



## **Notice of a public meeting of**

### **Decision Session - Executive Leader, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships**

**To:** Councillors Douglas

**Date:** Wednesday, 19 March 2025

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Venue:** West Offices - Station Rise, York YO1 6GA

### **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive and note apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members and co-opted members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

*(1) Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:*

*(2) Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.*

*(3) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*

<b>Type of Interest</b>	<b>You Must</b>
<i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i>	<i>Disclose the interest, not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i>
<i>Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i> <b>OR</b> <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; speak on the item only if the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i>
<i>Other Registrable Interests (Affects)</i> <b>OR</b> <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting, participate and vote unless the matter affects the financial interest or well-being: (a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interest or well-being of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward; and (b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest. In which case, speak on the item only if the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise do not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i>

### **3. Minutes** (Pages 7 - 8)

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous Decision Sessions - Executive Leader, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships held on 20 November 2024.

### **4. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee. Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Monday 17 March 2025.

To register to speak please visit

[www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings](http://www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings) to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

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During coronavirus, we made some changes to how we ran council meetings, including facilitating remote participation by public speakers. See our updates ([www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy](http://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy)) for more information on meetings and decisions.

#### **5. Corporate Peer Challenge Final Report** (Pages 9 - 60)

This report seeks the approval to publish the final report from the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Team following their second visit in December 2024 and an update on the Corporate Improvement Action plan for noting.

#### **6. Urgent Business**

Any other business which the Executive Leader considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

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Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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City of York Council	Committee Minutes
Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Leader, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships
Date	20 November 2024
Present	Councillors Douglas
Officer in Attendance	Helen Whiting - Chief Officer HR and Support Services

## **10. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies.

## **11. Declarations of Interest**

The Executive Leader was asked to declare at this point in the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on the agenda if they had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The Executive Leader had none to declared.

## **12. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Executive Leader, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships meeting held on 17 July 2024 and 18 September 2024 be approved and then signed by the Executive Leader as a correct record.

## **13. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## **14. LGA Peer Challenge progress review**

The Chief Officer HR and Support Services introduced the report, providing an update on the Councils progress against the Corporate Improvement Plan.

The Executive Leader welcomed the report and thanked officers across the Council for their work on the action plan and the positive progress made on the Corporate Improvement Plan. The Executive Leader welcomed the openness for external input to assist the Council to continue to improve, as well as its ability to work with partners who have positively engaged with this process which will improve the Council for staff, partners, and residents. The Executive Leader agreed to note the progress undertaken so far and welcomed the next Local Government Association peer review visit on the 9 December 2024.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the progress of the Corporate Improvement plan and ongoing work.

Reason: To ensure the Council is making progress against the Corporate Improvement plan.

Cllr Douglas, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.02 am and finished at 10.16 am].





<b>Meeting:</b>	Executive Decision Making Session : Executive Leader, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships
<b>Meeting date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Officer HR and Support Services on behalf of the Chief Operating Officer
<b>Portfolio of:</b>	Executive Leader

## Decision and Project Report : Corporate Peer Challenge Final Report

### Subject of Report

1. This report seeks the approval to publish the final report from the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Team following their second visit in December 2024 and an update on the Corporate Improvement Action plan for noting.

### Recommendation

2. The Leader is requested to;
  - a. Note and formerly approve the LGA peer teams final report following their second visit to York to conclude the Council's Corporate Peer Challenge (**Annex 1**).
  - b. To note the progress made on the Corporate Improvement Action Plan to date (**Annex 2**)

### Background

3. The Council welcomed the LGA Peer Team for their second visit to York on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2024. The visit was for one-day, which was 10 months following their visit to York in February 2024.
4. The purpose of the peer's visit was to review the progress of the Corporate Improvement Action Plan (CIP) that was created in response to the peer's 15 recommendations made in February 2024.
5. For their second visit, the peers received a comprehensive overview and position statement of the progress made to date on the recommendations. Whilst they were only visiting for one day they had the opportunity to meet with the Chief Operating Officer, Leader of the Council, Corporate Management Team, key partners and Heads of Service to hear first-hand the progress made against the 15 recommendations, discuss early impact or learning and receive feedback on the implementation of the Council's improvement plan which was written in response to the recommendations made.
6. The report from the peers second visit was received on 19<sup>th</sup> February and in the spirit of transparency and openness, the Council is required to publish the report no later than 12 months after the original peer challenge (6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> February). A copy of the report is attached at **Annex 1** and on approval will be published on the Council's website, and the LGA will also publish on their website.

### **LGA Peers Report**

7. From the peer's visit in December, it is pleasing to note that they have recognised numerous key actions which have been successfully delivered including:
  - a. The delivery of key aspects of the Council's Plan objectives
  - b. The Corporate Management Team restructure which has added more clarity and stability which was also strengthened from evidence of greater collaborative and cohesive working
  - c. Improved financial grip including a co-produced budget and a clear way of place working
  - d. Approach to joint commissioning and place making in Health and Care which goes live on 1 April 2025
  - e. Internal engagement improvement and more visible leadership from Senior Members and Senior Officers. There was also

evidence of a clearer and more unified, collegiate leadership team.

- f. Positive progress on the improvement of wider health and care outcomes for all of the city's communities
- g. Positive feedback on partnership working and engagement with external partners
- h. Feedback about the Administration's continued positive approach.

8. The peers also provided further recommendations as part of their insight on the progress made to date. It is pleasing to hear feedback that the peers recognised the good work already done and the hard work of the workforce. The new recommendations very much echo the continued journey that the Council is progressing including refining priorities, promoting the work that has been achieved, continuing to engage with partners and work to ensure the combined authority opportunities are realised. In summary the recommendations include:

- a. Continue to better define and tell the story of 'why' you are doing things: This related to one of the big messages from the original CPC about the value of a clear narrative and 'story of York as a place'
- b. Even greater level of prioritisation is needed
- c. There needs to be an even greater level of managing expectations of what can be achieved with the level of resource available, both with the workforce and public;
- d. Continue to develop the political and organisational maturity of the council including;
  - i. the organisation reviewing its processes to support speedier decision making;
  - ii. being selective on priority areas for improvement, with learning from elsewhere informing this process;
  - iii. the Administration should continue to take opportunities to further develop political skills, as well as pursuing 'one team' development through reflection and learning opportunities with the Council Management Team;
- e. There is more work required to genuinely develop stronger, positive and strategic external relationships on a shared vision and objectives for the City, but equally noting the good work to date.
- f. A more structured and strategic approach to engaging with and influencing the Combined Authority and taking the opportunity

to further strengthen the outcomes for the City of York as a result of being the economic driver in the sub-region

9. These recommendations will be embedded into existing strategies, ways of working and action plans.

## Corporate Improvement Plan

10. Some aspects of the corporate improvement plan are ongoing and will be for some time. A copy of the updated plan is attached at **Annex 2** and where annotated 'ongoing' activity is likely to form business as usual from this point forward. It is proposed that these activities will fall within relevant service plans or form part of other programme / strategy action plans, this will therefore, reduce duplication and progress will be reported accordingly.
11. In terms of the Council's continuous journey of improvement and being responsive to the many local and national challenges, we are continuing to shape our services, including progressing and implementing numerous restructures and defining business cases for various working as one city strategic reviews and transformation programmes. All enhancing the ways that we work in a more efficient manner and improve the overall customer and workforce experience.
12. One aspect that we are currently reviewing is the governance framework and meetings that were established in response to the feedback from the peers. It is an opportune time as meetings have been running for nearly 12 months.
13. The overall experience of the peer's visits has been a good opportunity to reflect and have an alternative insight on our ambitions, the ways that we work with our partners and community and the overall offer and experience of the employee journey. These insights will be cross referenced with other feedback and will be built into our continuous improvement journey.
14. Corporate peer challenges are recognised as assisting councils to meet their best value duty by having one corporate peer challenge at least every five years. The Council will be approached by the LGA for another peer challenge around mid-2029. The Council can also

approach the LGA at any time should there be benefit of specific sector support programmes.

