

## Stroud District Council – LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – 6-month progress report

| Report ref.   | Action  | Progress so far   | Next steps   | Council Lead    | Deadline   |
|---|---|---|--|-----------------|------------|
| <p><b>Recommendation 1. PACE OF ACTIVITY: Ensure there is sufficient corporate and strategic capacity, focus on reviewing progress to date and plan effectively for the delivery of agreed plans and strategies. Focus on the delivery of what you have agreed are your priorities to ensure that what you do is done well and your activity is outcome driven.</b></p> |   |   |  |                 |            |
| CPC1  | Monitor the effectiveness of the new Performance Management Framework – a key element of Council Plan delivery. | <p>Streamlined strategic meeting approach has now been implemented. Performance monitoring system now operating for all committees, including the involvement of the Youth Council.</p> <p>The Chief Executive and SLT work closely with the Leader, Deputy Leader, Group Leaders and Chairs of the policy committees to ensure that the Council stays focused on agreed priorities, holding regular 121s and meetings.</p> <p>The Policy &amp; Governance (P&amp;G) Team produce quarterly dashboards for both Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Leadership and Management Team (LMT). This includes details of the following, and is normally detailed by exception, i.e., what is not being completed or carried out correctly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance and Risk Management</li> <li>• Procurement and Contract Management</li> <li>• Information Governance (mandatory GDPR training, freedom of information requests, complaints)</li> <li>• Policies and Strategies</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Spend analysis</li> <li>• Low / Medium audit recommendations</li> </ul> | <p>A review of the PMF will be reported to Strategy &amp; Resources Committee in November; this will highlight progress and identify where improvements can be made.</p> <p>Subsequent recommendations from committee will be implemented and monitored.</p> | Andrew Cummings | 31/03/2023 |

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| CPC1        | Procure and implement a new software solution for comprehensive performance management (Performance Management System -PMS). | <p>Consultation with SLT, LMT, ICT and Performance Management System (PMS) project team (which involves officers representing service areas and members of the P&amp;G team) has taken place to create specification / requirements of a PMS.</p> <p>Agreed on the most appropriate procurement route, which is the use of the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) framework agreement – GCloud, RW1557.12 through the Digital Marketplace</p> <p>CCS is the government's buying organisation and we as a district council are legally permitted to use this organisation's framework agreements.</p> <p>The GCloud has three lots, we have chosen the second lot, cloud software, as the most appropriate lot for our requirements.</p> <p>We filtered the 11896 suppliers identified as suitably qualified organisations under this lot to a more proportionate number of suppliers by using categories, filters and key words. This filtered to 5 suppliers.</p> <p>Information on the offers of the 5 suppliers was downloaded and evaluated against our requirements to select the most appropriate PMS based on this.</p> | <p>Implement the new Performance Management System.</p> <p>Meeting with the supplier to agreed order form, and next steps</p> <p>A new performance management system has been procured and will be implemented in the next quarter, with comprehensive training for all staff and members to enable real time dashboard reporting. The new PMS is for corporate performance management of the Council Plan and service plans, but will be developed conjunctly with the people-based performance of the HR system iTrent.</p> <p>Schedule timescales for implementation and training.</p> <p>Involve project team in implementation</p> | Andrew Cummings | 31/03/2023 |

