



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2020, AT 6.00 P.M.

VIRTUAL MEETING - SKYPE - VIRTUAL

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTATION

The attached papers were specified as "to follow" on the Agenda previously distributed relating to the above mentioned meeting.

4. Bromsgrove District Council Recovery and Restoration Plan (Pages 1 - 38)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

6th October 2020

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Recovery and Restoration Plan 2020/21

14th October 2020

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|---------------------------------|--|
| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Cllr Karen May |
| Portfolio Holder Consulted | Yes |
| Relevant Head of Service | Kevin Dicks – Chief Executive Officer Deb Poole – Head of Transformation, OD & Digital Services |
| Ward(s) Affected | N/A |
| Ward Councillor(s) Consulted | N/A |
| Key Decision / Non-Key Decision | |

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has required an unprecedented response from the Council. Even though the requirement to respond to the pandemic is still ongoing it is important to look towards recovery and to the return of business as usual, whenever that may be. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the proposed approach to recovery and to ask Members to consider and endorse the attached Recovery and Restoration Plan 2020 – 2021. Members are also asked to note the attached Corporate Peer Challenge Report 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to AGREE

- 2.1 That the proposed Recovery and Restoration Plan 2020 - 2021, as set out in Appendix 1, be endorsed
- 2.2 That the Cabinet monitor the council's recovery actions against the plan and that the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to make amendments to the plan as required.

The Cabinet is also asked to NOTE

- 2.3 The attached Corporate Peer Challenge Report 2020.

3. KEY ISSUES

Background Information

- 3.1 Whilst the delivery of essential council services has been maintained during the pandemic we have seen major changes in the way officers work and the way councillors carry out their duties. Our local and national economies have been adversely impacted by the unprecedented suspension of trading for most of our local businesses who were unable to operate as normal. Members should be aware that a county wide, multi-agency economic recovery plan is being produced and this will sit alongside our own Recovery and Restoration Plan. It should also be noted that the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Head

Recovery and Restoration Plan 2020/21

14th October 2020

of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration are also developing a Bromsgrove specific economic recovery plan.

- 3.2 In line with government guidance at the beginning of the pandemic, a number of council staff were classified as key workers. Whilst we have been able to successfully implement a more agile approach to allow everyone who can to work from home, we have also continued to provide all core services with as little disruption to our community as possible.
- 3.3 As Members will have experienced, normal governance and decision making procedures have changed. The introduction of new emergency legislation to allow for the provision of virtual meetings, has seen the process of decision making continue, albeit in a very different way to our usual approach. In light of the pandemic, Members role as community leaders has also become increasingly important and appreciated by our community.
- 3.4 It is acknowledged that whilst the initial 'first wave' of infections now appears to be in decline, it is possible that a 'second wave' or local outbreaks may occur over the coming months. In order to plan for these eventualities, the Senior Management Team and Corporate Management Team have taken key learning points from the first outbreak to develop a number of actions to prepare for this situation. The actions include: a further review of Business Continuity Plans, development of a revised Communications Plan, development of a list of employees who live outside the district who may be impacted by local outbreaks, discussions with existing local support networks to understand their preparedness, discussions with partner agencies regarding the sharing of data and the identification of any staff who may be able to assist with Track and Trace activities.
- 3.5 Whilst the ongoing pandemic still requires some officers to continue to focus on response, the Council as a whole now needs to start planning for recovery and restoration and all that will entail. Whilst the recovery will, no doubt, take some time to implement; it is appropriate that we start to plan our way forward towards 'business as usual'.
- 3.6 To this end, officers have produced the attached Recovery and Restoration Plan. The Recovery and Restoration Plan is built around the five strategic purposes within the current BDC Council Plan and includes some of the priority areas from the Council Plan alongside key recovery actions. The Strategic Purposes in the BDC Council Plan are:
- Run and Grow a Successful Business
 - Affordable & Sustainable Homes
 - Work & Financial Independence
 - Living Independent, Active & Healthy Lives
 - Communities which are Safe, Well Maintained & Green
- The Recovery and Restoration Plan also includes a section for our Corporate Priorities which focus on the internal business of the council.

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- 3.7 It is recognised that the BDC Council Plan was developed prior to the Covid pandemic and as such the focus of some of the previous priorities may have changed as a result of the current crisis. A review of the BDC Council Plan will be undertaken in early 2021 to ensure the priorities are refreshed and remain relevant in a post Covid environment. The Recovery and Restoration Plan also incorporates the main recommendations from the recent Corporate Peer Challenge Review which can be found in Appendix 2.

Legal Implications

- 3.8 None.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.9 Whilst the continuation of services to our community remains the focus of the councils activities, it is anticipated that service areas will also begin to implement the high level actions outlined in the attached Recovery and Restoration Plan.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.10 None.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 None.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Draft Recovery and Restoration Plan 2020 – 2021
Appendix 2 – Corporate Peer Challenge Report 2020

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Deb Poole – Head of Transformation, OD & Digital Services
email: d.poole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel.: 01527 881256

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Bromsgrove District Council COVID-19 Recovery & Restoration Plan