15. The Council also has numerous officers who have been trained to be part of the LGA peer teams to visit and provide sector led challenge and support to other councils. This directly assists with continuous improvement for York, helps with the sharing of good practice and provides learning and development for the officers involved.

## Consultation Analysis

16. The Corporate Improvement Framework was developed in consultation with the Corporate Leadership Group and the Executive. It was also shared with partners, residents and officers. The outcome of the consultation on the framework helped shape the action plan presented. Future consultation for projects will also involve key consultation and engagement as part of co-delivery and partnership working.

## Organisational Impact and Implications

17. **Financial:** costs associated with the implementation of any aspects of the Corporate Improvement Action Plan will be considered on an ongoing basis and be mindful of the current financial challenges.
18. **Human Resources (HR):** Many aspects of the Corporate Improvement Action Plan links with the Workforce Strategy and the HR Service plan. These documents are key to developing and ensuring that the Council has a workforce fit to deliver all its priorities.
19. **Legal:** The Director of Governance and legal team will provide any legal challenges associated with the individual actions associated with the action plan
20. **Procurement:** The head of procurement and team will provide any procurement support associated with any action in the plan.
21. **Health and Wellbeing:** The Director of Public Health and team will be contacted where there are any actions that require public health intervention and consideration.

22. **Environment and Climate action:** There are no known environment and climate implications.
23. **Affordability:** The Director of Finance will be contacted where there are any actions that required intervention and consideration.
24. **Equalities and Human Rights:** any aspects of the action plan that requires equality impact assessments will be considered on individual basis as part of the project planning process.
25. **Data Protection and Privacy,** any aspects of the action plan that requires a DPIA will be considered on an individual basis as part of the project planning process.
26. **Communications:** The Head of Communications and team will be contacted where there are any actions that require communication to the workforce.
27. **Economy:** There are no known economy risks.

## Risks and Mitigations

28. There are no known risk implications associated with the recommendations in this report, work will continue to develop good partner and stakeholder relations and ensure that the workforce remain supported to be able to deliver the required services to our residents. It is important that all services are delivered in an effective and efficient manner and our officers have the ability to grow, be creative, take responsibility, be accountable and be proud to work for the Council.

## Wards Impacted

29. All Wards are impacted.

## Contact details

30. For further information please contact the authors of this report.

## Author

<b>Name:</b>	Helen Whiting
<b>Job Title:</b>	Chief Officer HR and Support services
<b>Service Area:</b>	Human Resources
<b>Telephone:</b>	07950 265938
<b>Report approved:</b>	Yes

<b>Date:</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
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## Annexes

Annex 1 – Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Report December 2024

Annex 2 – Corporate Improvement Action Plan

## Background papers

Executive approves Corporate Improvement Framework Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 9 May 2024, 5.30 pm (york.gov.uk) item 129 Corporate Improvement

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s176279/Local%20Government%20Association%20Peer%20Challenge.pdf>

LGA City of York Corporate Peer Challenge Report 2024

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s176280/Annex%20A%20>  
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Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee Agenda for Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee on Monday, 8 July 2024, 5.30 pm (york.gov.uk) item 9

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s177327/CSCM%20Scrutiny%20%20CIP v01.pdf>

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s177328/Annex%20A%20Corporate%20Improvement%20Action%20Plan%20DRAFT.pdf>

Executive Decision-Making Session – 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 approval of Corporate Improvement Framework

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s177424/Corporate%20Improvement%20Action%20Plan%20Report.pdf>

Executive Leaders Decision Making Session – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 progress report of Corporate Improvement Action Plan

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s179481/Corporate%20Improvement%20Plan%20Report.pdf>

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s179482/Annex%201%20-%20Corporate%20Improvement%20Framework.pdf>

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s179483/Annex%20%20Corporate%20Improvement%20Plan.pdf>



# LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

City of York Council

9 December 2024

Feedback



**Corporate Peer Challenge**

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## 1. Introduction

The council undertook an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) during February 2024 and published the full report.

The Progress Review is an integral part of the Corporate Peer Challenge process. Taking place approximately ten months after the CPC, it is designed to provide space for the council's senior leadership to:

- Receive feedback from peers on the early progress made by the council against the CPC recommendations and the council's RAG rated CPC Action Plan.
- Consider peer's reflections on any new opportunities or challenges that may have arisen since the peer team were 'on-site' including any further support needs
- Discuss any early impact or learning from the progress made to date

The LGA would like to thank City of York Council for their commitment to sector led improvement. This Progress Review was the next step in an ongoing, open and close relationship that the council has with LGA sector support.

## 2. Summary of the approach

The Progress Review at City of York Council took place onsite on 9 December 2024

The Progress Review focussed on each of the recommendations from the Corporate Peer Challenge, under the following theme headings:

1. **Recommendation 1:** Clarify a strong and consistent narrative that drives the ability of the organisation to take advantage of the opportunities available to York
2. **Recommendation 2:** Be clear on the need to prioritise the ambition of the new council plan to focus on key delivery.
3. **Recommendation 3:** Build on the clear leadership of the new administration

to develop a more mature corporate culture that improves appropriate behaviours and relationships within the organisation.

4. **Recommendation 4:** Consider how the corporate culture and senior arrangements of the organisation can help shape and deliver key priorities.
5. **Recommendation 5:** Consider how the Corporate Management Team can establish a collective responsibility for the delivery of key priorities and provide clear and consistent positive leadership to the many hard working and dedicated staff.
6. **Recommendation 6:** Put in place a robust performance management framework that recognises and rewards success and has clear accountability for delivery
7. **Recommendation 7:** Ensure improved staff engagement that clearly communicates the shared aims ambitions and priorities of the organisation and celebrates success
8. **Recommendation 8:** Establish a well evidenced and robust single version of the medium-term financial position that is collectively owned and understood.
9. **Recommendation 9:** Improve the financial literacy of the organisation, financial controls and financial grip that focuses on the big picture.
10. **Recommendation 10:** Develop a clear plan to deliver savings that includes a properly resourced strategic program for change with sound business cases that flow through a strong and more robust governance framework.
11. **Recommendation 11:** Ensure there are appropriate support resources and structures to enable all members to undertake their respective roles including training, timeliness of papers and access to information.
12. **Recommendation 12:** Develop a clear corporate strategy on how City of York Council can better utilise the desire capacity and ability of partners to help the city improve and achieve its ambition
13. **Recommendation 13:** Develop stronger, positive and strategic corporate relationships which build on localised good practice

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14. **Recommendation 14:** Properly understand the relationship with the Combined Authority and its role in enabling CYC to deliver its key priorities.
15. **Recommendation 15:** Implement an action plan to address these recommendations with urgency and pace that moves from single tactical interventions to a more strategic corporate approach.