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|  |  | Preferred supplier now selected, we are working with the supplier to develop and implementation plan including the timescales.   |   |               |            |
| <b>Recommendation 2. CAPACITY OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM: Consider the structure in place for informal meetings now that key Plans are in place – are meetings proportionate? Consider the capacity of your senior leadership team so that they can continue to deliver for you as they have been doing very capably.</b> |  |  |   |               |            |
| CPC2   | Review the pattern of informal meetings at which SLT and senior member attendance is required, now that we have moved into the delivery rather than the development of strategy. | Completed 19 May 2022 to time with the Council's AGM, in agreement with all political Group Leaders.   | To be kept under review now that a streamlined meeting pattern being established.   | Kathy O'Leary | 31/05/2022 |
| <b>Recommendation 3. CREATE A MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP: To coordinate and prioritise a programme of ongoing member training and support new members to find their place in the council and understand and embrace the member officer protocol. If Members own this agenda, they can shape it to what they need.</b>      |  |  |   |               |            |
| CPC3   | Develop a co-designed programme of ongoing training and support including a Member Induction Programme 2024 shaped to members needs and requirements                             | The Terms of Reference and Work Programme for the Member Development Working Group (MDWG) have been agreed by the Alliance Leadership Team (ALT). Group Leaders have been asked to nominate 1 councillor from each political group to join the Working Group and the first meeting has been scheduled for September. A number of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training opportunities have been identified to be considered by the Working Group | The first meeting of the MDWG took place in September and the Terms of Reference and Work Programme have been agreed.<br><br>A Member Training and Development Strategy will be developed by the MDWG for approval at | Hannah Emery  | 31/03/2023 |

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|             |   |                 | <p>Council in the summer of 2023.</p> <p>The MDWG is scheduled to begin drafting the Member Induction Programme for 2024 in early 2023.</p>  |              |            |
| CPC3        | Co-ordinate and prioritise training and encourage member attendance                         |                 | This is scheduled in the Work Programme to take place between February and April 2023  | Hannah Emery | 31/03/2023 |
| CPC3        | Embrace the protocol for member officer relations   |                 | This is scheduled in the Work Programme for spring 2023  | Hannah Emery | 31/03/2023 |
| CPC3        | Help with understanding of specific roles and responsibilities of members and officers      |                 | <p>MDWG will review the roles of members and officers and in some case develop role profiles.</p> <p>Work has already begun on the Member Champion Framework and Champion role profiles are being developed by the MDWG for approval at Council December 2023.</p> | Hannah Emery | 31/03/2023 |
| CPC3        | Review guidance and information provided to members including the content of the Member Hub |                 | This is scheduled in the Work Programme to begin in January 2023 for completion in April 2023  | Hannah Emery | 31/03/2023 |

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| CPC3  | In relation to 4 below, consider best approach to embed One Council ethos.  |  | Working alongside the Fit for the Future Programme, the MDWG will consider how our Values and Behaviours including the One Council ethos will be embedded.  | Hannah Emery | 31/03/2023 |
| <p><b>Recommendation 4. CLARITY ON EMBEDDING THE ONE COUNCIL ETHOS: Ensure there is a coherent plan that sets out how the One Council ethos will be embedded across the whole council (officers and members). This includes officers working across departments and it includes officers and members displaying corporate loyalty and mutual respect to each other.</b></p> |   |  |   |              |            |
| CPC4  | Produce plan to set out how our Values and Behaviours and the One Council ethos will be embedded across the council, including officers, members and working across departments. (See Milestones) | <p>This is part of the People and Organisational Development workstream of the Fit for the Future (FFF) Modernisation programme. Progress is reported to the monthly officer Modernisation Board and to Strategy &amp; Resources Committee as part of FFF reporting. See also above on Member Development Group.</p> <p>There is a plan to embed values and behaviours across the Council – this has started with Values &amp; Behaviours (V&amp;B) workshops, upskilling champions to support facilitation on this and creating a logo and branding for the V&amp;B that can be used on Policies and other documentation around the Council. Reinforcing that the V&amp;B are the heart of all we do.</p> | <p>Share a visual of embedding V&amp;B plan so that staff are aware of what this means and where they can expect to see V&amp;B become part of our processes. We have already rolled out screensavers, signs near staff doors, and mugs</p> <p>Values Based Recruitment approach – design and implement a values-based recruitment approach. This will be worked on and implemented in line with the iTrent development of the recruitment &amp; induction of system development.</p> <p>Launch a People-centred Performance Management</p> | Lucy Powell  | 31/03/2023 |

