the need for budget savings and the outcomes of the Transformation Programme work including the Liberata contract and the Pendle Leisure Trust contract.</p>	<p>Second report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy to Policy and Resources Committee.</p> <p>Council approval of budget for 2023/24.</p>	<p>December 2022</p> <p>February 2023.</p>		<p>Monitoring reports have been taken to P&R.</p> <p>Regular engagement sessions have taken place with members alongside the Transformation Programme. This includes the direction of travel for forecast.</p> <p>Base Budget Review and Budget setting session have taken place with Heads of Services for 20223/24 Budget.</p>
7.	<p>Capital Budget</p> <p>Ensure project and programme management capacity to maintain momentum on delivery of major capital projects and secure funding for the programme as a whole.</p> <p>Review the Capital Programme as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy including</p>	<p>Initial report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy including review of capital programme to Policy and Resources Committee.</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Director of Resources</p>	<p>The Capital Programme was re profiled in Q1 and reported to P&R for Q2.</p> <p>Further review and re-profiling is included in the Medium term forecast alongside options for savings by reducing the capital</p>

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	external review of the overall funding of the Programme. Funding to be dependent on the corporate priorities and affordability of schemes and taking into account additional resource for the Nelson Town Deal and LUF schemes in Colne already in place.	Second report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy including review of capital programme to Policy and Resources Committee. Council approval of Capital Programme for 2023/24.	December 2022 February 2023		programme (subject to Council agreement) Updated Capital Programme agreed at February Council meeting.
8.	Transformation Ensure clear and frequent internal communication and engagement on the purpose of the Transformation Programme. The Council should ensure the whole organisation has a focus, commitment and relentless drive on the Programme in order to meet the financial challenges ahead.	Initial report to Policy and Resources Committee setting out governance and arrangements for delivery of Programme. Quarterly progress report including establishment of Member Reference Group to Policy and Resources Committee. Engagement and communication with all staff. Quarterly progress report to Policy and Resources Committee.	March 2022 May 2022 July 2022 August 2022 November 2022 February 2023	Chief Executive Transformation Director	Q1 Report taken to September 2022. Update report included in the Revenue Budget Monitoring report for Q2 but a fuller report will go to January 2023 P&R. Regular engagement sessions have taken place with members through the Transformation Members Reference Group Team Pendle staff sessions held on a monthly basis.

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		Quarterly progress report to Policy and Resources Committee. Quarterly progress report to Policy and Resources Committee.			Transformation a key agenda item on staff briefings. Regular staff communication and briefings
9.	Strategic Housing Use the review of the Corporate Plan (to be undertaken later this year) and new ways of working developed through the Transformation Programme, to bring a renewed focus on the delivering the Council's strategic housing priorities. Progress on the Pendle Local Plan Part 2, including the Borough's agreed housing requirement, will be key.	(See above for milestones on development of new corporate plan). Report to Policy and Resources Committee on initial consultations required for preparation of new Local Plan. (further milestones to be added)	June 2022	Chief Executive Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager	Good progress is being made on the Local Plan, with Executive agreeing in May 2023 that the Plan can progress to public consultation. A Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment has been completed to inform the Plan. The clear steer from Executive, however, is that the Plan should progress on the basis of lower, 'Standard Methodology' housing numbers.