For this Progress Review, the following members of the original CPC team were involved:

- **Lead Peer:** Sara Todd (Chief Executive, Trafford Borough Council)
- **Member Peer:** Councillor Peter Marland (Leader of Milton Keynes Council)
- **Senior Officer Peer:** Mark Fowler (Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director – Population Wellbeing, Luton Borough Council)
- **Senior Officer Peer:** James Dunn (Director Prosperity and Investment, Telford and Wrekin Council)
- **Shadow Officer Peer:** Lo'ren Spence (Project Manager, Modernisation Team, Trafford Borough Council)
- **LGA Peer Challenge Manager:** Ernest Opuni (LGA Senior Regional Advisor)

### 3. Progress Review - Feedback

#### **Response from City of York Council to the February 2024 CPC**

Out of the CPC's 15 recommendations, the council's Action plan reports that 100 per cent of actions are completed or in progress with none not to be progressed.

Following the CPC in February 2024 City of York Council has created a Corporate Improvement Framework and Action Plan which meets the peer recommendations. It embeds the council's continued ethos of improvement by '*working together to improve and make a difference*'.

The council's journey is themed around the framework and peer recommendations. The framework provides the structure to the council's continuous journey of improvement using four themes:

1. Strengthen strategic leadership: embedding clear expectations for our senior managers to work as one council delivering a shared vision throughout the organisation
2. One City, one Council: co-designing an internal and external approach to what it means to work together in partnership, uniting the council, officers, members and partners together, as one team
3. Harness the commitment to the City to deliver ambition: developing and implementing a communication strategy, establishing different activities to strengthen partnerships and engage the workforce
4. Build a strong foundation: embedding council plan priorities and the performance framework, reviewing how we support personal development plans and service plans, with a refreshed internal governance structure

The 12-month Action Plan is grouped around the framework and sets actions around:

- a) how the council operates to meet the objectives set in the Council Plan
- b) the council's continuous journey of improvement
- c) being responsive to challenges whilst ensuring that the council's services and its workforce are adaptive to change
- d) recommendations from peers

As at November 2024 (8 months into the council's 12-month action plan) the majority of the actions were complete or underway with substantial headway being made to meet the peer recommendations from the Corporate Peer Challenge. This has been made possible thanks to efforts of the council's dedicated and hard-working workforce, partners and the city's community all believing in York as place, the Council as an employer and good partner relationships.

Below is detail on the progress against each recommendation as fed back by the council. The peer challenge team has fed back its thoughts against what was shared by City of York Council on 9 December 2024.

## 4. Feedback from the Team

### Overall Messages

There has been a level of positive change evidenced since the CPC report evidenced in the significant amount of activity. This included:

- Restructure progressed and more clarity and stability as a result.
- Improved financial grip – co-producing budget and a clear way of place working
- Approach to joint commissioning and place in Health and Care will go live on 1 April 2025

There feels to be a more collaborative and cohesive Corporate Management Team than at the time of the Corporate Peer Challenge. This owed as much to the timing of the visit and the state of flux which existed at a time in which the council was embarking on a major organisational restructure. The sense of things having settled down in the interim was noticeable.

Internal engagement has improved (for example the 'Leading Together' initiative) and more visible leadership from Senior Members and Senior Officers. At the time of the original peer challenge there was a significant level of communications activity being undertaken. What was less clear at that time was how effectively this messaging was landing with staff. From the feedback provided during the Progress Review there is a clearer sense of a more unified, collegiate leadership team.

There are some examples of positive engagement with external partners. Notably this came through in much of the work ongoing to positively progress the improvement of wider health and care outcomes for all of the city's communities. There was also very positive feedback on the impact of the work of the Interim Director of City Development in the intervening months between the CPC in February 2024 and the Progress Review in December 2024.

Feedback about the administration's political approach continues to be positive.

### Areas to consider

- *Continue to better define and tell the story of 'why' you are doing things:* This related to one of the big messages from the original CPC about the value of a clear narrative and 'story of York as a place'. The volume of work that has been undertaken is without question and there is significant level of detail about **what** is being delivered. There is the opportunity for the **why** messages

to be strengthened as part of a truly compelling narrative about the York journey and the impact sought from activity.

This will also contribute to the work the council is doing on continuously improving staff engagement. The clarity of the 'why' will contribute positively to embedding any change sought and provide a means of assessing the degree to which efforts are successful. This will always take time to achieve and the team would encourage the council to continue with this as a longer term area of focus.

- *Even greater level of prioritisation is needed:* The ambition of the council under the leadership of the administration which has been in control since May 2023 is clearly providing significant energy behind all the council is delivering. contributing to the impetus behind much of the hard work which is clearly. The team would encourage a focus on more prioritisation as a means of better targeting capacity. Reflections from meetings between the peer challenge team and colleagues from York on 9 December was that there is not yet a clear hierarchy of priorities which means that the feeling that everything is a priority remains.
- *There needs to be an even greater level of managing expectations of what can be achieved with the level of resource available:* This relates to both people and finance. This is on two fronts of internal organisational expectation management as well as external to the council with partners and communities.
- *Continue to develop the political and organisational maturity of the council.*
  - There is still a lot of focus on process and detail. The team would encourage the council to continue reviewing processes in order to allow for speedier decision-making and greater organisational agility.
  - Further develop your organisational self-awareness to ensure there is a strong understanding of where improvements for the council are most required. Consider how the council might seek to learn from practice elsewhere on an ongoing basis as part of the aspiration for continuous improvement. This involves the ability to take and use feedback even where it is particularly challenging.
  - The administration should take opportunities to further develop political skills. As a still relatively new administration the team would encourage consideration of external resources such as LGA Member Development Programmes to support ongoing learning. The opportunity to take this even further would involve taking opportunities for both the Executive and CMT to jointly undertake reflection and learning opportunities in the spirit of being truly a united 'Top Team'

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- *There is more work required to genuinely develop stronger, positive and strategic external relationships:* The team was informed by partners that some of the engagement and relationships can still feel somewhat transactional with a focus on individual organisational objectives as opposed to collective objectives. The opportunity is to identify how a collectively owned vision for York as a place can be delivered in a spirit of true co-production and cross-sector collaboration.

Partners were very positive about the impact the Interim Director of City Development had made during her tenure. Her time was characterised very positively by partners in their conversations with the peer challenge team. She was viewed as embodying the strategic and visible external officer leadership they would like to see demonstrated by the council. They pointed out that she had articulated an ambition for both the council and the city of York that was very much welcomed by partners it during her time in the role. Her willingness to tackle previously prevailing cultural issues was also positively noted by partners. Her approach was one of being solution focussed as well as more engaging of partners.

There is a new City Director who was due to take up this role not too long after the time of the visit in December 2024. Partners felt it was incumbent upon the council's Chief Operating Officer and the new Director to maintain and build on the positivity initiated by the Interim Director. This would ensure that that visible leadership, focus on solutions and partner engagement underpinned by a clear 'can do' culture is sustained and encouraged - partners view this as being essential for York's future success.