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|             |   |  | <p>approach that is also values based. This will be specifically for staff but running conjunctly with our new corporate performance management system</p> <p>Continue to work with the FFF champions to embed</p>                     |              |            |
| CPC4        | FFF Champion training programme designed to explore the V&B and embed the one Council ethos.  | FFF Champions had training delivered by Ascend (our consultants supporting the council on the FFF workstream) on facilitation skills so that they can support by facilitating team meetings, supporting an LMT member in discussing how the V&B relate to staff individually and as part of their team and demonstrated in the work they do. | Further training being planned for managing change for the Champions   | Lucy Powell  | 31/03/2023 |
| CPC4        | Two LMT sessions will be delivered to explore the V&B at service, team and individual level and embedding of the one Council ethos. | LMT sessions were delivered in the form of a workshop, facilitated by Ascend to encourage LMT members to think about the V&B, how they relate to them individually, to their teams and the work they are delivering.   | Follow up actions are to work with the FFF Champions and or workstream leads to further explore the V&B with their teams, creating an action plan of things that the team/service need to do more of, less of, to start or stop doing. | Lucy Powell  | 31/03/2023 |
| CPC4        | SLT sessions will be delivered to explore the V&B at service and individual level and embedding the One Council ethos.              | Some discussions have taken place, but a more specific workshop is needed.   | Confirm date and plan for SLT workshop   | Lucy Powell  | 31/03/2023 |

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| CPC4  | Member Development Group to consider approach to embedding One Council ethos (see 3(f) above). | Initial discussions with Corporate Policy and Governance Manager on best approach for Member development. Workshop to be delivered to Members to refresh on V&B, where they originated, why we want and need them and how they will be used. | <p>Confirm workshop outline plan and agree approach for delivery. In house or consultancy or a combined approach.</p> <p>Consultation will take place with the Member Development Working Group for member training on V&amp;B; and this will also be included in the Member Induction programme</p> | Lucy Powell   | 31/03/2023 |
| <p><b>Recommendation 5. ACTION PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT TO HOUSING SERVICES: Continue to work on your action plan for improvement for housing services making sure the teams within that service understand their corporate responsibilities and feel that they are an integral part of the council. Ensure a clear plan to put tenants at the heart of what they do.</b></p> |  |  |  |               |            |
| CPC5  | Recognise good work already underway & celebrate success.                                      | Informal 'cross service' familiarisation lunches are taking place, with the first one occurring on 28 September. Strategic Director, Chief Executive and Chair of Housing Committee attend Property Services 'toolbox talks'                 | Cross service celebrating successes and sharing good practice elements to be included in 'Team Lunches' in Q3  | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |
| CPC5  | Provide challenge and support to further improve landlord services.                            | A new, interim, Head of Service is working through key improvements: Initially looking at void numbers and processing times, which are 50% improved on pre-Covid levels.   | Ongoing current focus is on recruitment and retention within Landlord Services   | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |
| CPC5  | Ensure leadership and management is in place to deliver and embed change and improvement.      | Agent of change appointed and providing support to interim manager.  | Mini service review scheduled for completion in Q4   | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |

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| CPC5        | Appoint an overarching Head of Housing to lead a service which is wholly integrated within a One Council approach.  | Interim manager in post support and developing service delivery.   | Interviews for permanent appointment to head of housing will be 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2022  | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |
| CPC5        | Produce a Comms Strategy  | Workshop to confirm outputs has been scheduled   | Proactive comms plan to be drafted in Q3  | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |
| CPC5        | Review the work and patch sizes of neighbourhood management officers to ensure there is capacity provide support for tenants in the most appropriate way. | Currently scoping brief. Work under way.<br><br>Sharing of health/health inequalities data and workshop on intelligence led working delivered through the Strategic Housing and Health Group (August 2022) | Strategic Housing and Health Group to convene intelligence lead 'patch pilot' - will include information available from the County Joint Strategic Needs Assessment | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |
| CPC5        | Provide additional resources and capacity to enable good quality tenant involvement.  | Identifying resource requirement.<br><br>Additional staff in post  | Tenant empowerment and development days ongoing   | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |
| CPC5        | Refresh our focus on repairs and returning empty properties into use continue the improvement journey   | Working on next steps from successful task and finish groups.<br><br>Q2 exceeded pre-Covid performance   | Void Improvement action plan to be refreshed building on successes – reinforce recruitment and retention work. Mapped phased transition of voids works in house     | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |
| CPC5        | Identify opportunities to strengthen joint  | Work under way.  | Joint Warden, Landlord Services and public realm  | Keith Gerrard | 31/10/2022 |