2020 – 2021

Version 1.4

Run and Grow a Successful Business

| Purpose | Original Council Plan Commitments | Recovery & Restoration Issues and Actions | New or Modified Actions (what we will do...who with/partners) | By When | Owner |
|------------------------------------|---|---|--|----------------|-------|
| Run and Grow a Successful Business | Supporting businesses to start and grow within the District | Consult businesses to understand current needs, recovery, and growth plans, working with partners to support business recovery and growth | Arrange discussions with businesses via BEIS to understand position and future needs Further schemes available and due to be launched which will be promoted alongside partners | Ongoing | NWEDR |
| | | For many strategic purposes, the planning system can play a key role in contributing to recovery and restoration. For all strategic purposes, where relevant, there will be support through the timely determination of planning applications and the implementation, evidence gathering and review of the Local Plan | | | |
| | | Ensure businesses access Government Coronavirus Support Grants | Ensure all appeals are responded to robustly | Completed | DR |
| | | Provide businesses entering Recovery Cycle for Non-Domestic Rates with information relating to support mechanisms | Advise businesses of support available via comms | Ongoing | DR |
| | | Provide businesses with information on recovery support available internally and nationally. | Advise businesses of support available via comms | Weekly/Ongoing | NWEDR |
| | | Revisions made to letters that are going out to businesses to explain debt recovery processes. | Work with recovery teams to ensure all businesses are provided with support and advice on debt management. | Aug – Dec 2020 | DR |
| | | Liaise with internal partners to provide information in relation to business in arrears and delaying payments of liabilities. | Work with other recovery officers across the councils to ensure debt is managed holistically to provide the customer with the correct level of support. | Ongoing | CFor |
| | | | | Nov 2020 | NWEDR |

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| | | Look to provide incubator units or the like through the investment programme to give businesses spaces to open and operate. | Continue to circulate the weekly Business Bulletin and provide further updates from partners as appropriate. Prepare Master planning / feasibility study for key sites | Aug – March 2021 | NWEDR |
| Regenerating our Town Centre | Continue with the regeneration of the Town Centre | | Utilise Bird Box as additional space to support local businesses | Ongoing | NWEDR |
| | Provide low cost loans to businesses to encourage growth and attract them to the area | | Develop loan policy to enable this option to be available for Businesses | Dec 2020 | CFor |
| Economic development & regeneration | Engage with businesses to understand current needs, recovery & growth plans, working with partners to support business growth. | | North Worcestershire Business Advisor appointed by GBSLEP to engage with businesses in North Worcestershire | Ongoing | NWEDR |
| Undertake a comprehensive review of all Council owned assets and assess all opportunities for investment privately in land and premises within the District with a particular focus on business centre and industrial estates | Investigate alternate sources of funding to PWLB to ensure best value borrowing can be achieved to maximise the range of investment opportunities and returns to the council | | Ensure that the council is compliant with guidance when accessing these funds. | Ongoing | CFor |
| | Identify partners to invest with | | Revise the treasury management policy to enable all options to be made available to the council | Mar 2021 | CFor |
| | Review of the councils asset base | | Review the property structure to enable an asset review to be undertaken | Mar 2021 | CFe |
| | | | Develop an asset management strategy | Mar 2021 | CFe |
| | Identify opportunities for strategic investments | | Review the property structure to ensure there is the resource to enable strategic investment opportunities to be identified and pursued | Mar 2021 | CFe |
| Develop an economic development strategy, to include stimulating the growth of low carbon industries | Develop a Local Economic Recovery Framework | | Work with the Worcestershire Economic Recovery Group to ensure Bromsgrove's economic recovery needs are addressed in the county wide economic recovery plan. | Nov 2020 | NWEDR |

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| | | <p>Work up an approach for the council to make investments in the locality to contribute towards economic recovery/implement its Economic Recovery Framework</p> | <p>Develop and deliver a Bromsgrove Economic Recovery Plan</p> <p>There are a number of disparate programmes of support to help businesses diversify into the low carbon sector. Propose to work with colleagues to pull these together and promote as a cohesive whole</p> <p>Consider holding a local jobs fair, focusing on reskilling, including carbon friendly skills</p> | <p>Nov 2020 and ongoing</p> <p>Oct 2020</p> <p>Dec 2020</p> | <p>NWEDR</p> <p>NWEDR KM</p> <p>NWEDR</p> |
| | Work with partners to improve digital & physical connectivity (to include broadband, 5G & transport infrastructure) | <p>Ensure that adequate digital infrastructure is in place to support the accelerated adoption of digital technologies by local businesses as a result of Covid-19</p> | <p>Work with the West Midlands 5G Company and the GBSLEP and WLEP on exploring the potential of a 5G testbed in Bromsgrove</p> <p>Work with Superfast Worcestershire on delivering superfast broadband to Bromsgrove homes and businesses</p> | <p>Summer 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>NWEDR</p> <p>NWEDR</p> |
| | Support local businesses to embrace new technologies in order to maximise business growth, particularly in the knowledge & creative industries | <p>Identify local businesses that plan an accelerated adoption of digital technologies</p> | <p>Work with Betaden Tech Accelerator to promote opportunities to learn about innovative technologies being developed in the county</p> <p>Promote the new Business Recovery Grant, being administered by the Growth Hubs, which is designed to support businesses affected by Covid-19 to access new technology. Grants from £1k-£5k, available for a limited time</p> <p>Promote learning and training opportunities for businesses - courses</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Due to be launched late Sept</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>NWEDR</p> <p>NWEDR</p> <p>NWEDR</p> |

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| | | | and workshops delivered by GBSLEP Growth Hub and Worcestershire Business Central | | |
| | Look to stimulate adequate supply of land & premises to enable existing & new businesses to grow | Identify brownfield sites and long term empty premises that could be redeveloped | Continue to work with the Worcestershire LEP Land supply group and private landowners and landlords to identify development opportunities in the district | Ongoing | NWEDR |
| | Strengthen the vibrancy & viability of our towns & district centres | Make the town centre a more attractive place/space to do business | Prepare Master planning and Feasibility Study for key town centre sites | Oct 2020 | NWEDR |
| | | Make the town centre a more attractive place to spend free time (leisure, arts & culture, well-being) | Develop a programming strategy for the Birdbox within the restrictions of Covid-19 regulations and guidance | Oct 2020 | NWEDR |
| | | | Prepare the Bromsgrove Town Centre 2040 vision | Feb 2021 | NWEDR |
| | | | Undertake a refresh of the Centres Strategy, covering the identified town and local Centres in Bromsgrove | Dec 2020 | NWEDR |
| | | | Commission a further car parking review of the Town Centre, linked to work on the vision and Local Plan development | Mar 2021 | GR/KH |
| | | | Implement the 5 year Car Park capital infrastructure programme as detailed in the Business Case | From Dec 2020 | GR/KH |