- *A more structured and strategic approach to engaging with and influencing the Combined Authority would be of benefit. There is an opportunity to further strengthen the outcomes for the City of York as a result of being the economic driver in the sub-region:* There is the opportunity as one of only two constituents to ensure that York's voice and contribution is as prominent as possible. Seek greater clarity on how the Mayoral model can bring impact over and above what the individual constituents can deliver on their own. For example in relation to housing ambitions there would be value in considering how targets can be achieved across the wider geography of the sub-region rather than being in any way constrained by being limited to achieving targets within individual council boundaries.

The current early stage of development of the Combined Authority allows York to play a major role in positively influencing the priorities for the sub-region

provided it remains proactive in this space. The council may find value in visiting other more mature/more longstanding Combined Authorities as this may help City of York Council to get a better sense as to how the organisation can maximise opportunities to meet York's ambitions as part of this collaboration.

- *There is still more work to do on the purpose and role of the Combined Authority in delivering the priorities of City of York. 'When is it York and when York and North Yorkshire?'*

## 5. Final thoughts and next steps

The LGA would like to thank City of York Council for undertaking an LGA CPC Progress Review.

We appreciate that senior managerial and political leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions in order to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

Under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas identified for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this.

Mark Edgell (Principal Adviser) is the main point of contact between the authority and the Local Government Association (LGA) and their e-mail address is [mark.edgell@local.gov.uk](mailto:mark.edgell@local.gov.uk)

## **APPENDIX: City of York Council Progress against the CPC recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1: Clarify a strong and consistent narrative that drives the ability of the organisation to take advantage of the opportunities available to York**

#### **City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:**

- CMT restructure has been finalised including the appointment of new Director of City Development
- A strong, visible and united team working together to deliver key priorities
- Revised governance structures and terms of reference established allowing dedicated time for strategic matters and ensure that cross working and opportunities are maximised
- Strong narrative of leadership from the top with new communication platforms and communication strategy to ensure that the Council plan, financial challenge and key priorities are known and understood and embed into everyday business as usual discussions
- Leadership engagement and Let's talk Leadership and the York Deal
- Phase 2 and ongoing work to define senior manager grades and responsibilities
- New internal communications strategy
- Dedicated policy and strategy meetings
- Strategic reviews
- Success of cross council working to achieve outcomes
  - Garden waste,
  - Station bridge,
  - Early help,
  - Changing lives

### **Recommendation 2: Be clear on the need to prioritise the ambition of the new council plan to focus on key delivery.**

#### **City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:**

- Within one year the majority of the Labour Manifesto pledges were achieved
- Executive and Management remain focused and ambitious with emphasis on efficiency and resource management
- Refresh of Corporate Governance Frameworks and links to the Council Plan
- Partners clarity on Council Plan; Partnership Plan and Cultural Investment Plan co-produced
- 'Golden Thread' for employees to understand the ambition, outcomes and their contribution; Council Plan, Service Plan, Team Plan, PDRs and 121
- Strategic reviews align with improved customer journey and demand management
- Update report on Council Plan achievements in September and November to Executive
  - EACH is incorporated into all decision reports
  - Performance / PDRs guidance
  - Staff communications and themes
  - Linked within the workforce strategy & action plan
- Council Plan (and Combined Authority) progress is part of standard agenda items for the Corporate Improvement Board
- 6 weekly staff meetings and Leading Together communication of the Council Plan and progress

**Recommendation 3: Build on the clear leadership of the new administration to develop a more mature corporate culture that improves appropriate behaviours and relationships within the organisation.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- LGA Assurance report in July setting the key aspects of 'how' we are developing a culture that focuses on strong relationships
- Leadership and 'Let's Talk Leadership' engagement with workforce
- Good relationship between Executive and CMT Members, role clarity and boundaries clear for effective working
- Equality at the heart of culture

- Appointment of Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- PDR Framework refresh including the Corporate behaviours and competencies at each level of the workforce
- PDR completion rates already higher than 2023
- Buddying scheme
- Trauma informed training roll out planned
- Dealing with difficult customers policy
- Staff networks continue to grow and be a strong part of culture and assisting with key policies
- Positive working relationships with Trade Unions continue

**Recommendation 4: Consider how the corporate culture and senior arrangements of the organisation can help shape and deliver key priorities.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- Shared values and working together on delivering key priorities; Leading Together
- Key Three messages 6 weekly
- Open and visible leaders in the office with dedicated space
- Let's Talk Leadership
- Training and Development commitment and launch of new management development programme in the New Year
- Director blogs
- New workforce strategy and action plan

**Recommendation 5: Consider how the Corporate Management Team can establish a collective responsibility for the delivery of key priorities and provide clear and consistent positive leadership to the many hard working and dedicated staff.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- Collective leadership engagement
- Engagement with staff including staff survey with follow up sessions

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Local Government Association company number 11177145 Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government company number 03675577

**Chair:** Councillor Louise Gittins

**Chief Executive:** Joanna Killian

**President:** Baroness Grey-Thompson

- Staff engagement hub – you said, we did approach and published on the intranet
- Staff empowered to make changes where they can
- Accountability and responsibility reinforced
- Positive praise and pride promoted amongst colleagues and from managers / leaders
- Promotion of cross council working in practice, many examples
  - Early help, garden waste, changing lives, local transport strategy

**Recommendation 6: Put in place a robust performance management framework that recognises and rewards success and has clear accountability for delivery**

**City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:**

- Performance is at the heart of how we work
- Standard agendas have been reviewed
- New terms of reference and new governance structures
- Service plans format has been reviewed
- Core Services Performance Board introduced to support and focus service performance including Children's & Adults Ambition Boards which COO Chairs
- Monthly CMT focus on performance
- High energy for praise to teams and individuals
- IMPOWER award most productive top tier Council
- Education Minister and Chief Social Worker praise
- Reduction of agency numbers and spend by 38%
- Single View development continues to be explored

**Recommendation 7: Ensure improved staff engagement that clearly communicates the shared aims ambitions and priorities of the organisation and celebrates success**

**City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:**

- COO and Leader visit teams to celebrate success
- Strengthened internal comms and engagement
- Staff suggestion hub
- New weekly email format from COO achieving high click and read rates
- Introduction of Key Three Messages
- New screens across floorplates; information sharing
- Wealth of achievements; IMPOWER, PWC defined York as the most liveable City in the UK (only northern City to make top 10)
- Rick Gritter –Shed Seven Frontman !
- As well as many national and regional staff award recognition

**Recommendation 8: Establish a well evidenced and robust single version of the medium-term financial position that is collectively owned and understood.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- MTFS approved by Executive in Sept 2024
- Further update in November 2024.
- Huge turn in position of budget overspend – original forecast of c£11m now c£2.7m gap & expect to be balanced by March 2025
- Importance of further communication with workforce but also reinforcement that need to continue as we are doing to be sustainable
- Work with Leading Together re understanding the financial position
- Ongoing successful cost control processes
- Strategic away day for CMT
- Workshops held with partners too on the financial strategy and cost savings
- Close working with Executive on savings
- Staff encouraged to be creative and innovative with savings suggestions – including personal responses.

