

Meeting:	Audit and Governance Committee
Meeting date:	31/07/2024
Report of:	Ian Floyd, Chief Operating Officer
Portfolio of:	Leader, Executive Portfolio Policy, Strategy, Partnerships

Audit and Governance Committee Report: Response to the LGA Assurance report

Subject of Report

1. This report provides an update about how the council has responded to recommendations published in the Local Government Association's Assurance report (2023).

Policy Basis

2. The Council Plan, One City for All, was approved by Full Council in September 2023. It articulates the vision, priorities and Four Core Commitments that sets the framework for the improvement plan and response to the recommendations.
3. The actions taken in response to the LGA Assurance Report respond to the Council Plan as below:

Equalities: Staff groups are instrumental in supporting delivery of the Corporate Improvement Action Plan, with their own, and staff survey feedback informing how the council will deliver the action plan

Affordability: The response to the LGA Assurance Report has informed work already planned, with no additional cost to the council.

Climate: Climate action and adaptation is included as sessions in the Member Induction Programme.

Health: the health and wellbeing of both officers and members is considered throughout the response to the LGA Assurance Recommendations, including endorsement of the Officer Support Protocols at Audit and Governance Committee.

Recommendation and Reasons

4. The Audit and Governance Committee are asked to:
 - a) Note progress against the ten recommendations in the LGA Assurance Report.

Background

5. In January 2023, the Local Government Association published an Assurance Report in response to the Public Interest Report. This report contained 10 recommendations for the council to take forward, including producing a concise, focused and holistic overall improvement plan.
6. Progress has begun against the recommendations (**Annex A – progress against the LGA Assurance Report recommendations**), which has led to several different, interrelated, areas of work.

Member information

7. A welcome pack, providing detailed information about member's roles, York and ward data, where to go for information, the member induction programme, and the code of conduct was provided to all newly elected members in May 2023.
8. The welcome pack is published on a member portal on the intranet which was established to support newly elected members from May 2023. Featured on the intranet homepage, the member portal provides signposts to help members carry out their daily duties.
9. It was developed in collaboration with Democratic Services reviewing common member enquiries, and the Leader and political assistant at the time.

the CYC intranet

Q Search

beConnected beSupported beInvolved The Council Plan: One City, for all **Members' portal**

Intranet / Members' portal

Members' portal

Here is some information to help you find the information you need as part of your work as an elected member at City of York Council.

View the calendar of meetings, agendas and committee information: [Meetings, agendas and minutes](#)

Submit or amend your register of interests: Go to [Work to Do](#), and select [Edit My Register of Interests](#). Once you have completed the Register of Interest form, it will be submitted to Democratic Services to be approved and published.

Member induction programme information

- view member induction programme calendar
- view member induction sessions and supporting papers
- register to attend a member induction session
- provide feedback in survey on member induction programme
- download member induction welcome pack

View the constitution: [The Constitution](#)

View the code of conduct: [Member Code of Conduct](#)

View information on West Offices and Hazel Court, including floor plans: [Offices and facilities](#)

Request ICT support

- go to <https://live.hornbill.com/cyo/internal/home/>
- email [redacted]
- call [redacted]

Claim expenses: [iTrent self service system](#)
Your username and password are sent to you shortly after the elections.

Request payroll support

- email [redacted]
- call: [redacted]
- more information: [travel and subsistence claims](#)

The Corporate Improvement Action Plan

- In February 2024, a Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge took place at the City of York Council. The LGA Peer Challenge set out to understand how the council operates, exploring the council's leadership at place and organisational level, governance, culture, financial management and capacity to improve, with a focus on improving customer service and working closely with regional partners to best represent York's interests.
- The LGA Peer Challenge interviewed over 130 partners, residents and elected members, together with officers, to inform 15 recommendations. The recommendation related to member and officer relationships is:

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.

12. Informed by the LGA Peer Challenge recommendations, and already planned in response to the Council Plan strategic theme “how the council operates”, the council prepared a corporate improvement framework setting out the activities that will address the recommendations of the peer review. This framework builds on existing strengths with a view to continuous improvement being very much a part of how the council operates.
13. Following consultation at CSCCSMC (Corporate Services, Climate Change, and Scrutiny Management Committee) Scrutiny, the Leader has recently approved the Corporate Improvement Action Plan, developed in consultation with officers, residents and partners to implement the framework.
14. This action plan covers actions to be delivered over the next 12 months to help improve different aspects of how officers, members and partners work together to deliver for the city. Progress on delivering the action plan will be shared with the LGA in December 2024 and report to Executive in May 2025.

The member induction programme

15. [York's councillor induction programme – City of York Council](#) was designed to help improve understanding of member roles and responsibilities over a wide range of subjects. It began May 2023, and was reviewed at Joint Standards Committee in May 2024. The member induction programme is currently being audited by Veritau, who are due to report back later in the year.
16. Over 25 different sessions have been held, covering a wide range of issues, including code of conduct, aspects of The Constitution and how officers and members work together, and their respective roles.
17. Feedback from Joint Standards Committee in May included the below. This will be considered as part of a refresh of the programme led by Democratic Services, following the audit report:
 - Reviewing how members access the programme to make it easier and more intuitive
 - Signposting Group’s own training programmes, including mentoring

- Exploring providing training records for members that can include logging externally provided training
- Consider joint officer and member training
- Introduce additional training to cover the Mayoral Combined Authority and a training programme covering Adults Social Care

Consultation Analysis

18. The response to the recommendations (**Annex A**) list several different actions already underway which respond to the LGA Assurance report. These have involved the below consultation:
- a) The LGA Peer Challenge scope was developed in consultation with Audit and Governance Committee. The feedback that informed the recommendations involved consulting with partners, officers, trade unions and residents.
 - b) The Corporate Improvement Action Plan was developed following workshops with partners, officers and trade unions and a resident on and offline consultation. Prior to publication it was discussed at Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee.
 - c) The member induction programme was developed in consultation with Group Leaders and political assistants, together with support from the Local Government Association. It has been reviewed by Audit and Governance and Joint Standards Committees.
 - d) The Welcome Pack and Members Intranet Portal were developed in consultation with the then-Leader.

Wards Impacted (optional section)

All

Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Report.

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Specialist Implication Officer

Lindsay Tomlinson, Head of Democratic Governance

Background papers

Assurance report of the Local Government Association [Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Tuesday, 7 February 2023, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 40

Monitoring Officer report: [Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 19 July 2023, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 9

Officer support protocols: [Agenda for Joint Standards Committee on Tuesday, 14 May 2024, 4.00 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Constitution working group: [Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 28 February 2024, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 55

Corporate Improvement Action Plan:

- [Agenda for Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee on Monday, 8 July 2024, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 4
- [Agenda for Decision Session - Executive Leader, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships on Wednesday, 17 July 2024, 10.00 am \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 4

Member welcome pack: [Document Welcome Pack 2023 \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Member induction programme:

- [Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 18 January 2023, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 35
- [Agenda for Joint Standards Committee on Tuesday, 14 May 2024, 4.00 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 55

LGA Peer Challenge

- [Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 31 January 2024, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\) item 40](#)
- [Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 9 May 2024, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\) item 129](#)

Annexes

A: Progress against the LGA Assurance Report recommendations

Abbreviations used in this report

CSCCSMC (Corporate Services, Climate Change, and Scrutiny Management Committee)

LGA – Local Government Association

YNYCA – York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority