

Selby District Council

REPORT

Reference: E/17/44

Item 4 - Public



To: The Executive
Date: 1 February 2018
Status: Non Key Decision
Report Published: 24 January 2018
Author: Stuart Robinson, Head of Business Development & Improvement
Executive Member: Mark Crane, Leader of the Council
Lead Officer: Stuart Robinson. Head of Business Development & Improvement

Title: Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback and Next Steps

1. Summary:

- 1.1 The LGA delivered a Corporate Peer Challenge on behalf of Selby DC in November 2017. We have now received the final Feedback Report. The Feedback Report contains a number of recommendations for how we could improve.
- 1.2 We have committed to use the Peer Challenge as a tool for improvement and have developed a draft Improvement Plan in response to the findings and recommendations of the LGA team.
- 1.3 Executive are asked to approve the Improvement Plan subject to any comments made by full Council. The Leader previously confirmed that the report and the improvement plan would be made available and presented to Council on 20 February 2018.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Executive consider the attached Feedback Report and agree to its publication.
- 2.2 The Executive consider and approve the attached Draft Improvement Plan.
- 2.3 The Executive present the Feedback Report and Improvement Plan to Council on 20 February and seek comments on the Improvement Plan.

3. Reasons for recommendation

- 3.1 The primary purpose of the Peer Challenge was to support Selby DC to deliver its stated objectives and meet residents' aspirations. Delivering on the seven key recommendations made in the report will help ensure this happens. Being open and transparent in how we do this will help ensure we get stakeholders – including Members - bought into our continuing improvement and delivery.

4. Introduction and background

- 4.1 The LGA delivered a Corporate Peer Challenge on behalf of Selby DC in November 2017. The LGA team spent 3 days onsite between 14 – 16 November, during which they:

- Spoke to more than 85 people including a range of council staff together with councillors and external stakeholders;
- Gathered information and views from more than 45 meetings, visits to key sites and additional research and reading; and
- Collectively spent more than 250 hours to determine their findings – the equivalent of one person spending nearly 7 weeks in Selby DC.

The team presented initial feedback on the last day followed by a draft report.

5. The Report

- 5.1 The LGA team have now produced their final Feedback Report (see Appendix A). The Report contains seven key recommendations:

1. ***Refresh the Corporate Plan on an annual basis and ensure the wording and language is reflected in other corporate documents.*** This will ensure there is read-through between what the vision is and what is being delivered and achieved.
2. ***Council action plans should be reviewed to focus on a shorter number of key actions and a clearer steer provided to staff on what needs to be delivered, by when and by whom.***
3. ***Better define and articulate the Programme for Growth and its governance processes so that there is clarity on what the priorities are and how their delivery will be managed.***
4. ***Review and improve scrutiny arrangements to ensure that there is healthy and adequate challenge within the Council to help with improvements***
5. ***Develop more effective mechanisms to provide wider and up to date insights into customer and residents' aspirations and needs.*** This will ensure that service developments and transformations are based on accurate information about needs and wants.

6. **Strengthen internal and external communication** to ensure key messages are clearly communicated and successes celebrated. This will ensure that everyone is aligned to the agreed priorities, can easily understand their role in the delivery of these and that the 'Selby Brand' is well established.

7. **Develop a more strategic approach to organisational and workforce development** to pull together how the Council will attract, retain, support, develop, recognise and reward its people to meet its priorities.

5.2 A Draft Improvement Plan has been developed in response to the seven recommendations and other issues raised in the Feedback Report (see Appendix B).

5.3 Issues for consideration

5.3.1 Publication of the Feedback Report

LGA guidance suggests that the decision as to whether to make public the findings of the Corporate Peer Challenge rests with the local authority. However, it is suggested that we make the Report public – via the council website – for the following reasons:

- The Report is a positive and fair assessment of the Council's current position; and
- Transparency is a 'good thing'. Being open and honest with stakeholders will help secure 'buy-in' – not only into how we respond to the recommendations but into the wider Council agenda.

Assuming the Executive agrees to publication, direction is sought as to the preferred level of publicity and media interest.

