

**Executive**

**14 July 2016**

Report of the Assistant Director, Customers & Employees

Portfolio of the Executive Leader, Deputy Leader, and Executive Member for Finance & Performance

## **Thinking & Acting Differently – A Response to the Peer Review 2016**

### **Summary**

1. To offer a specific response to the findings from the recent report from the Local Government Association (LGA) Peers and present the People Plan strategic aims for approval which was already under development to support the council in meeting Council Plan priorities.
2. An update on all actions contained in the Peer Review Action Plan is provided along with suggestions for ongoing monitoring arrangements by Members.

### **Recommendations**

3. The Executive are asked:
  - a) to note progress in achieving the Peer Review 2016 Action plan published on 2 June 2016 as shown in Annex B;
  - b) to agree the future monitoring arrangements for the Peer Review Action Plan 2016 through the Council's quarterly performance reporting process that is already in place;
  - c) in light of b) invite Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee (CSMC) to review any matters they feel appropriate given the committee's portfolio;
  - d) to approve the People Plan 2016- 20 by signing up to the strategic aims as detailed in Annex C.

Reason: To provide assurance regarding clear action planning and decision taking around the Peer Review 2016 recommendations, together with progress and monitoring arrangements in place.

## Background

4. The council undertook a Local Government Association Peer Review in 2013. The peer challenge team's reports and findings fed into a report to Cabinet in October 2013 which led to the creation of a new transformation programme. In 2014 there was a further review relating to member behaviour following a motion at full Council. In response and during that period an Organisational Development Plan was produced.
5. There were reports in February and September 2015 on the progress of action plans arising from these reviews to Audit & Governance Committee.
6. In a monitoring report provided from the records held by the former Assistant Director Transformation & Change, the following actions were recorded as complete:

### Peer Review 2013:

- Service planning overhauled
- Performance scorecards produced
- Policy & Performance teams consolidated
- Organisational Development Plan developed and
- Transformation Programme developed and implemented.

### Peer Review 2014:

- Group Leaders committed to better ways of working and established cross party group to review and develop protocols
- Guidance reissued on members and officers in decision-making process
- Report to Audit & Governance Committee on revised access to information rules
- Clarify council's values & what they mean for members
- Report on member Freedom of Information Requests.

Further work has been completed over the past 12 months to address in particular the 2014 findings:

- Extensive induction programme delivered to new/existing members
- Member briefing process reviewed
- New scrutiny proposals developed
- Additional resources provided to Democratic Services.

7. The following areas have been rolled into the high level action plan for the Peer Review 2016 contained in this report:

- Media protocol (under redevelopment) – September 2016 report to Executive
- Digital Services Project implementation – September 2016 Phase 1 and 2 implementation.
- Workforce Development – see People Plan proposals contained in this report.

### **Findings of the 2016 review**

8. The LGA Peer letter was published on 2nd June 2016 and can be found in the background papers and in Annex A to this report. The focus of the findings were in line with its objectives around culture and leadership and future plans, it was not a judgement about quality and/or performance of council services.

### **Response to the 2016 Review**

9. Initial work involved bringing together all ongoing/remaining actions from previous reviews, key strategies already under development and to respond to specific points in the new review. Discussion then focussed with senior leadership teams around the top strategic actions which were published alongside the LGA Peer Challenge letter on 2nd June 2016.

10. Those priority actions already under development are, for example, the Management Restructure, People Plan and Media Protocol together with other actions reported separately in these agenda papers relating to the City Vision, Council Plan and Performance Management Framework. Any new or revision of policies/strategies will return back to Executive for approval.

## **Monitoring of the Peer Review 2016 Plan**

11. A report has already been requested by Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee (CSMC) on the 2016 Peer Review within the context of the other reviews at its meeting on 15 July 2016.
12. Given the corporate and strategic nature of the 2016 review it is recommended that Executive invite CSMC to monitor the implementation of the key actions arising from the 2016 review and any areas they choose to review in more detail.
13. Notwithstanding this request it is recommended that officers report back to Executive as part of the regular quarterly performance reporting process.