Affordable & Sustainable Homes

| Purpose | Original Council Plan Commitments | Recovery & Restoration Issues and Actions | New or Modified Actions (what we will do...who with/partners) | By When | Owner |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|---------------------|----------|
| Affordable & Sustainable Homes | Rough Sleepers To continue the legacy of having no rough sleepers in the District | To review and adapt work to the Housing First Model in partnership with the voluntary sector, the Police and mental health services. | To identify funding from MHCLG grants and complete claims for those helped. | Dec 2020 | DA |
| | | To work with WCC and other District colleagues on the County Next Accommodation Programme Bid. | To implement the programme of activities outlined in the bid | Ongoing | DA |
| | | To identify suitable accommodation from within BDHT's housing stock and ensure no-one helped in crisis returns to the streets | To identify funding from MHCLG grants. | Dec 2020 | DA |
| | | Capacity around support of all providers – financial health check to ensure continued support available | To write to agencies concerned to contact the Council with any issues | Oct 2020 | DA |
| | A balanced housing market | Develop & implement a District Housing Strategy giving consideration to the impact of Covid 19 and how the impact of crisis on the economy will impact on housing supply and demand | To work with new government guidance /legislation issued in response to Covid 19 | Oct 2020 | DA |
| | | | To include the impact of Covid in the strategy and associated actions over the next 12/18 months. | Dec 2020 | DA |
| | | | Contribute to the countywide housing delivery strategy. | Mar 2021 | DA |
| | Work with developers to deliver more affordable homes | Continue work with developers on the impact from the crisis on the economy and consequently housing supply and demand | Continuously monitor and review the impact of Covid 19 and provide influence and support to developers | Sept 2020 & Ongoing | DA MB |
| | | | Review impacts of the new planning guidance | Dec 2020 & ongoing | DA MB |
| | | | Building Control will continue to support developers with consistent and timely advice | Ongoing | AW |

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| | Develop a plan for the Burcot Lane site | Include consideration of Covid 19 in Cabinet report | Undertake a revision of financial remodelling. To continuously monitor the milestones that have been reviewed with Homes England. | Ongoing | DA SH CFor |
| | Improve outcomes for tenants in the private rented sector | To continue to work with private landlords and tenants to support the impact of Covid 19 and work with any new government guidance/legislation. | Develop and implement an action plan for helping private renters avoid eviction, including maximising the use of Discretionary Housing Payments and other financial means available to incentivise landlords to refrain from evictions. | Ongoing | DA SS |
| | Support people to live & remain in appropriate homes | Work with Worcestershire Partnership Groups, County pathways and other bids to support this priority | Work with the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership to develop and implement actions. | Ongoing | DA |
| | Engage with leaseholders, such as park home residents, to understand their needs | To pause progression of this in light of other service priorities following Covid 19 | Monitor and review capacity to undertake this commitment in future years | April 2021 | SS |
| | Work with developers to deliver more energy efficient homes | To continue to work with developers to promote upfront investment for long term savings and acknowledging that developers may focus on must-haves and reduce spend on energy efficiency | Monitor post Covid 19 development proposals for new build and influence to achieve this priority Implement a £610k funding bid submitted to the Getting Building Fund programme for low carbon housing at the Burcot Lane site. Consider and bid for new energy grant schemes as they are announced including the Green Homes Grant | Ongoing Dec 2020 Sept 2020 & ongoing | MB DA MB MB |

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| | | Government guidance on improved green credentials | Implemented by Building Control and advised upon wherever possible | Ongoing | AW |
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Work & Financial Independence

| Purpose | Original Council Plan Commitments | Recovery & Restoration Issues and Actions | New or Modified Actions (what we will do...who with/partners) | By When | Owner |
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| | Skills for the future | Undertake a skills audit with partners & work together with them to address any gaps | Work with partners to see what the needs are in terms of skills Work with WCC who are leading on the "Creating our Future Workforce" campaign including the skills show and Careers & Enterprise Company | Nov 2020 Nov 2020 | NWEDR NWEDR |
| | Support schools & HOW College to link students to local employers | A number of schemes have been launched to help address the effect of the economic downturn on Young People – apprenticeship grants, traineeship grants and kick-start (6 month placements) Understand the partnerships that are already in place | Work to promote the availability of schemes and, in addition, continue to deliver the 'Opening Doors to Business' initiative alongside partners Arrange meetings with high schools and HOW to establish their current links with schools | Nov 2020 Nov 2020 | NWEDR NWEDR |
| | Work with businesses to utilise the apprenticeship levy & increase the number of apprenticeships | Ensure that the council maximises the levy by taking on the full cohort of apprentices which can be funded through the levy the council pays. In addition, review if the council wants to utilise other organisations levy payments to further increase this number | Fourth tier managers and HOS to undertake a session to identify how training can be funded from the levy in the future Work with GBSLEP apprenticeships triage service and Worcestershire Apprenticeships to promote apprenticeships opportunities and support available to businesses | Dec 2020 Ongoing | BT PSmith NWEDR |
| | Provide support to people to enable them to access employment opportunities in digital & low carbon industries | Promote the support available through the Worcestershire Jobs Match programme and GBSLEP Employment triage programme | Promote the GBSLEP skills hub when launched. | Ongoing | NWEDR |