**Recommendation 9: Improve the financial literacy of the organisation, financial controls and financial grip that focuses on the big picture.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

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- Refresh of the financial e-learning module
- Promotion of the savings and financial challenge to embed as part of the day-to-day culture – this has worked based on improvements made
- Partners and residents' part of engagement
- Procurement challenge board introduced
- Procurement training for new pending legislation across key officers and managers
- Plans in place to review budget manager self sufficiency
- Veritau Budget Management Memorandum Report:

*‘Overall, the findings from our review of the council’s budget management process support that it is operating well. A good framework of support is in place which is strengthened by the availability of good quality and timely data. There is also good visibility of budget position and pressures at more senior levels through corporate governance arrangements and the more bespoke arrangements developed by the council’s directorates. Effective working relationships exist between budget managers and finance support’.*

**Recommendation 10: Develop a clear plan to deliver savings that includes a properly resourced strategic program for change with sound business cases that flow through a strong and more robust governance framework.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- Working as One City programme of strategic reviews under the theme of improving resident experience, becoming a more resilient council and supporting the workforce
  - Reviews underway include homelessness pathway, joint committee with health and integrated neighbourhoods' teams, contract management and accelerating health communities
- Working as One City Board established
- Appointed a Head of Transformation (temp)
- Business cases being worked up
- Recognition of extra capacity, development of secondment opportunities



- Growing our own staff to undertake these reviews without consultants has been a key message

**Recommendation 11: Ensure there are appropriate support resources and structures to enable all members to undertake their respective roles including training, timeliness of papers and access to information.**

**City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:**

- Creation of a project team in Democratic Services with the specific aim of updating and improving both the Member Induction Programme and ongoing Member Training Programme, with work beginning in the New Year;
- Continued oversight of the updated Programmes by the Audit and Governance Committee;
- Signposting to an updated Member portal will be in place by the end of the financial year;
- Currently in the process of carrying out a review of Scrutiny at the Council, conducted by CfGS (with the support of the LGA);
- Review will consider all aspects of improving scrutiny, committee organisation and workloads, committee methods of working, meeting schedules, and staffing support;
- Review will also consider how best to integrate the independent members into the scrutiny process;
- Cross-party Constitution Working Group continues to meet, with recommended amendments being presented incrementally to Audit and Governance Committee;
- Recognition that the Constitution is never ‘finished’, and is a living document;
- First major constitutional amendments approved 21 November 2024

**Recommendation 12: Develop a clear corporate strategy on how City of York Council can better utilise the desire capacity and ability of partners to help the city improve and achieve its ambition**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- Partner workshops held seeking feedback on CPC and future working
- Creation of a partnership approach and annual programme of partner meetings
- New Place Making Partnerships created – first meeting in February 2025 – Agenda includes the City-wide response to the refreshed Local Plan and the National planning Policy Framework
- CMT now part of City Partners meetings with Executive members to ensure proactively maximise opportunities
- Health and Care Partnership – COO Chair and Place Lead. Strong presence on board across the Council from members and officers – acknowledged that Board is working very effectively with strong ambition for future integration

**Recommendation 13: Develop stronger, positive and strategic corporate relationships which build on localised good practice**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation

- Strategic discussions with University of York Executive and CMT
- City Centre Symposium – April 2025
- York Central Development – significant progress
- York Health and Care Partnership
- Work with the ICB
- Local Care partnerships to improve population outcome and reduce health inequalities
- Agreeing priorities aligned with York Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Strategy

**Recommendation 14: Properly understand the relationship with the Combined Authority and its role in enabling CYC to deliver its key priorities.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- Successful creation of the Combined Authority and delivery of the elections for the appointment of the new mayor in May.
- As a Team we have embraced the new relationship with the CA (and NYC) with energy and been responsive and structured to opportunities available in a timely manner to maximise potential
- Excellent working relationships established at pace with ease and authenticity, York is well positioned and ready with pipeline projects to meet the council plan agenda.
- Investment from the CA is in the region of c£18m (for CYC and City Projects)– including funding net zero initiatives, feasibility study for an energy park, brownfield sites to accelerate affordable homes, EV charging, City Centre spatial plan and regeneration, movement and place plan and cultural passports for young people
- Local growth plan links

**Recommendation 15: Implement an action plan to address these recommendations with urgency and pace that moves from single tactical interventions to a more strategic corporate approach.**

City of York Council progress in relation to this recommendation:

- April – Final Peer Recommendations received
- May – Peer Review report published including draft Corporate Improvement Framework
- June – consultation with staff and residents and Scrutiny on action plan to meet the peer recommendations
- July - Leader at Decision Session approved the Corporate Improvement Framework and Action Plan
- Monthly progress reports to Corporate Improvement Board chaired by Chief Operating Officer
- November – Leader Decision Session approved update report on the action plan

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## Corporate Improvement Action Plan

**Council Plan action:** How the council operates (actions: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8)

### Background

This action plan lists the detailed actions that responds to the [Corporate Improvement Framework](#), feedback from staff surveys, together with engagement with officers.

Actions are council-wide and will be developed and delivered in close collaboration with the Corporate Management Team and all directorates. The four themes in the Corporate Improvement Framework provide structure for this action plan.

The action plan has been developed in consultation with partners, residents, officers and [Scrutiny](#) – through both a series of workshops and a consultation which took place throughout May and June. It will continue to be added to throughout the next three years as the council listens and responds to residents, officers and partners.

### Objectives

1. **Strengthen strategic leadership:** By September 2024, we will have embedded clear expectations for our senior managers to work as one council delivering a shared vision throughout the organisation;
2. **One City, one council:** By September 2024, we will have co-designed both an internal and external approach to what it means to work together in partnership, uniting the council, officers, members and partners together, as one team;
3. **Harness the commitment to the city to deliver ambitions:** Develop and implement a communication strategy, establishing different activities to strengthen partnerships and engage the workforce, with a plan prepared by September 2024;
4. **Build a strong foundation:** By December 2024, we will have embedded council plan priorities and the performance framework throughout the organisation, reviewing how we support personal development plans and service plans, with a refreshed internal governance structure

## Governance

The Corporate Improvement Framework sets the structure for this action plan. The Framework was approved at Executive in May 2024. [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 9 May 2024, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 129

This action plan is monitored at quarterly Corporate Improvement Board, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer. The Corporate Improvement Board reports issues by exception to the Corporate Management Team.

The Corporate Improvement Board monitors and steers the council's continuous corporate improvement journey, with reports covering this Corporate Improvement Action Plan, the Working as One City programme, budget savings plans and progress against the Council Plan.

The Corporate Improvement Action Plan has been developed in response to the Council Plan priority "how we operate" and the significant financial pressures the council is experiencing. It was informed by the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge which took place in February 2024 together with staff surveys and feedback from partners. As part of that process, LGA will assess progress against this action plan in December 2024. Actions have been described in such a way that allows for progress to be clearly recorded and evidenced.

Progress against this action plan will report publicly at the Leader's Decision Making Session in November 2024 and May 2025.

This Action plan will continually be refreshed as part of our journey of continuous improvement, dates and interdependencies may change as a result.

The peers presented the Council with 15 recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** Clarify a strong and consistent narrative that drives the ability of the organisation to take advantage of the opportunities available to York.

**Recommendation 2:** Be clear on the need to prioritise the ambition of the new council plan to focus on key delivery.

**Recommendation 3:** Build on the clear leadership of the new administration to develop a more mature corporate culture that improves appropriate behaviours and relationships within the organisation.