5.3.2 Improvement Plan sign off

In line with the stated intention to use the Peer Challenge as a mechanism to affirm current progress and identify areas for improvement, a Draft Improvement Plan has been developed. The Draft Improvement Plan addresses not only the seven key recommendations (see para 5.1) but also responds to additional matters highlighted by the LGA within the body of the Feedback Report, including:

- Ensuring economic growth and development delivers improved outcomes for local people;
- Exploring further options for 'Better Together' projects;
- Reviewing CEFs;
- Reviewing Executive portfolios to ensure clarity of responsibilities;
- Reviewing the governance framework around officer decision making to empower officers to make appropriate decisions;
- Exploring opportunities to work with voluntary and community sector partners to improve and deliver services at the grassroots level; and
- Accelerating the emerging digital and transformational agenda.

It should be noted that many of the actions included in the Draft Improvement Plan are already identified in our work plans. However, we have taken the opportunity to bring them forward. New areas for improvement will be highlighted.

Executive is asked to consider and approve the Draft Improvement Plan subject to any comments by Council.

Once approved, it is proposed to monitor progress on delivering the Improvement Plan via quarterly Corporate Performance Reporting which is considered by both Executive and Overview and Scrutiny.

5.3.3 **Full Council engagement**

It was agreed to bring the results of the Peer Challenge to Council on 20 February 2018. Executive are asked to confirm the proposal to share the Draft Improvement Plan with Council and seek feedback prior to making it Final.

6. **Legal/Financial Controls and other Policy matters**

Legal Issues

6.1 None

Financial Issues

6.2 Delivery of the Improvement Plan should be achievable within previously agreed budgets. Where additional funding is required, further reports will be produced to support decision making.

Impact Assessment

6.3 Equality, Diversity and Community Impact Assessment screening will be carried out for each key improvement action as required.

7. **Conclusion**

7.1 Peer Challenge is one of the primary tools in the LGAs work to support councils to self-improve. Implementation of the attached Improvement Plan will help ensure Selby DC takes advantage of the opportunity provided by the recent Peer Challenge and addresses the identified areas for improvement.

Contact Officer:
Stuart Robinson
Head of Business Development & Improvement
srobinson@selby.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix A Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report

Appendix B Draft Improvement Plan

Corporate Peer Challenge

Selby District Council

14th – 16th November 2017

Feedback Report

[see separate document]

APPENDIX B

Corporate Peer Challenge – Improvement Plan

Formal Recommendations:

1. Refresh the Corporate Plan on an annual basis and ensure the wording and language is reflected in other corporate documents.
2. Review Council action plans to focus on a shorter number of key actions.
3. Better define and articulate the Programme for Growth and its governance processes.
4. Review and improve scrutiny arrangements to ensure that there is healthy and adequate challenge within the Council to help with improvements
5. Develop more effective mechanisms to provide wider and up to date insights into customer and residents' aspirations and needs.
6. Strengthen internal and external communication to ensure key messages are clearly communicated and successes celebrated.
7. Develop a more strategic approach to organisational and workforce development.

Ref.	Action	Lead	By when
Recommendation 1: Refresh the Corporate Plan annually and ensure wording and language is reflected in other corporate documents. Improved prioritisation will ensure we focus our attention on the most important areas and ensure there is read-through between what the vision is and what is being delivered and achieved.			
CPC1.1	Develop a priority-led, SMART 2018/19 Delivery Plan for the Corporate Plan 2015-20	S Robinson	April 2018
CPC1.2	Set robust outcome focussed targets aligned to the Delivery Plan and incorporate into quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring.	S Robinson	June 2018
CPC1.3	Publish Annual Report 2017/18	S Robinson	July 2018
CPC1.4	Develop new Corporate Plan for 2020 and beyond	S Robinson	Sept 2019
Recommendation 2: Review Council action plans to focus on a shorter number of key actions. SMARTER action plans will ensure we deliver against our refined priorities and a provide a clearer steer to staff on what needs to be delivered, by when and by whom			
CPC2.1	Agree corporate suite of Action Plans	Leadership Team	March 2018
CPC2.2	Review and update agreed Action Plans to deliver revised priorities – and incorporate into performance monitoring	ALL	May 2018
Recommendation 3: Better define and articulate the Programme for Growth and its governance processes This will help provide clarity on what the priorities are and how their delivery will be managed – supporting delivery and future sustainability			
CPC3.1	Define and prioritise projects to be funded by P4G as part of the Corporate Delivery Plan and monitor through Corporate Performance arrangements.	Directors	April 2018