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| | Support residents to manage their finances, including working with schools on money management | <p>Promote the work that the FIT team do, as part of this create stronger partnership working with CAB/BDHT.</p> <p>Improve website to include budgeting tips and tools. Get greater awareness to residents.</p> <p>Provide Taxpayers in arrears and failing to maintain CT payments with information in relation to support available</p> | <p>Undertake full service review to ensure posts are in place to deliver support</p> <p>Utilise accessibility project to improve website and improve information available online.</p> <p>Liaise with partners (eg CAB) to identify the support and signposting that they can give</p> <p>Develop script of support advice to customer service teams</p> | <p>Dec 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>LD</p> <p>LD</p> <p>DR</p> <p>DR</p> |
| | Ensure people get the benefits they need | <p>Ensure support for prison leavers / ex-offenders to access the benefits they need as one of the key drivers to reducing re-offending</p> <p>Work with DWP to identify support to jobseekers/ advice re benefits</p> <p>Be prepared for potential spike with regards to furloughed workers – unemployment, UC claims, and HB/CTR claims.</p> <p>Optimise spending of DHP budgets to those in need.</p> <p>Liaise with foodbanks on their capacities and demand and investigate whether we can we assist through ELF and Food Vouchers</p> | <p>Liaise with prison to ensure advice and support given to leavers and ex-offenders</p> <p>Arrange quarterly meetings with DWP to understand impact of Covid on benefit take up and unemployment</p> <p>Restructure to be implemented to ensure staff resource is sufficient to meet demand</p> <p>Regular meetings with Housing Officers to monitor level of spend</p> <p>Work through County funding support model</p> <p>FIT team to continue to support and provide data of demand</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Oct 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> | <p>Benefits Team / Comm. Safety Team</p> <p>LD</p> <p>LD</p> <p>LD</p> <p>LD</p> |

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| | | Simplify CTR scheme for 2021/22 | CTR scheme to be presented to Cabinet, O&S and Council. Consultation with the community to be undertaken | March 20201 | LD |
| | Supporting young people to gain the skills they need | Support schools & HOW College to link students to local employers | Liaise with high schools and HOW to understand what links are currently in place. Discuss with BEIS as to future link | Dec 2020 | NWEDR |
| | Working with businesses to develop skills for the future | Undertake a skills audit with partners & work together with them to address any gaps | Work with North Worcestershire Employment and Skills Board, Skills4Worcestershire, GBSLEP and Worcestershire LEP to commission a skills audit | Feb 2021 | NWEDR |
| | | Develop a single Bromsgrove Business Leaders Group that can focus on skills development within the broader context of other key issues of importance to local businesses. | Work with the various business groups in North Worcestershire e.g. Worcestershire ESB, North Worcestershire ESB etc to establish a Business Leaders Group that will focus on skills development in the district alongside other key business issues. | Oct 2021 | NWEDR |
| | | Encourage the sharing and placement of staff in businesses for fixed durations to share and learn new skills | As previous column | Oct 2021 | NWEDR |

| Purpose | Original Council Plan Commitments | Recovery & Restoration Issues and Actions | New or Modified Actions (what we will do...who with/partners) | By When | Owner |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------------|--------------|
| Living Independent, Active & Healthy Lives | Improving health & well-being | Support targeted activities for healthy lifestyles | Discuss with Partnership officer the demand / need for activities. Liaise with Sports Development and Everyone Active to enable community activities to take place | End Sept 20 and ongoing | JP |
| | | To deliver on the Bromsgrove Social Prescribing contract | To consider new funding opportunities from the Govt's proposal to expand the army of social prescribing link workers to support mental wellbeing. | Oct 2020 | TD |
| | | To promote the Lifeline wellbeing checks | To work with communications to promote the benefits of the Lifeline Well Being Checks. | Nov 2020 | RN |
| | | To support targeted virtual activity and creativity sessions for healthy lifestyles | 1) long term health condition interventions (respiratory illness COPD, MS, postural stability), 2) disability sessions in partnership with Aztec Upton Warren & Sailing Club, BSLC, 3) Fit for Free guided sessions with outdoor fitness equipment in Bromsgrove, Clent & Alvechurch, 4) Active Kitchen holiday hunger projects | Aug & ongoing | Dev Service |
| | Continue to support the Redditch & Bromsgrove Dementia Friendly Communities initiative | Continue to support this work | | Ongoing | JW |
| | Provide targeted activities for older people & support the emerging Bromsgrove | Working with Active Herefordshire and Worcestershire Virtual Strong and Steady classes have replaced the face to face delivery. | Funding from the Health Innovation Network has allowed an online Escape Pain class to start for people suffering with Osteoarthritis | Sept 2020 | Dev Services |

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| | Age Friendly Community | | | | |
| | With partners, enable targeted activities & initiatives to support mental well-being | Work with WCC on the legacy of Here2Help to support vulnerable residents post Covid | To promote and support that local communities access the legacy of Here2 Help and link this with the work of the Bromsgrove Partnership around the 'Deal Approach' | Dec 2020 | JW |
| | | | To support the work of Support Bromsgrove and BARN's volunteer Bureau to increase the number of volunteers working with VCS mental wellbeing services. | Ongoing | JW |
| | Support improved access to services that reduce social isolation (including Lifeline) | Promote the Lifeline Service locally and through partner agencies including self-installation during the pandemic. | To develop a communications/ marketing plan | Nov 2020 | RN |
| | | Develop and promote a new range of digital equipment and sensors to enhance the service user experience, including devices that will work outside of the home, encouraging independence and peace of mind when going out. | Monitor conversion rates to establish how many of those, that have the service for free, choose to retain the service and pay for it ongoing. Target is 50% conversion | Ongoing | RN |
| | | Continue to work with WCC and Amica24 installing complex technology enabled care solutions on their behalf in Bromsgrove . Expand the 6 week free scheme to all health and care professionals. | Review opportunities with County and Health colleagues new tele health technologies post Covid | June 2021 | RN |
| | | To continue with the Bromsgrove BURT bus and Shopmobility with new Covid safety measures | To review with Members both of these services and whether further funding is available or income generation through charging to invest and develop them as a Council priority | Dec 2020 | JW TD |
| | | Work with WCC on the legacy of Here2Help to support vulnerable residents post Covid | Work with Support Bromsgrove to achieve a legacy for the VCS | Dec 2020 | JW |