## **People Plan**

14. The People Plan, attached in Annex C, is one of a number of council strategies that will be used to support the organisation deliver the Council Plan. It sets out strategically what we, as an organisation need to do to deliver the right workforce for 2020.
15. The proposed strategy builds on the work put in place as a result of the Council's previous Workforce Strategy (2012-1015) , and takes forward some the recommendations as detailed in the outturn report that went to Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee on 7 April 2015.
16. The plan illustrates the main priorities under each of the five strategic aims as follows:

### ***Resourcing***

To resource the council in the most cost effective way, using a flexible resourcing model. Recruit and retain a core workforce with skills and values we need. Challenge and address accessibility barriers

### ***Pay, Reward and Recognition***

To provide pay structures and flexible reward packages that allows for the changing nature of the council's structure, ensuring fairness across all grades

## ***Skills and Behaviours***

To have a visionary ambitious workforce to enable effective delivery of outcomes for residents in challenging times. To further develop our teams so that in enabling the provision of outcomes they can demonstrate flexibility, innovation, decision making, an ability to engage with external parties and at all times excellent customer service.

## ***Performance and Change***

To be an organisation that can transform quickly and effectively, that is outcome focussed, that values and engages with employees and has a culture that is collaborative, innovative, inclusive and creative.

## ***Wellbeing and Engagement***

To be an organisation that supports and manages wellbeing that promotes effective and active employee engagement with staff initiative encouraged and welcomed. We will manage risks sensibly and proportionately to ensure the levels of accidents and incidents of occupational ill health is as low as possible.

17. An action plan is in the process of being developed which will capture the actions /activities to deliver the desired outcomes – Annex D illustrates some examples of how the action plan will be developed under each priority.

## **Consultation**

### **Council Plan/LGA Peer Review**

18. Council Plan priorities were subject to public consultation during summer 2015, and feedback was incorporated into the final plan. The LGA Peers met with a range of stakeholders including partners, residents, officers and members during the Peer Review process.

## **People Plan**

19. Heads of Service and members of Directorate Management Teams have been consulted on the Plan to make sure its relevant, will achieve the desired outcomes for the organisation and that the main focus and key issues have been captured. It is noted however that the as the council's operating model continues to evolve the size, shape, types of activities and roles, and essential skills and competencies may change. As a result the focus and direction of the plan will need to be kept under review to ensure it continues to meet

the strategic requirements of the council. Trade Union representatives have also been consulted on the content.

## **Options**

20. There are no alternative options to recommendation 3a) as it asks members to note the progress in implementing the action plan, not make a decision.

21. In relation to 3b) the options are:

- to agree the future monitoring arrangements for the Peer Review Action Plan 2016 through the council's quarterly performance reporting process that is already in place.
- to agree an alternative or additional form of monitoring to the quarterly performance process.

22. In relation to 3c) the options are:

- to agree to invite CSMC to review related matters
- to disagree with inviting CSMC to review related matter
- to suggest an alternative approach to scrutinising the Peer Review and Action Plan.

23. In relation to 3d) the options are:

- to approve the People Plan strategic aims as summarised in paragraph 16 and Annex C
- to amend and approve the principles and aims
- to reject the principles and aims.

## **Analysis**

24. All information is contained in the body of the report.

## **Council Plan**

25. Outcomes achieved by the activities covered in this report help to deliver priorities in the Council Plan 2015-19. The priorities relating to the People Plan support 'A prosperous city for all', ensuring that as an employer the council sets a positive example of supporting employees to achieve their full potential.

## Implications:

26.

- a. **Financial:** None
- b. **Human Resources (HR):** See People Plan priorities.
- c. **Equalities:** See People Plan priorities
- d. **Legal:** None
- e. **Crime and Disorder:** None
- f. **Information Technology (ICT):** See use of digital technologies in Peer Review Report
- g. **Property:** None.
- h. **Other:** No known other implications.

## Risk Management

27. External Peer challenge is a valuable element of the council's performance framework in gaining an external perspective on the council's improvement progress. The action plans and proposed monitoring arrangements are recommended to avoid the risk of the value of the review being lost and key actions being unmonitored/unimplemented.

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### Report Approved

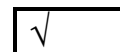


**Date** 30th June 2016

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None

**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

**All**



## **Background Papers:**

Peer Review Challenge Letter and Peer Review Action Plan 2016, published on the council's website at:

[https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/download/3254/2016\\_peer\\_review](https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/download/3254/2016_peer_review)

Previous reports on Peer Review 2013/14:

Audit & Governance Committee February 2015 - LGA Peer Review

<http://modgov.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=437&MId=8119&Ver=4>

Audit & Governance Committee September 2015 – Peer Review Update Report

<http://modgov.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=437&MId=8605&Ver=4>

## **List of abbreviations used in this report:**

LGA	Local Government Association
CYC	City of York Council
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Computer Technology
CSMC	Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee

## **Annexes**

Annex A Peer Challenge Letter 2016

Annex B Updated Peer Review 2016 Action Plan

Annex C People Plan

Annex D Key priority areas and actions in People Plan