

Cabinet

28 January 2020

Peer challenge – response to recommendations

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: Matt Prosser, Chief Executive

Report Author: Bridget Downton

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

That cabinet approves the action plan in response to the recommendations set out in the corporate peer challenge report.

Reason for Recommendation:

To ensure that the council acts on the corporate peer team's recommendations.

1. Executive Summary

At the beginning of October 2019, a corporate peer challenge team spent four days on-site at Dorset speaking to councillors, officers and partners. Before that, the team had reviewed a range of documents including a position statement the council had provided. At the end of the site visit, the peer challenge team provided a presentation setting out their findings. Appendix 1 contains the team's written report and includes 9 recommendations. Appendix 2 contains the proposed action plan setting out how the council intends to respond to these recommendations.

2. Financial Implications

No direct financial implications from this report

3. Climate implications

No direct financial implications from this report

4. Other Implications

None

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

There are no equalities implications arising from this report

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 Dorset Council corporate peer challenge feedback report

Appendix 2 Dorset Council corporate peer challenge action plan

8. Background Papers

None

9. Corporate Peer Challenge - background

9.1 Peer challenge is a proven tool for improvement that the Local Government Association (LGA) provides. It involves a team of local government officers and councillors spending time at the council as peers to provide challenge and share learning. The process involves engaging with a wide range of people connected with the council.

9.2 A peer challenge team was onsite in Dorset for four days from 1st October meeting a range of councillors, employees, partners and stakeholders. They provided informal feedback throughout the week and a presentation about their findings at the end of the week.

9.3 The team was made up of:

- Councillor Rachel Bailey - Cheshire East Council (Conservative)
- Councillor Adam Paynter –Deputy Leader, Cornwall Council (Lib Dem)
- Gavin Jones - Chief Executive, Essex County Council
- Lorraine O'Donnell – Director of Transformation & Partnership Services - Durham Council
- Mark Wynn-Chief Operating Officer, Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Simon Oliver, Director, Digital Transformation, Bristol City Council
- Rebecca Davis - Chief Executive - West Midlands Employers
- Paul Clarke - LGA peer challenge manager

9.4 The council prepared a position statement which was available to all colleagues, councillors and anyone invited to take part. This was an open an honest assessment of where the council is.

10. Corporate Peer Challenge – report and action plan

- 10.1 Appendix 1 contains the final report from the peer challenge team. The report is a good reflection of the council and it contains a set of helpful recommendations. Appendix 2 contains the proposed action plan intended to ensure that the council responds to the recommendations.
- 10.2 Once Cabinet has agreed the action plan, officers will share both the report and the action plan with colleagues and stakeholders who took part in the peer challenge.

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.