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| | Develop a Parks & Open Spaces Strategy (including increased physical activity & cycling) | Provide a clear brief on what the detail of the strategy will be | Develop a phased approach to the work to fine tune the technical documents that would feed into the overall strategy | Mar 2021 | RB IKF JC |
| | Enhance sport & cultural opportunities offered by the Council | <p>Work with partners to ensure that provision is accessible and safe for all participants, particularly those from minority and marginalised communities.</p> <p>Deliver the “Tell me what you want” action plan, the consequence of a 2 year £90,000 action research piece that identified projects designed to break down barriers to engagement with arts culture and heritage.</p> | <p>Liaise with partnership group to understand what is needed within the District for minority and marginalised communities.</p> <p>Working with all instructors and venues to provide COVID-19 Secure measures ready for a phased return to face to face delivery from mid Sept 2020</p> <p>Work with Bromsgrove Arts and Culture Consortium partners to deliver the plan.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>End of March 2021</p> | <p>JP DM</p> <p>Dev Services</p> <p>Dev Services</p> |

| Purpose | Original Council Plan Commitments | Recovery & Restoration Issues and Actions | New or Modified Actions (what we will do...who with/partners) | By when | Owner |
|--|---|--|---|------------|----------------|
| Communities which are Safe, Well Maintained & Green | Reducing crime & disorder | To consider the impact on society of Covid 19 and work with partners and service areas to ensure the Community Safety Partnership action plan reflects this. | To review and update the Community Safety Partnership action plan to contribute to the recovery of consequences from Covid 19 | March 2021 | BH |
| | Work with partners, schools & communities to reduce crime & the fear of crime | Ensure effective Parking Enforcement, via the SLA with Wychavon, covering both on and off street contraventions. | Currently working with County Highways, Police & Schools. Recruit to post (additional hours) to assist with enforcement around schools. | Ongoing | KH |
| | | Through the Community Safety Respect Schools Programme, continue to work with partners and provide additional support for young people affected by the impact of Covid 19 | Identify funding opportunities to sustain and continue to deliver the Respect Programme | Ongoing | NWCSP |
| | Review services to understand how we can adapt to address the implications of climate change | Currently working with the Energy Savings Trust who are undertaking an initial high level fleet review followed by a more detailed vehicle specific review with Cenex to identify the best low carbon emission vehicles to purchase in the future. | Review the priorities for Climate Change across the district | 12 months | GR KH PW |
| | | Review fleet usage for Waste Collection, Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance to consider opportunities to further reduce our carbon footprint through technology. | Review of technologies and innovation and funding | Ongoing | MA KH PW |
| | | Service review of domestic waste service to support upcoming legislative changes to services aimed at reducing waste and increasing recycling as part of the circular economy. | As previous column | Ongoing | MA KH PW |
| | | Campaign to increase recycling quality and quantities with residents (domestic waste service) and businesses via our Commercial Waste service. | As previous column | Ongoing | MA KH PW |

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| | Improve targeted environmental enforcement | <p>Define Council priorities regarding environmental enforcement, and then review existing arrangements and alternative models available either through partnership with adjacent LA's, or Private Sector as a commercial arrangement.</p> <p>Identify effective responses to environmental crime activity to identify perpetrators and take appropriate enforcement action to reduce/prevent further offences, utilising available ASB tools and powers</p> | <p>Review of council enforcement arrangements, across priority areas.</p> <p>Review environmental enforcement with regard to increased commercial fly tipping in the urban fringe of the district since lockdown was eased</p> <p>Review enforcement arrangements and impact of Covid 19, eg on fly tipping, and new resources/new model of working may be required</p> | <p>April 2021</p> <p>Oct 2020</p> <p>April 2021</p> | <p>MA GR</p> <p>MA GR</p> <p>SH GR JW RB</p> |
| | Understand the different needs of our local areas in order to keep them clean & tidy | <p>Review IT systems in place to help manage demand data and introduce mobile working more effectively to support maintenance operations.</p> | <p>To procure and implement new Environmental Services IT system</p> | <p>Sept 2021</p> | <p>GR KH MG</p> |
| | Explore the options to reduce residual waste, increase recycling & maximise the efficiency of waste collection services | <p>Campaign to increase recycling quality and quantities with residents (domestic waste service) and businesses via our Commercial Waste service.</p> <p>Provide opportunities around better management of waste and introducing recycling projects including an introduction of recycling options within parks</p> | <p>Restart recycling quality project from Sept 2020 with direct mail to households in targeted areas</p> <p>Work with other Councils across Herefordshire and Worcestershire to develop a programme of work for the shared strategic waste officer and ensure that programme of work meets needs of the district</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 2021</p> | <p>MA AM AW</p> <p>GR</p> |

Corporate Priorities

| | Original Council Plan Commitments | Recovery & Restoration Issues and Actions | New or Modified Actions (what we will do...who with/partners) | By when | Owner |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|-------|
| | Financial Sustainability | Produce & deliver sustainable financial plans | Development of General Fund 4 year plan to ensure financial impact of Covid assessed. | Feb 2021 | CFor |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify impact of Covid Assess prior year underspends Review Capital Programme Identify savings plans Review fees and charges | Oct 2020 Oct 2020 Jan 2021 Nov 2020 Dec 2020 | |
| | | | Recruit additional technical capacity | Sept 2020 | |
| | | | Work with managers to better understand budget implications | Sept 2020 | |
| | | | Restructure of financial services team | Dec 2020 | |
| | | Improved commerciality: maximising every opportunity to generate income, including review of fees & charges | Implementation of new system to better understand income and financial management | Nov 2020 | CFor |
| | | | Review of fees and charges | Dec 2020 | |
| | | | Workshops with budget holders | Sept 2020 | |
| | | Undertake effective contract management | Continue to work through corporate training and development programme. Work internally to maximise efficiency and economy of scale. | Mar 2021 | JS |
| | | | Develop comprehensive contracts register and effective contacts management through new finance system | Mar 2021 | CFe |
| | | | Targeted and bespoke departmental training and development | Mar 2021 | CFe |

