

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report (May 2019) Recommendations		Action	Timescale	Progress	Led by
1	Commence senior officer restructure to ensure sufficient strategic capacity is in place at the top of the organisation.	1a) Improve capacity in the short term until restructure implemented.	Complete	Interim Director of Resources in post 1 June 2019 Interim Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in place and meeting weekly May 2019; wider Operational Managers Team (OMT) established early 2019 and meets monthly.	CE HR Manager
		1b) Review senior leadership team to address lack of strategic capacity and reflect structural and cultural changes required (page 9-10, section 4.3 and page 13-14 section 4.5).	Immediate with recruitment Autumn 2019	Report to Strategy & Resources Committee 11 July 2019 to outline proposed recruitment of 3 Strategic Directors; recruitment process to commence in July with first round interviews in September and final interviews in October.	CE HR Manager
		1c) Consider the need for additional short-term capacity at director level to drive forward the Council's digital and wider transformation programme at pace (page 15, section 4.5.1)	Immediate with recruitment Autumn 2019	Report to Strategy & Resources Committee 11 July to outline proposed recruitment of Director of Transformation for 2 year term.	CE HR Manager
2	Agree short-term priorities and actions for the period to May	2) Set realistic short term goals (next 12 months) (page 9, section 4.3).	Complete	The updated Corporate Delivery Plan with Key Actions for 2019/20 was approved by Council 16 May	CE and Alliance

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	2020.			2019. Progress will be recorded and monitored regularly by SLT and OMT (on Excelsis) and reported quarterly to SLT and committees.	Leaders SLT and OMT
3	Ensure the integrity of the current IT system. Review the progress and suitability of current plans, capability and capacity in respect of this, and beyond that to confirm that emerging plans in respect of ICT development and digital delivery fit with longer term transformation plans.	3a) Seek external expertise to review the Socitm work undertaken to ensure short, medium and long term priorities are set out (page 10, section 4.3).	May - September 2019	Socitm work shared with some external experts already and way forward being established ahead of proposed appointment of fixed term Director of Transformation. Outputs of Socitm work being revisited with Socitm themselves too.	CE / SLT
		3b) Review ICT capability and capacity professionally and across the organisation to support transformation and day to day service delivery (page 14, section 4.5.1).	June 2019 onwards	Report to Strategy & Resources 11 July 2019 proposes fixed term Director of Transformation who will lead on this; in the meantime CEO and SLT will work with external experts (see above).	CE / SLT/ Director of Transformation
		3c) Develop a clear route map and resource plan to implement agreed actions to ensure suitability of IT for transformation as well as day to day	July 2019 onwards	See above. Immediate work being undertaken on Disaster Recovery options and infrastructure priorities.	CE / SLT/ Director of Transformation

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		service delivery (page 14, section 4.5.1).			
4	Work with all key stakeholders over the next year to develop a clear vision and priorities for the council aligned to its medium term financial plan (MTFP), to be agreed in the next iteration of the Corporate Delivery Plan (CDP) and once approved ensure this is communicated effectively to residents, businesses and other partners	4a) Analyse available data on district to ensure SDC and its members are well briefed on a strong evidence base to compellingly underpin priorities and decision making processes (page 7, section 4.1).	Autumn 2019	Preparation under way to undertake annual budget consultation with residents and businesses in October 2019 to provide baseline information on the future priorities for the Council.	Policy team / SLT
		4b) Engage members early in district wide priorities, using their knowledge and understanding of their communities to shape and inform them, and ensuring a strategic focus on financial sustainability and the district as a whole rather than on individual wards. Local initiatives can often draw capacity from SDC as a whole and make it difficult for the Council to deprioritise and stop doing things (page 7, section 4.1).	Autumn 2019 onwards	A budget workshop on linking the MTFP with priorities from the emerging CDP 2020+ is planned.	Interim Director of Resources CE / SLT
		4c) Engage other key stakeholders, including staff, Parish & Town Councils; LSP and partners (page 7-8, section 4.1)	Autumn 2019 – Spring 2020		CE / SLT / OMT / Democratic Services & Elections Manager,

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					Comms Manager
		4d) Prepare an internal and external engagement plan for the preparation of the new CDP 2020-2024 and a Communications Plan for the agreed CDP (page 7-8, section 4.1).	Summer 2019		Comms Manager / SLT
		4f) Adopt new CDP 2020-2024 (page 3, section 1).	Post May 2020		CE / Leader
5	Create time, once its senior officer team is appointed, for its political and managerial leadership teams, both informally and formally to have the 'strategic conversations', referred to in this report. This will help develop a strong leadership team and help them develop clear priorities and plans to be put in place focused on SDC's improvement, for the district and the wider county and sub region.	5a) Schedule regular meetings between SLT and lead members to jointly discuss strategic matters.	Summer 2019 onwards	This will start with CDP and budget workshops Summer and Autumn 2019.	CE / Alliance Leaders
		5b) On a county and sub-regional level, more members and officers need to be bolder, more active and lever SDC strategic planning influence on the broader stage for the benefit of its residents, businesses and the wider region. Revisit potential for collaboration in formal and informal partnerships including working more closely with other districts on shared services or joint priorities (page 8-9, section	Summer 2019 onwards	Potential for shared legal service being explored as one option for future provision.	CE / Leader