Ref.	Action	Lead	By when
Recommendation 4: Review and improve scrutiny arrangements.			
More effective Scrutiny arrangements will help ensure that there is healthy and adequate challenge within the Council to help with improvements			
CPC4.1	Review existing arrangements and report recommendations to Executive	G Marshall	April 2018
CPC4.2	Develop proposals for revised arrangements and implement	G Marshall	April 2018
Recommendation 5: Develop more effective mechanisms to provide better insight into customer and residents' aspirations and needs.			
Wider and more up to date insight will improve our understanding of the views of Selby residents and ensure that service developments and transformations are based on accurate information about needs and wants.			
CPC5.1	Update Customer Strategy	A Crossland	March 2018
CPC5.2	Develop the Council approach to making best use of business intelligence – including expanding the availability and effective use of robust customer insight - to support effective decision making.	A Crossland/ S Robinson	June 2018
Recommendation 6: Strengthen communication to ensure key messages are clearly communicated and successes celebrated.			
Stronger internal and external communication will ensure that all stakeholders are aligned to the agreed priorities, can easily understand their role in the delivery of these and that the 'Selby Brand' is well established.			
CPC6.1	Develop a Communications Plan for 2018/19 aligned to the priorities included in the 2018/19 Corporate Delivery Plan	S Robinson	May 2018
CPC6.2	Develop new approaches to recognising and celebrating success – and communicating this internally and externally.	S Robinson	March 2018
CPC6.3	Develop further communications tools – e.g. website, intranet, community messaging, social media etc – and mechanisms to ensure messages, ideas and views filter from top-down and bottom-top	S Robinson	June 2018
Recommendation 7: Develop a more strategic approach to organisational and workforce development.			
This will pull together how the Council will attract, retain, support, develop, recognise and reward employees to ensure we are resourced to deliver our priorities			
CPC7.1	Develop a strategic Organisational & Workforce Development Plan	S Robinson	June 2018

Additional Recommendations:

Ref.	Action	Lead	By when
Additional Recommendation: Economic growth and development that delivers improved outcomes for local people			
ADD1	Ensure the principles of inclusive growth are embedded in the Economic Growth Framework – focusing on the outcomes that will be achieved – and develop a SMART, focused Delivery Plan.	D Caulfield	April 2018
Additional Recommendation: Explore further options for 'Better Together' projects			
ADD2	Explore further options for 'Better Together' projects with NYCC; with other districts; and with NYCC and other districts together.	K Cadman/ Leadership Team	Sept 2018
Additional Recommendation: Review CEFs			
ADD3	Undertake a review of the role of CEFs to include more targeted engagement and decision making of local residents/groups and agree in advance of re-contracting.	A Crossland	July 2018
Additional Recommendation: Review Executive portfolios to ensure clarity of responsibilities			
ADD4	Review Executive portfolios in line with development of the Corporate Delivery Plan – ensuring each priority action has a lead portfolio holder - to ensure clarity of responsibilities	G Marshall	April 2018
Additional Recommendation: Review governance framework around officer decision making to empower officers to make appropriate decisions			
ADD5	Review governance framework around officer decision making to empower officers to make appropriate decisions	G Marshall	June 2018
Additional Recommendation: Explore opportunities to work with voluntary and community sector partners to improve and deliver services at the grassroots level.			
ADD6	Explore opportunities to work with voluntary and community sector partners to improve and deliver services at the grassroots level.	A Crossland	March 2019
Additional Recommendation: Accelerate the emerging digital and transformational agenda			
ADD7	Develop and implement the Roadmap for the Digital Strategy 2017-20	S Robinson	March 2020