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|--|-----------------------|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | Social responsibility policy with focus on local suppliers | Mar 2021 | CFe |
| | | Manage our assets to get the best outcomes for our residents | Review use of buildings, facilities and assets | Mar 2021 | CMT |
| | | | Develop comprehensive assets management strategy in line with the Council Plan | Mar 2021 | CFe |
| | | Make financially viable strategic acquisitions & investments | Review the property structure to ensure there is the resource to enable strategic investment opportunities to be identified and pursued | Ongoing | CFe CFor |
| | | Undertake a self-assessment against CIPFA's new Financial Management Code (CPC) | Undertake the self-assessment online | Feb 2021 | CFor |
| | | Encourage all levels of the organisation to articulate their role clearly and succinctly in delivering financial sustainability (CPC) | Workshops and training on the new ERP system | Sept 2020 | CFor |
| | Sustainability | Review services currently delivered to determine if they offer VFM, and if not and not legally required then consider discontinuing. | Restructure in the financial services team | Dec 2020 | CFor |
| | | | Work with members to understand priority services and assess those that are not as a priority against benchmarking to fully understand value for money and associated costs | Nov 2020 | CFor |
| | | | | | |
| | | Review alternative delivery models. The production of Service Business Plans will begin to outline what a Future Operating Model may look like. | Service Business Plans will be assessed in order to establish an overall council operating model | Nov 2020 | SMT CMT |
| | | Exploit digital technologies, enabling more automation of services through the implementation of the Digital and Customer Strategy to ensure both technology and process change. (CPC) | Develop a delivery action plan for the Digital Strategy and digital developments outlined in the Service Business Plans Encourage customer use of website for payment and alternative methods of payment | Sept 2020 Ongoing | DP MH PS |

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| | | Invest in leadership development to reinforce culture change and lay foundations for the future. (CPC) | Start the ILM programme later in 2020 | Oct 2020 | DP BT |
| | | | Ensure the Apprenticeship Levy is used to cover training costs | Ongoing | |
| | | | Ensure the first cohort focuses on 5 th tier level employees. | Ongoing | BT |
| | | Be consistent in internal communications and explore opportunities for two-way internal communications (CPC) | Implement the learnings from remote working and Covid 19 staff surveys | Oct 2020 | DP BT |
| | | Strengthen financial forecasting to underpin the refreshed approach to financial management (CPC) | Workshops and training on the new ERP system | Dec 2020 | CFor |
| | Review Resources and Services | | Restructure in the financial services team | | |
| | | Utilise external commercial expertise to ensure delivery of agreed priorities (CPC) | Ongoing support via remote working/virtual meeting | Ongoing | GR DP |
| | | Review key risks on the Corporate Risk Register | Regular review of the added Covid risk – financial and service | Oct 2020 | CFor |
| | | Review services to understand how we can adapt to climate change | To identify opportunities through departments service plans and develop an action plan | Jan 2021 | CMT JW |
| | | Prioritise clearly and resource accordingly (CPC) | Review priorities post Covid | Feb 2021 | SMT CMT |
| | | Ensure that budget manager engagement and ownership is invested in to make self-service a success (CPC) | Workshops and training on the new ERP system | Oct 20 – Feb 21 | CFor |
| | | | Restructure in the financial services team | | |
| | | Workforce planning – employee skills, gap analysis, workforce profile, succession planning etc | Create a workforce strategy in light of the 'new normal' after the Covid crisis. To consider the impact of remote/agile working on employee numbers/skills. | Dec 2020 | DP BT |
| | | | Develop improved management information for services through a renewed corporate dashboard. | Apr 2021 | DP BG |

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| | | Support workforce recovery and transition to 'new normal' | Determine what 'new normal' means and understand what policy changes will be needed to support new ways of working. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a remote working policy • Arrange management training to develop skills for remote working and performance management. • Review working arrangements of whole organisation. • Explore flexible work arrangement. | Dec 2020 | DP BT |
| | | Capture lessons learned/details from surveys in order to assess impact of remote working. | Analyse data and pass this out to service areas. | May 2021 | DP BT |
| | | Review appetite for agile working post-crisis | Services to use the data to determine what their service reviews may look like. To include future operating model, agile working etc | Sept 2020 | DP BT |
| | | Review HR&OD Strategy to ensure recognition and reward are encompassed within it. | Link the strategy to business planning cycle, development of 'new normal' and workforce planning | Feb 2021 | SMT CMT |
| | Review the Council Plan | Review the delivery of priorities in light of the impact of the pandemic. | Review during 2021 for the next 3 years to link in with the MTFP | Dec 2020 | DP BT |
| | Community Leadership | Explore the development of "Deal" approaches (based on the concepts / principles of the Wigan Deal). | Consider the legacy of the Covid volunteers and how they and the VCS organisations can support the 'Deal' approach in terms of community assets. | Apr 2021 | CMT |
| | | Continue to work with the support networks (Support Bromsgrove) and partnerships to underpin future economic and community recovery (CPC) | Undertake / co-ordinate work across Council departments and with partner organisations to create a better understanding of our most vulnerable and in need residents. | Aug/Sept 2020 | HoS 4th Tier Managers LSP Managers Policy Team |
| | | | | Sept 2020 | 4th Tier Managers LSP Managers Policy Team DS |

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|--|--|--|---|----------|----|
| | | | <p>Bring together data and information the Council and partners hold about vulnerable residents which can be utilised to target future resources, support, and opportunities to those most in need in our communities. This data to also be used for future planning and response in emergencies e.g. any future waves of the Covid-19 pandemic</p> | Oct 2020 | JW |
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Corporate Peer Challenge: Follow Up Visit **Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council**

June 2020

Feedback Report

1. Introduction and purpose

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils received an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge in January 2018. Feedback from the Peer Challenge concluded the two councils had delivered over £7.5m of savings since 2010/11 through joint working and are continuing to deliver around £1.5m per annum. In 2018 the team identified further scope for efficiencies and service improvements. The Peer Challenge process recommended that the councils should focus on ensuring improved corporate ownership of financial management with tighter control of budget savings and guarantee that expenditure is directed only towards agreed priority areas.

