

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 21 March 2022

Reporting officer: Stuart Bobby, Chief Executive and Michelle Batstone, Corporate Change Manager

Subject: LGA Peer Challenge – Action Plan Update

Purpose and summary of report:

To provide Members with an update against the recommendations made by the LGA as part of their review in October 2019 and the further recommendations made as part of the follow-up review in March 2021.

Recommendations:

1. Members are asked to note the progress made in respect of the agreed action plan

Key Implications:	
Item	Implications
Legal	There is no legal requirement to undertake a Peer Challenge.
Finance and Value for Money	There may be a need for additional resources in order to complete specific actions resulting from the follow-up process and these will be addressed at the appropriate time as necessary.
Corporate Plan	The Peer Challenge was a review of the council in its entirety and as such, has the potential to impact on the delivery of all objectives as set out in the council's Corporate Plan.
Climate Change	There are no specific climate change implications resulting from this report. However, completion of the recommendations relating to funding and flexible working will make a positive contribution to the council's approach to climate change.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members will recall that in October 2019, the council welcomed a Peer Challenge Team from the LGA onsite in order for them to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge of the council. This was then followed-up with a further 'virtual review' undertaken by the LGA in March 2021.
- 1.2 As a result of the follow-up review, the Peer Challenge Team prepared a short report setting out their findings; the team reviewed progress against the actions resulting from the original review in October 2019 and also recommended a number of follow-up actions.
- 1.3 The Peer Challenge report and an action plan was reported to Cabinet in September 2021. At this meeting it was agreed that a report be brought back to Cabinet in March 2022 to provide an update to Members on progress against the revised action plan.

2. LGA Peer Challenge Action Plan Update

- 2.1 Appendix one to the report provides Members with a copy of the action plan that was previously agreed, along with updates against each of the actions identified (22 in total – one action was signed off by the Peer Challenge Team in their follow up review).
- 2.2 The action plan sets out 10 recommendations, with 21 individual action points. Of the actions set out:
 - 2.2.1 Fifteen recommendations have been fully completed (71% of all actions). This includes (but is not limited to) ensuring a programme of away days for senior managers and Cabinet Members is in place, recruitment of a Funding Officer to ensure the council has a dedicated resource to identify potential grant/funding opportunities, developing relationships with the Kent Housing & Developers Group with a meeting of the group held at Gravesham and reviewing the council's overall approach to risk management in conjunction with Zurich Municipal.
 - 2.2.2 The remaining six action points (29%) are all due be completed by the end of the 2022 calendar year. However, all outstanding actions are underway and five of these are due to be completed in the next two months.
- 2.3 Officers are continuing to work towards completion of the actions. Moving forwards, the actions that are outstanding will be included within the operational business plans for the relevant departments and will form part of the department's regular performance monitoring processes. Officers will ensure that Members are kept abreast of these activities through the regular briefings with the Leader of the Executive and Cabinet Portfolio Holders.

3. Appendices

- 3.1 The following documents are to be published with the report:
 - 3.1.1 Appendix One - LGA Peer Challenge Action Plan Update – March 2022

4. Background Documents

4.1 The following background documents were used:

- 4.1.1 Cabinet – 03 February 2020 - LGA Peer Challenge Report and Action Plan
- 4.1.2 Cabinet – 22 February 2021 - LGA Peer Challenge Action Plan Update and Follow-up Review
- 4.1.3 Cabinet – 07 September 2021 - LGA Peer Challenge - Follow-up report and updated action plan

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Secondary Implications	
Risk Assessment	There are no risks associated with the Peer Challenge follow-up process. The follow-up review assessed the progress the council has made in addressing the recommendations previously identified and provided additional support/suggestions as necessary.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<p><i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i></p> <p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of personal data or special category data or criminal offence data? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner’s Office website via the above links. No</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/A</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk. N/A</p>
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. No</p> <p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. Yes – the agreed action plan made specific reference to expanding the way in which the council promotes its job vacancies with a view to ensuring these are visible for all community groups within the borough</p> <p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
Crime and Disorder	There are no crime and disorder implications resulting from this report.
Digital and website implications	There are no specific digital and website implications resulting from the report.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	There are no safeguarding children and vulnerable adults implications resulting from this report.