**Recommendation 4:** Consider how the corporate culture and senior arrangements of the organisation can help shape and deliver key priorities.

**Recommendation 5:** Consider how the Corporate Management Team can establish a collective responsibility for the delivery of key priorities and provide clear and consistent positive leadership to the many hard working and dedicated staff.

**Recommendation 6:** Put in place a robust performance management framework that recognises and rewards success and has clear accountability for delivery.

**Recommendation 7:** Ensure improved staff engagement that clearly communicates the shared aims ambitions and priorities of the organisation and celebrates success.

**Recommendation 8:** Establish a well evidenced and robust single version of the medium-term financial position that is collectively owned and understood.

**Recommendation 9:** Improve the financial literacy of the organisation, financial controls and financial grip that focuses on the big picture.

**Recommendation 10:** Develop a clear plan to deliver savings that includes a properly resourced strategic program for change with sound business cases that flow through a strong and more robust governance framework.

**Recommendation 11:** Ensure there are appropriate support resources and structures to enable all members to undertake their respective roles including training, early access to papers and expanded access to information.

**Recommendation 12:** Develop a clear corporate strategy on how City of York Council can better utilise the desire capacity and ability of partners to help the city improve and achieve its ambition.

**Recommendation 13:** Develop stronger, positive and strategic corporate relationships with all partners. Ensure these are more consistent across all partnership working utilising localised good practice (for example the work of the ICB, engagement with the voluntary sector etc). Seek to replicate and embed these positive examples across CYC to establish effective collaboration as being the norm).

**Recommendation 14:** Properly understand the relationship with the Combined Authority and its role in enabling CYC to deliver its key priorities.

**Recommendation 15:** Implement an action plan to address these recommendations with urgency and pace that moves from single tactical interventions to a more strategic corporate approach.



## Action Plan

Key	Complete	Underway	At risk	Not started
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**Objective 1 Strengthen strategic leadership:** By September 2024, we will have embedded clear expectations for our senior managers to work as one council delivering a shared vision throughout the organisation;

Action	Detail	Accountable officer	Narrative and Evidence Matrix (where appropriate)	Deadline
1. Refresh the Corporate management team	1. Create a working environment for senior leaders to work together with ease and enable officers and the workforce to have access to senior teams. <b>Recommendations: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7</b>	Chief Officer HR	New Corporate Management Team area for visibility and ease for individuals and teams to work with and locate senior team.	March 2024
	2. Build on the senior management restructure to reflect the new structure and support officers understand their directorate and how they contribute to the organisation's vision. <b>Recommendations: R1, R5, R7, R12, R13, R14</b>	COO	Work has been undertaken to communicate the new structures, all senior posts are now filled, and team are working well together. <b>Evidence: E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E12, E13</b>	November 2024
	3. Ensure opportunity for senior management policy and strategy discussions continue to reinforce the organisation's vision and ambition.	Chief Strategy Officer	Dedicated Policy and Strategy meetings with senior officers in place and governance structure created.	June 2024

	<b>Recommendations: R1, R5, R7, R12, R13, R14</b>		<b>Evidence: E18, E24</b>	
2. Co-design a Leadership framework	1. Co-design with senior managers of the council expected leadership behaviours, values and actions. Leadership to be embedded across all levels of the organisation including building relationships with communities. <b>Recommendations: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7</b>	Chief Officer HR	Let's Talk Leadership engagement ongoing. Roll out of expected behaviours, accountability and responsibility and the York Deal – what officers receive in return for their employment and hardwork. <b>Evidence: E24</b>	October 2024 and ongoing
	2. Establish senior manager buddying system and shadowing opportunities for support and challenge to help build confidence, capabilities and share good practice. <b>Recommendations: R1, R3</b>	Chief Officer HR	Buddying system promoted to all staff not just senior managers, felt this was an important offer, in addition to the existing buddying arrangements in place for new starters. Guidance promoted in October 2024, evaluation will take place in 6 months. <b>Evidence: E8</b>	October 2024
3. Redesign the roles, relationships and responsibilities	1. Following approval of the new Corporate Management Team, develop the framework for the review of roles which directly report into the Corporate Management Team, including job naming conventions (known as the CLG review 2).	Chief Officer HR	Ongoing work, engagement with Leading Together cohort ongoing, further work to continue re defining Senior Manager grades	Completed by May 2025

	<b>Recommendations: R1, R2, R4, R5</b>			
	2. Develop a Managing Customer Relations Policy to help ensure both residents and officers understand their own roles and responsibilities. <b>Recommendations: R3, R5, R7</b>	Director of Housing and Communities	Currently with Talk About panel as part of consultation agreed with Scrutiny. Presentation to Talk About panel delayed due to other consultations	March 2025
	3. Start the journey to become a trauma-informed council, training to ensure all officers understand their own role in supporting residents and each other during different transactions, including sharing videos and interactive learning for key roles. <b>Recommendations: R4</b>	Chief Officer HR	Work has progressed with a learning platform for officers, face to face training for other officers, this will roll out wider across the council too. Staff who are also facing trauma (personally) have access to resources from EAP (from March 2024). CMT and Executive Members Trauma Informed training 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	April 2025 and ongoing
	4. Introduce an annual process with senior managers to share and support each other's Service Plan development with opportunity to contribute to each other's delivery of ambitions. <b>Recommendations: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	COO Director of Finance Chief Strategy Officer	Revised service plan template and guidance for CMT members to complete. Agreed that service plans will be updated twice per year and aligned to the Council Plan. Interdependencies and links	November 2024

			to strategic reviews also highlighted.	
	<p>1. Share the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with residents, members, partners and officers, being clear on the savings target for the next three years. <b>Recommendations: R6, R8, R9, R10</b></p>	Director of Finance Head of Comms Chief Strategy Officer	Budget Consultation started in November following with Executive on key proposals. Staff also part of the journey and kept informed. <b>Evidence: E39, E40</b>	Nov 2024
	<p>2. Provide great opportunity for senior managers to understand and engage in setting their annual budgets, through the budget setting process and ongoing. <b>Recommendations: R8, R9</b></p>	Director of Finance	Engagement continues with staff via All staff briefings, Leading Together, Key Three documents and weekly briefing	June 2024 ongoing
	<p>3. Design short financial literacy courses for Senior Managers to learn how to manage the financial management system, setting out the key dates for each year. <b>Recommendations: R8, R9</b></p>	Director of Finance	Courses are currently being designed. E-learning course currently under review. Promoting e-learning training. Procurement training ongoing to new managers.	Oct 2024 and ongoing

**Objective 2 One City, one council:** By September 2024, we will have co-designed both an internal and external approach to what it means to work together in partnership uniting the council, officers, members and partners together, as one team