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|  | working with neighbourhood wardens to deliver a cohesive approach to managing neighbourhoods.  | Collaboration is proactively celebrated across services   | prioritisation workshops planned for Q3   |              |            |
| <p><b>Recommendation 6. OPPORTUNITY TO RESET CUSTOMER SERVICES: Making it more efficient, corporate, and centralised. If Customer Services (or Community contact) is carried out to its highest level, you can free up resource by answering and responding to queries at first point of contact. Good customer service leads to a highly regarded council. (Related to Council Plan objective CW3.2).</b></p> |  |   |   |              |            |
| CPC6   | Produce and implement a Customer Contact Strategy to deliver an efficient, corporate and centralised customer services (or customer contact) team. | Customer Contact Strategy is a core focus of the Fit for the Future Modernisation programme and will be reported to the monthly officer Modernisation Board.  | Contact Centre strategy to be reviewed by SLT Nov 2022. Road map and action plan to be agreed.  | Liz Shellam  | 31/12/2022 |
| CPC6   | Develop and adopt Corporate Care Standards   | Corporate Care Standards are being developed in conjunction with a Member working group. Once adopted by full Council, the standards will be reviewed annually by Community Services & Licensing Committee and performance monitored by Audit & Standards Committee. As part of this process the Corporate Care Standards were renamed Our Service Standards. | Following robust consultation with various stakeholders Our Service Standards were developed and adopted by full council on 21st July 2022. Roll out and implementation to take place Oct/ Nov 2022 | Liz Shellam  | 31/12/2022 |
| <p><b>Recommendation 7. ALIGN THE COUNCIL PLANS AND STRATEGIES: As the Council's FFF Programme is rolled out, ensure it aligns with the Council Plan, 2030 Strategy and MTFP and there is a clear internal communications plan, alongside the Community Engagement Plan. The Community Engagement Plan could include expected outcomes agreed with communities. There is clearly</b></p>                       |  |   |   |              |            |

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| <b>work done on external communications and engagement with the media. Ensure that there is also attention paid to internal communications with a communications strategy to ensure that resources are appropriately assigned to both aspects.</b> |   |  |   |                 |            |
| CPC7   | Produce a framework for the Council Plan, Fit for the Future (FFF) modernisation programme & 2030 Strategy. | Mapping document linking Fit for the Future and the Council Plan has been produced by the Strategic Director of Change and Transformation.                         | Mapping is to be considered by SLT and the Modernisation Board.   | Andrew Cummings | 31/12/2022 |
| CPC7   | Work with FFF workstream leads to ensure FFF interventions align with MTFP budgets and savings targets.     | Finance is a recurring item on the Modernisation Board agenda.   | When the settlement is known and the future financial position for the Authority is clearer the financial savings targets, including the phasing, can be reset. This will be agreed by the modernisation board.   | Andrew Cummings | 31/12/2022 |
| CPC7   | The MTFP is to continue to link Council Plan and budget allocations.  | The existing MTFP for 2022/23 is fully integrated with the Council Plan and an update to the MTFP was taken to Strategy and Resources Committee in September 2022. | The budget process for the 2023/24 year is well underway. Although the budget is likely to be dominated by the impact of inflation, existing growth items linked to Council Plan projects are to be protected.<br><br>Member briefings will take place on the Council's financial position in November 2022 and Policy Committees will consider | Andrew Cummings | 31/12/2022 |