The peer team suggested more rigour should be introduced into developing and analysing business cases, and to their impact on priority setting. The Peer Challenge recommended the councils should be clearer about how they will track progress on key projects and savings and report against them. This should include identifying the consequences and mitigation if delivery does not progress as planned.

In 2018 the peer team invited the councils to re-assess what they are seeking to achieve from the shared services partnership moving forward. Whilst it had delivered savings, resilience and a greater opportunity to lever influence it had not in 2018 established a single workforce or culture.

The purpose of the follow up visit on 24th and 25th February 2020 was to help the councils take stock of progress made against the areas of improvement identified in 2018. This report provides a written summary of the key observations made by the peer team during their visit in February 2020. This report was finalised in June 2020 having been delayed whilst the councils responded to the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Peer review and challenge

Peer challenges are improvement-focussed and tailored to meet individual councils' needs. They are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read. The process is not designed to provide a technical assessment or due diligence on specific proposals. Neither is it intended to provide prescriptive recommendations. The peer challenge process provides feedback, observations and insights from experienced practitioners that will help validate, reality check and further develop the councils' current plans, proposals and evolving thinking about the future.

Scope and focus

The peer team were asked to consider the progress made since January 2018 and provide recommendations for continued improvement. In doing so peers considered the areas for

improvement identified by the original peer review and the key recommendations made at that time:

- Pause and reflect on the shared service journey to date – celebrate your success – use the 10 year anniversary as a moment to do this
- Prioritise the work on tightening financial processes so that they provide the most up to date profiling, model the best in the sector and support strong decision making
- Spend more time together – introduce more joint informal meetings at political level
- Create space to have conversations about the future with your valued partners
- Redefine the shared future journey and ambition
- Define a new shared culture from the bottom up – with input from officers and members
- Share this emerging culture with partners and collectively shape the future community leadership role for the councils and partners
- Establish a single workforce and reduce duplication and time spent navigating two structures and systems of governance
- Having established the above use this re-energised culture to enable officers and members to design services to meet and pre-empt customer needs within your financial envelope.

A further 22 recommendations were made within the five core themes of corporate peer challenge. These are set out in Annex A.

Peer team

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected the councils' requirements and the focus of the peer challenge. Peers were selected on the basis of their relevant experience and expertise and agreed with the councils. The peers who undertook the follow up visit were:

- Matt Prosser, Chief Executive, Dorset Council
- Cllr Paul James, Former Leader, Gloucester City Council
- Cllr John Kent, Former Leader, Thurrock Council
- Bindu Arjoon, Director, Exeter City Council
- Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers & Organisational Development, Cherwell DC and Oxfordshire CC
- Karen Iveson, Chief Finance Officer Selby DC and Assistant Director North Yorkshire CC
- Raj Khera, LGA membership engagement officer
- Clare Hudson, LGA Peer Challenge Manager

Seven of the team had been involved in the original peer challenge in 2018. The team spent two days onsite at Bromsgrove and Redditch councils on 24th and 25th February during which they spoke to more than 40 stakeholders including councillors, senior

managers, frontline staff, and partners. Peers prepared for their visit by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the councils, their current challenges and recent progress.

2. Key findings and observations

2.1 Progress since the Peer Challenge

In 2019 Redditch BC changed political control and became Conservative controlled. This change in political balance and leadership means both councils are Conservative controlled and provides an opportunity to make progress on some fundamental issues facing the councils. The councils continue to benefit from a dedicated workforce and there has been significant effort in the senior officer core put into identifying what culture change might best support the workforce going forward. There is now a stronger sense of a single workforce serving two councils at the senior officer level. The councils now need to work to embed culture change from the bottom up to ensure all parts of the councils are engaged in moving towards a more dynamic and financially accountable culture.

This emerging culture change has been facilitated through the harmonisation of terms and conditions for the two councils. Several key steps have also been taken to address the recommendations made by the peer team, and the section 24 notice that was served to Redditch BC in 2019. A new finance system is in the process of being introduced which will be fundamental to delivering the financial control and accountability needed. The scheme of delegation in Redditch BC has been revised and this is having a positive impact in empowering officers to be more innovative.

Partners continue to value working with the councils, both individually, and collectively and the councils' leadership have continued determined effort to underpin this. There remains significant scope for collaboration with partners to improve outcomes for the communities in Redditch and Bromsgrove and the councils need to carefully consider how to harness this without necessarily always leading it.

2.2 Shared services – direction of travel

There were mixed views expressed to the team, particularly by members, on whether shared services has reached its maturity within these two organisations. Senior leaders need to be clear about their understanding of this maturity and whether the full benefits have been realised. Leaders should explore whether or not shared services will be actively pursued with others – and be clear with staff where future efforts will be placed. The councils should also establish regular benchmarking to understand if services are providing value for money and if further efficiencies could be realised within the current shared services framework.

Given progress made and the maturity of the shared services partnership the councils should now be considering how they can translate the benefits that operating a long running shared service has bought to drive further collaboration.

2.3 Understanding of local place and priority setting

The leaders of both councils are well respected for their energetic passion for place. Through collaborative working this can be harnessed to help shape the delivery of future growth, regeneration and economic prosperity respectively. The regeneration plans in Redditch are ambitious and have the potential to be transformative. Redditch BC must now consider how it will bring together exciting individual projects and schemes into single vision that can galvanise the resources and capability of partners.

