



Assurance Exercise on Actions Resulting from the 19 April 2021 Public Interest Report City of York Council

The City of York Council (CYC) received a Public Interest Report (PIR) from Mazars dated 19 April 2021 into the Early Termination of the Chief Executive's Employment Contract. The City Council officially received this report at Full Council on 4 May 2021 alongside an Action Plan. On 16 June the Audit and Governance Committee received an update of progress against the Action Plan and an "Implementation Plan" that supports the Action Plan.

The Local Government Association proposes a piece of support to help assure CYC that it has taken appropriate, timely and effective action in response to the PIR's 5 recommendations.

Scope and focus

The LGA would propose to offer assurance to CYC that it has taken appropriate, effective and timely action in response to the PIR by answering 3 questions:

1. Are the Council's Implementation and Action Plans appropriate and sufficient to cover the issues raised in the PIR and specifically the 5 recommendations within it?
2. Have the actions within the Implementation and Action Plans been implemented/carried out in the planned way?
3. Will the completed actions have, or be likely to have in due course, the desired impact in terms of the changes in the systems, processes, behaviours and culture that the PIR implied were needed.

Note that the answers to each of these 3 questions will, to some extent, be subjective. But the answers to the 3rd question will be the hardest to ascertain and, whilst the LGA will make best endeavours to answer this question, we may need to suggest to the Council, further follow up work to assess impact in the longer run.

Timing and process

The LGA will conduct some of this work through desktop analysis and evidence gathering of plans, actions and timelines. We would want to see the Implementation and Action Plans, any further related Project Plans or documentary evidence.

The desktop work will be supplemented by a limited number of meetings between all, or part of, the LGA team and members, officers and stakeholders at the Council.

This Assurance exercise will be a robust but constructive activity. We will give you honest feedback, which will allow you to be clear whether your actions have been effective or whether there are still areas that need attention.

The LGA would propose to report back to the Council, in the form of a (probably interim) written report, for the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 29 September 2021.

We will then aim to finalise our feedback in the form of a final report, for the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 20 October 2021. As suggested above, we may suggest further work if we feel it has not been possible to answer question 3 sufficiently by that stage.

There will be no direct costs to the Council of receiving this Peer Assurance Exercise.

Proposed Team

We would propose a team of:

- An experienced Monitoring Officer/Governance Officer - Sharon Bridglalsingh
- Director, Law and Governance, Milton Keynes Council
- An HR expert – Sarah Ward, Principal Adviser – Workforce, LGA
- An LGA Facilitator/Manager, Mark Edgell

We would want to ensure both the Council and the LGA were happy with the team members selected and have done so.

Mark Edgell, LGA
14 September 2021