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|  |  |  | <p>their estimates in December.</p> <p>The final budget will be considered by Council in February 2023.</p>  |                 |            |
| CPC7   | Review how best to govern the overall programme of change across FFFP, Council Plan, MTFP and 2030 Strategy.   | The Strategic Leadership Team sits as the body responsible for the overall governance of change and must ensure that these different strands are linked. The current process has the Council Plan as the overarching document with all of Strategies feeding into the delivery of that plan.   | SLT are to continue to ensure that different elements of the Council's overall Strategic Plan fit well together.   | Andrew Cummings | 31/12/2022 |
| CPC7   | Communications Strategy to be produced including Internal Communication.   | A Communications Strategy covering all aspects of Council Comms, internal and external, is currently in production.  | The Comms Strategy will be produced in draft form by the end of November 2022 and will be reviewed by SLT at that point.   | Andrew Cummings | 31/12/2022 |
| <p><b>Recommendation 8. WORKING WITH TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS: Consider working more effectively with town and parish councils to maximise the developing relationships – whilst developing the Working Together project to put a protocol in place for engagement, continue and enhance the regular forums that are in place already (for example they could be theme based e.g., how towns and parishes can engage in planning policy, or planning consultations and see the results of their engagement).</b></p> |  |  |  |                 |            |
| CPC8   | Accelerate the Working Together project and adopt the Town and Parish Charter which will set out Consultation, Communication, Engagement and Resource commitments. | The suggestion of accelerating the pace of the project was taken to the working group who unanimously agreed that the project is progressing at the right speed, giving SDC sufficient time to produce the outputs and working group members adequate time to consider them. It was felt that any attempt to accelerate the process could lead to a reduction in the quality of the outputs and potentially cause volunteer workload issues. | Following the consultation period, the Draft Charter will be submitted to full Council's for approval. The Charter will be reviewed annually with all Town and Parish Councils. In the first year, this review will include a feedback questionnaire with SDC managers, Councillors and Town and | Hannah Emery    | 30/09/2022 |

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|             |   | <p>The Draft Charter has been developed in collaboration with Town and Parish Councils involved in the Working Together working group. This was consulted on with SDC's managers and feedback has been incorporated into a new version which is ready for consultation with Members and all Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>A Town and Parish Council Hub is being built to share information and resources specifically tailored for Town and Parish Councils.</p>   | <p>Parish Councils as well as a workshop with Town and Parish Councils to assist with measuring performance against the Charter.</p> <p>The Town and Parish Council Hub is in development with a content plan in place. ICT have recommended Microsoft Sharepoint as the most suitable platform and are working to resolve access requirements.</p> |              |            |
| CPC8        | Enhance the regular forums already in place (theme based, e.g. engaging with planning policy/planning consultations). | <p>The working group meeting on 13 September 2022 included a presentation from SDC's Planning Strategy and Development Management teams, which gave Town and Parish Councils an overview of planning policy, policy consultation and how they can influence and see the results of their engagement. This was very well received by the attendees and the presentation will be shared with those not in attendance.</p> <p>An annual schedule of events for Town and Parish Councils has been prepared which includes a biannual strategic forum meeting, which is an evolution of the Chief Executive annual forum which used to take place. The agendas for these forum meetings will be set</p> | The first biannual strategic forum meeting is planned for end of November 2022.   | Hannah Emery | 30/09/2022 |

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|             |  | in collaboration with Town and Parish Councils and will be theme-based.   |   |              |            |
| CPC8        | Consider the role of Town & Parish Councils during emergency response. | On 13 July 2022 a workshop was held with Town and Parish Councils covering the Emergency Response structure and how towns and parishes fit into the response. Town and Parish Councils were encouraged to prepare their own emergency plans using templates made available to them. | <p>The workshop/training sessions can be built into the annual training sessions and held as and when required.</p> <p>Lessons learnt following emergency responses will be co-ordinated with Town and Parish Councils.</p> | Hannah Emery | 30/09/2022 |