Action	Detail	Accountable officer	Evidence Matrix and narrative	Deadline
1. Co-design a culture Improvement Plan	1. Celebrate success with operational and delivery teams highlighted for personal thanks from the Leader and Chief Operating Officer (COO) following achievements. <b>Recommendations: R1, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	COO	COO and Leader visited teams and is in progress. <b>Evidence: E10, E14, E15, E16</b>	Ongoing
	2. Refresh internal governance arrangements, bringing greater visibility to how decisions are made and providing greater oversight to how the council operates internally. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6</b>	COO	Created and communicated <b>Evidence: E21</b>	June 2024
	3. Following CLG review 2, co-design with senior managers cohort ways of working, confirming what good looks like when considering the six themes presented to Audit and Governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build stronger relationships by understanding expectations</li> <li>• Define the culture you want to see</li> <li>• Communicate the change</li> </ul>	Chief Officer HR Chief Strategy Officer	Phase 2 ongoing.	March 2025



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead by example</li> <li>Embed training and support</li> <li>Align systems and processes</li> </ul> <p>Monitoring Officer report: <a href="#">Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 19 July 2023, 5.30 pm (york.gov.uk)</a> item 9</p> <p><b>Recommendations: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6</b></p>			
2. Co-design a partnerships plan	<p>1. Following partner workshops and recent city leader's events, develop a partnership plan that takes a one council approach to developing partnerships for approval at an Executive Decision Session (following further discussion with partners).</p> <p><b>Recommendations: R12, R13</b></p>	Chief Strategy Officer	EDMS Sept 2024 Annual schedule being arranged, proposal to establish a strategic place making board prepared for COO/Leader approval.	In progress
	<p>2. Provide greater visibility of partnership working, with communications during or after events to show city partners coming together to discuss strategic issues, at both local and regional level.</p> <p><b>Recommendations: R1, R12, R13</b></p>	Head of Comms	<b>Evidence: E25, E28, E29</b>	Ongoing
	<p>3. Co-design with partners the top 5 things to focus on to harness energy and commitment to the city, working</p>	COO Chief Strategy Officer		October 2024

	with partners on plans to deliver change, including increasing public affairs activities. <b>Recommendations: R1, R12, R13</b>			
3. Build capacity and capability to transform council services	1. Establish the Corporate Improvement Board chaired by the Chief Operating Officer to monitor and steer corporate transformation, including the Working as One City programme, budget savings and delivery of the Council Plan. <b>Recommendations: R1, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10</b>	Director of Finance	Ongoing, board created and active <b>Evidence: E22, E27</b>	June 2024
	2. Explore the best way to develop change and project capabilities to lead transformation, working closely with directorates, taking a one council approach to deliver end benefits such as improved customer experience and a more efficient council. <b>Recommendations: R1, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10</b>	Director of Finance	Strategic reviews defined and business cases establishing this is now ongoing <b>Evidence: E22</b>	August 2024 and ongoing
	3. Develop a series of Strategic Reviews that will take a council wide approach (for example, improve customer experience, embed safe and effective social care practice, and launch	Chief Strategy Officer	Strategic reviews defined and business cases establishing this is now ongoing <b>Evidence: E22, E27</b>	Executive Sept 2024  Ongoing

	integrated neighbourhood teams) that together form the Working as One City Programme, providing Executive oversight in September 2024 as part of the MTFS budget setting process. <b>Recommendations: R1, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10</b>			
	4. Identify action plans related to corporate improvement to bring to the Corporate Improvement Board for oversight and steer – including equalities action plan, budget savings plans, etc. <b>Recommendations: R1, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	Ongoing, board created and active	June 2024
4. Deliver an Induction programme for the newly elected Mayor to best represent York's interests	1. Introduce the newly elected Mayor to key York leaders, including Executive, Corporate Management Team, city leaders and key officers, facilitating tours of key sites, eg. York Central <b>Recommendations: R1, R12, R13</b>	Chief strategy Officer	City Leaders event in May and ongoing work with the combined authority, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor	May 2024
	2. Present the Mayor with the York pipeline of proposals, for mayoral consideration, following cross-party scrutiny <b>Recommendations: R1, R12, R13</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	MCA pipeline approved in July and MCA business cases being coordinated. Work required to activate cases for Local Growth Plan. <b>Evidence: E20, E26</b>	July 2024



	<p>3. Centrally coordinate Combined Authority business cases that have regional impact for council plan action to maintain oversight of projects progressing with Mayoral support, working with York's policy network to prepare business cases ready for further discussion.</p> <p><b>Recommendations: R12, R13</b></p>	Chief Strategy Officer	MCA pipeline approved in July and MCA business cases being coordinated. Work required to activated cases for Local Growth Plan	July 2024 Ongoing
	<p>4. Work with the Combined Authority to establish working groups between officers in York, North Yorkshire and the Combined Authority to explore opportunities in key themes!</p> <p><b>Recommendations: R12, R13</b></p>	Chief Strategy Officer	<p>MCA pipeline approved in July and MCA business cases being coordinated. Work required to activated cases for Local Growth Plan</p> <p><b>Evidence: E26, E29</b></p>	June 2024 ongoing

**Objective 3 Harness the commitment to the city to deliver ambitions:** Develop and implement a communication strategy, establishing different activities to strengthen partnerships and engage the workforce, with a plan prepared by September 2024;

Action	Detail	Accountable officer	Narrative and Evidence Matrix (where appropriate)	Deadline
1. Develop and implement the Communications Strategy	1. Define a clear corporate narrative through the Working as One City Programme <b>Recommendations: R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R10</b>	Head of Comms Director of Finance	Work started, business cases commenced, working groups convened and communication with staff commenced Head of Transformation appointment from 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 to drive and take lead on transformation <b>Evidence: E24, E48</b>	Ongoing
	2. Develop a new Communications Strategy that aligns to the Council Plan and Working as One City programme, setting out a clear corporate narrative and refreshing channels. <b>Recommendations: R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R10</b>	Head of Comms	Work started, business cases commenced, working groups convened and communication with staff commenced	Dec 2024

	3. Develop an internal engagement plan that shows how different internal meetings and communications are integrated, with key strategic issues discussed and providing opportunity for staff to get involved and meet the Corporate Management Team (CMT). <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	Head of Comms	Internal comms completed and now ongoing <b>Evidence: E9, E11</b>	June 2024
	4. Launch senior management weekly blogs to introduce senior management to officers and share their ambition for the organisation, celebrating success and sharing resident's experiences. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	Head of Comms	CMT blog schedule confirmed and rota established <b>Evidence: E9, E11</b>	Sept 2024
	5. Share the clear narrative throughout all internal communications with three key messages from CMT every month. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	Head of comms	Agreed and established <b>Evidence: E19</b>	July 2024
	6. Refresh how we share information to better equip officers with the information they need and consider all workforce including those without access to council-provided ICT.	Chief Strategy Officer Head of Comms	Ongoing, implemented new email platform, key three and ongoing all staff meetings <b>Evidence: E9, E11</b>	April 2025

	<b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>			
2. Establish and facilitate the City leaders annual events programme	1. Establish a partner plan to provide greater opportunity to build relationships. <b>Recommendations: R1, R11, R12</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	Partner plan produced. <b>Evidence: E29</b>	September 2024
	2. Share with partners the annual partner event plan in advance, with invitations. <b>Recommendations: R1, R11, R12</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	Programme of events has been produced. <b>Evidence: E28</b>	October 2024
	3. Establish a City Developments Group that oversees and steers regeneration projects informed by partner task and finish / working groups and with opportunity for Scrutiny review. <b>Recommendations: R1, R10, R11</b>	Director of City Development	City Development Board established, forward look agreed, meeting schedule underway. <b>Evidence: E28, E29, E30</b>	October 2024
	4. Through the City Developments Group, reignite the York Narrative to embed the city values in built infrastructure and design. <b>Recommendations: R1, R10, R11</b>	Director of City Development	Ongoing, embedded into York Central developer's proposition, Acomb Front Street Masterplan underway, Castle Gateway Master Plan due at Executive, Inward Investment Plan being developed.	January 2025