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	4.2).			
<p>6 Establish effective workforce planning and performance management arrangements so that the Council has a committed and engaged staff group with clarity in terms of the expectations of them and sufficient capacity to deliver its plans. The Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review its future staffing arrangements, ensuring strategic fit and the development of a 'one council' ethos • Develop core transformation plans and ensure sufficient capacity to enable effective delivery and monitoring. This includes consideration of ICT provision • Establish appropriate pay and reward arrangements for staff • Ensure consistent compliance 	6a) Review the staffing structure and develop a clear workforce plan to ensure skills and capacity are aligned to delivery of Council priorities (page 11, section 4.3).	Autumn 2019 onwards as emerging CDP develops.		CE / SLT / HR Manager
	6b) Create a learning organisation; in terms of leading, influencing and shaping places there is significant knowledge and talent which needs to be more effectively harnessed, tapping learning from different projects and programmes within the lead department across the Council (page 8, section 4.2).	Summer 2019 onwards	Creation of a Corporate Policy team planned to help centralise learning. Skills audit to identify talent across the organisation. Organisational development planning under way.	Interim Director of Resources HR Manager/
	6c) Develop effective mechanisms for staff engagement to develop and promote more effectively the values, behaviours and new ways of working (page 10-11, section 4.3).	Autumn 2019	Values and behaviours workshops planned in 'Proud of Stroud' CE / staff briefing sessions.	HR Manager / SLT
	6d) Put in place appropriate systems for and application of performance management. The current system could do with improved clarity, purpose, consistent compliance and	Winter 2019 onwards as CDP and workforce plan are developed.		HR Manager / SLT

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	<p>with, and outcomes arising from, core HR policies are delivered eg appraisals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consistent oversight, management and compliance with key performance management practices. 	effective monitoring arrangements (page 11, section 4.3).		Quarterly performance reports to SLT and Committees.	Policy team
		6e) Undertake a council-wide staffing, pay and reward review (page 10, section 4.3).	July 2019 onwards; likely to take 18 months	Pay and reward to recruit proposed directors addressed in report to Strategy & Resources Committee on 11 July 2019, in a 'top down' approach.	HR Manager
7	Building on its relatively strong financial position, review how its investment and commercial plans could be enhanced. A key focus of this will be to help deliver the council's priorities as well as sustain its financial viability into the medium term.	7a) Learn lessons from the past where projected savings / income have not been achieved eg introducing car parking charges in some market towns (page 12, section 4.4 and page 7, section 4.1).	Autumn 2019	Facilitated workshop to be planned.	Interim Director of Resources / CE / Leader
		7b) Forecast income more effectively (page 12, section 4.4).	Ongoing	Regular budget monitoring activity.	Interim Director of Resources
		7c) Manage SDC's capacity into the future, recognising that key areas as staffing structure, pay and reward, skills and transformation require financial planning and commitment	Ongoing	Reserves put in place.	Interim Director of Resources

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	(page 13, section 4.4).			
	7d) Increase visibility and transparency around cost of services and options (page 13, section 4.4).	Ongoing	CPC report notes that a good start has been made.	Interim Director of Resources
	7e) SDC to internally consider what commercialism means to the Council in order to develop a strategy as part of its longer term plan, eg how it links investment to priorities, place shaping etc (page 13, section 4.4).	July 2019	LGA facilitated budget workshop planned for Autumn 2019.	Interim Director of Resources
	7f) Treasury management – the Council is regarded as being fairly risk averse, and commercialisation opportunities that deliver enhanced return and other policy priorities should be positively considered within a controlled environment in relation to risk and reward (page 13,	Summer 2019 onwards	Implementation of the Investment Strategy agreed at Council in February 2019	Interim Director of Resources

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		section 4.4).			
		7g) Routinely review income derived from fees and charges (page 13, section 4.4).	Autumn 2019	Budget workshop planned.	Interim Director of Resources
		7h) Ensure members have sufficient financial and performance information on which to make informed decisions and deliver challenge (page 13, section 4.4).	Ongoing	CPC report notes Interim Director of Resources' groundwork is really helping with this. Business cases required.	Interim Director of Resources
8	<p>Consider reviewing governance arrangements to ensure better decision making, in order to deliver its revised priorities and plans. As part of this the Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to develop better collaboration at an early stage in producing policy or service 	8a) Carry out a review of the committee system, and the governance arrangements that support it (member / officer working groups and separate member and officer meetings), to gauge how effectively the current way of working operates and especially whether its application in practice enables effective decision making			Cross-party Task & Finish Group supported by Democratic Services / SLT

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<p>options, taking account of expertise available from members where appropriate, together with ensuring that operational, financial and legal implications of options are effectively understood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to build greater political consensus before decision making reports come to members, with greater opportunity for testing and rigour. 	(page 11, section 4.3).			
	8b) Develop a longer term forward plan and associated with this, clarity around approaches to challenge and effective scrutiny to improve decisions, and importantly the quality of reports to underpin this (page 11, section 4.3).	May 2019 onwards	Work is under way to produce a forward plan for the year ahead based in CDP Key Actions for 2019-20 and 'business as usual'.	SLT / Policy team and Democratic and Elections Manager
	8c) Support the development of member capacity, through further focused training and development (page 11, section 4.3).	Summer 2019 onwards		CE / Alliance Leaders / Monitoring Officer / Democratic Services and Elections Manager
	8d) Member / officer training to ensure both are aware of their respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities and staff have a strong sense of political awareness	Autumn 2019 and post 2020 elections		CE / Alliance Leaders / Monitoring Officer / Democratic

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	to respond effectively and lead and deliver improvement (p10, section 4.3).			Services and Elections Manager
	8e) Utilise the existing programme management capacity that is available; further clarity of role and purpose is needed (page 11, section 4.3).	July – October 2019	Creation of a Corporate Policy team resource from within existing staff resource, together with new JDs, is being scoped.	Interim Director of Resources / CE / HR Manager
	8f) Ensure the Constitution is updated to reflect the above actions.	Ongoing		Monitoring Officer