			<b>Evidence: E33</b>	
3. Explore and launch an e-ideas hub	1. Launch the staff ideas hub to encourage staff to take part in corporate consultations, including the budget consultation and workforce improvements. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	Head of Comms	In place and attracting responses, responses shared via a 'you said we did' basis	June 2024
	2. Every month, share 'you said, we did' information based on staff ideas. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	Head of Comms	Responses provided in periodic weekly COO emails	July 2024
4. Strengthen the role of Leading Together role	1. Develop an induction and training guide for Senior Managers, including scheme of delegation, financial management, performance and managing high performing teams <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	Chief Officer HR	Induction document produced and in circulation <b>Evidence: E23, E38</b>	Dec 2024
	2. Share the forward look and decisions made through internal governance arrangements every month with Senior Managers to keep them informed about how the council operates, and their role in delivering ambitions. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	COO	Completed and sent on a monthly basis	Sept 2024

	<p>3. Explore options for a management development programme for all Senior Managers to help embed expected ways of working and sharing learning. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b></p>	Chief Officer HR	<p>Programme to launch in new year, promoted to managers in October <b>Evidence: E12, E13, E23</b></p>	Dec 2024 Started October
	<p>4. As part of the Working as One City programme, develop small task and finish group for Heads of Service to work together on cross-council issues, eg. how to make it easier for Head of Service to manage their service through greater oversight of HR and Finance data. <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b></p>	Chief Strategy Officer Head of BI	<p>These have started and lead by CMT members <b>Evidence: E22</b></p>	Ongoing
	<p>5. Reset the regular senior officer meetings to provide space to explore organisational strategic issues together, publishing the schedule well in advance <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7</b></p>	Chief Officer HR	<p>Established and ongoing <b>Evidence: E4</b></p>	June 2024



**Objective 4 Build a strong foundation:** By December 2024, we will have embedded council plan priorities and the performance framework throughout the organisation, reviewing how we support personal development plans and service plans, with a refreshed internal governance structure

Action	Detail	Accountable officer	Narrative and Evidence Matrix (where appropriate)	Deadline
1. Confirm the Council plan priorities	1. Publish a six-month snapshot of progress on the website and to city partners, with a report to Executive and internal comms <b>Recommendations: R1, R2, R4, R5, R11, R12</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	Snapshot report presented to Executive in September 2024. <b>Evidence: E23</b>	In place ongoing
	2. Confirm priority council plan actions with Executive, recommending different delivery models when the council is not funded to support <b>Recommendations: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5,</b>	COO/CMT	Meeting with Executive in February	January 2025
	3. Work closely with CMT, senior managers and Executive, develop a roadmap of council plan action, showing which service is accountable for delivering which action (informed by Service Plans) <b>Recommendations: R4, R5, R6, R7</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	Council Plan and Service Plan process in place. <b>Evidence: E23, E35</b>	January 2025
2. Review performance management	1. Establish a Core Service Performance Board, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, to provide oversight and monitor performance,	COO	Core Service performance Board established.	July 2024

	scrutinising poor performing services and exploring how to support improvements <b>Recommendations: R6</b>		<b>Evidence: E35, E36, E41</b>	
	2. Scrutinise Service Plans bi-annually in the Core Service Performance Board, taking a 'one council' approach to consider how ambitions are effectively and efficiently delivered and customer experience improved. <b>Recommendations: R6</b>	COO	Process in place.	October 2024
	3. Identify the 4-5 key performance indicators for each Senior Manager to be responsible for delivering through their teams <b>Recommendations: R6</b>	CMT	Part of service planning <b>Evidence: E36</b>	December 2024
	4. Reinforcing the link of service plans and performance management to ensure <u>all</u> officers are aware of how they contribute to ambition, setting SMART objectives based on Service Plans and EACH (Equalities, Affordability, Climate and Health) and holding regular performance discussions with staff, which may be followed up in a further review for the 2025/26 reporting year. Reinforcing the importance of regular 121 discussions for all staff to ensure the understanding of expectation, performance and opportunity to celebrate.	Chief Officer HR	Initial review of PDR process completed. Further review planned in February 2025 Higher completion rate in 2024, than 2023 already <b>Evidence: E8, E21</b>	January / February 2025



	<b>Recommendation: R6</b>			
3. Review Internal governance structures	1. Establish how internal governance arrangements create clear lines of accountability for CMT, introducing new arrangements for any gaps in corporate oversight and leadership. <b>Recommendations: R4, R5, R6</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	Complete, launched and ongoing	April 2024
	2. Establish a Corporate Governance Board, chaired by the Director of Governance and Director of Finance, to review decision reports and governance arrangements, escalating issues to Corporate Management Team and prior to publication. <b>Recommendation: R7</b>	COO	Complete, launched and ongoing.	June 2024
	3. Establish new internal governance arrangements to provide structures to support strategic and priorities and organisational management discussions. <b>Recommendation: R4, R5, R7</b>	COO	Complete, launched and ongoing	June 2024
	4. Launch new internal governance arrangements making it easier for Senior Managers to know who to engage with and when, publishing terms of reference and forward plans for each meeting <b>Recommendations: R2, R3, R4</b>	COO	Complete and ongoing	June 2024
4. Review Scrutiny oversight	1. Continue the development of the ongoing member induction programme informed by member feedback.	Head of Democratic Services	Oversight by Audit and by the Audit and Governance	Ongoing

and member induction programme	<b>Recommendation: R11</b>		Committee of the Member Induction Programme. A small project team with Democratic Services is looking at strengthening the Member Training and Induction Programme.	
	2. Update the Member's Portal to signpost access to information and member support. <b>Recommendation: R11</b>	Head of Democratic Services	The Project Team will look at expanding and enhancing the portal so that it becomes the first point of contact for members looking for support.	March 2025
	3. Work with Chairs of Scrutiny to agree a process for reviewing scrutiny practices and identifying annual workplans <b>Recommendation: R11</b>	Head of Democratic Services	The Centre for Governance Scrutiny has conducted a Scrutiny Impact Review of the Council and their recommendations are been reviewed and actions plans developed.	April 2025

	4. Review scrutiny officer's role considering how they can support a continuous review of Scrutiny <b>Recommendation: R11</b>	Head of Democratic Services	The Centre for Governance Scrutiny review will consider the issue of dedicated scrutiny support.	April 2025
	5. Continue to work with a cross-party representative group to review the Constitution. <b>Recommendation: R11</b>	Director of Governance	The review of the Constitution, through the cross-party Constitution Working Group, then through the Audit & Governance Committee and Full Council, is an ongoing process, as the Constitution is a living document. The first jointly agreed recommendations will be presented to Council on 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2024.	Ongoing
	6. Review the role and responsibilities of independent members and how they can best support constructive scrutiny <b>Recommendation: R11</b>	Director of Governance	This will be considered within the wider Centre for Governance scrutiny impact review.	April 2025

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