Bromsgrove DC is seeking to deliver on its vision for an economically vibrant and sustainable district within the constraints of its green belt. The Government's Review of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) may well result in the Council no longer being able to maintain membership of two LEPs. This will mean a major strategic decision about where Bromsgrove DC wishes to align itself economically.

There is evidence of speculation about future local government arrangements for Worcestershire. Without wishing to comment on the merits or otherwise of change, the peer team would encourage the councils not to be distracted by this and to concentrate on collaboration and partnership working for the benefit of residents and businesses. The need for Worcestershire County Council to complete a strategic transport assessment could be considered to be a practical example of this.

Having focused effort on instigating culture change the councils must now focus on strengthening approaches to prioritisation and associated delivery plans. The councils are continuing to commit to too numerous priorities and need to be clearer about when something is no longer a priority and what that means for the organisations, and how this is reflected in corporate plans. Plans to deliver agreed priorities are not as embedded as they need to be resulting in lower levels of rigour on project delivery than are needed in the current financial climate.

The councils are well versed in transformation principles but these would benefit from a more clearly articulated and agreed transformation programme and governance being updated and fully aligned to refreshed – and fewer – priorities. These refined priorities and delivery plans should then be resourced accordingly. The councils should bear in mind that agreeing a priority does not mean the councils always have to be the deliverer of services. There is a history of providing services to the community that are not the traditional role of district councils. This feels more prominent in Redditch, such as the Connecting Families project. Whilst these projects may have received external funding the council should also consider the wider resources implications of committing to non-statutory service delivery.

2.4 Political and managerial leadership

The Chief Executive continues to lead from the front and remains a visible presence for partners and staff. Since the original peer challenge in 2018 there has been constructive action to change the behaviour and conduct of political debate in Bromsgrove Council meetings. This is positive and the Council should build upon these improvements to overcome the historic legacy of negative political debate in public.

Group leaders are now invited to meet together informally, and this more regular engagement is welcome amongst councillors and officers alike. There has been a management restructure which is still embedding and senior officers must work to ensure that managerial approaches are consistent and managers are well supported to deliver priorities. Having invested in clarifying the culture the councils want staff to operate in consideration should now be given to what accountability and positive challenge means for everybody in the organisation as part of the culture change programme – and how it influences decision and behaviours.

2.5 Financial planning and viability

A clearer understanding of what financial accountability means for individuals is progressing at the corporate management team level and this now needs testing with wider staff and members. A self-assessment against CIPFA's new Financial Management Code will provide a focus for further improvement.

The finance system that has been committed to will provide a catalyst for improved financial management and accountability. It is critical that this is delivered to deadline to and becomes quickly embedded in a strengthened culture of financial accountability. Given the financial challenges it is important that robust forecasting is embedded with budget managers in order to build greater confidence in financial management.

The peer team heard that there has been a solid response to the s24 notice issued to Redditch and substantial work has been done on identifying savings and clarifying the council's approach to financial sustainability. Future savings plans need rigorous testing and there is a particular need for more work to be done on the financial sustainability of Redditch's Housing Revenue Account.

The revised budget reports are more consistent between the two councils and provide detailed analysis. The overarching MTFS has the opportunity to set the wider context for the budget reports but needs to be more widely articulated across the organisations. Staff working to deliver services against planned budgets are not always clear when they are seeking to make changes what are efficiencies and what are savings and cuts to services.

The focus on continual service review and redesign for efficiencies and improved outcomes could be clearer. The councils have developed a substantive approach to commercialisation including using property investment to generate income as well as selling services and expertise. However, the councils' approach to borrowing to finance commercial property investment also needs careful consideration in light of the latest MHCLG and CIPFA code and guidance.

The concept of commercialism as 'part of the day job' seems embedded for those colleagues that have advanced it. There is however, a need for a clear risk assessment to ensure that both savings delivery plans and income generation plans are built on the foundations of tested and robust delivery plans and that services provided for other parties, such as Lifeline for Cannock, are genuinely contributing to financial sustainability.

2.6 Capacity to deliver

The councils are operating a high number of live programmes and projects. In our brief time there the peer team noted at least seven major change programmes that officers were working on. The councils have also established property investment funds but progress on this has not been as expected, with limited viable commercial opportunities coming forward. There is significant breadth in what the councils are seeking to achieve but they do not always achieve the depth of their planned project/intervention. This is having a negative impact on organisational resilience with projects not always seeming to have been closed down before a new one is started. It is also not clear how the organisation learns from the projects it has delivered and how this can influence project design and service delivery as well as organisational culture.

The councils have set out a comprehensive approach to programme management and should ensure this is oriented towards generating pace and momentum in delivery of savings including identifying opportunities for improving productivity and reducing costs as well as delivering savings and service redesign.

The councils have embraced the need for change and have developed processes for setting up new programmes and projects. As this matures and the councils clarify their future operating models there will need to be a focus on how to allocate resources towards redesigned services ensuring that costs are regularly benchmarked and efficiencies sought out. The workforce is generally very long-serving and opportunities should be sought out for officers at every level to 'get out' and find out about practice elsewhere in order to bring in new ideas and promote an open and innovative culture.

3. Recommendations 2020

The councils have made solid progress since 2018, particularly in solidifying the concept of a single workforce and responding appropriately to the section 24 notice in Redditch. The peer team recommend the councils now focus on:

1. Prioritise clearly and resource accordingly
2. Invest in leadership development to reinforce culture change and lay foundations for the future
3. Consider how and when you can be the convenor/enabler of services and change within your communities. The Councils through the Bromsgrove Partnership and Redditch Partnership (at the time of the visit) were exploring possible “Deal” approaches (based on the concepts / principles of the Wigan Deal). During the pandemic response two support networks have been established (Support Redditch and Support Bromsgrove) – the Councils could seek to work with these networks and the partnerships to underpin future economic and community recovery.
4. Be consistent in internal communications and explore opportunities for two-way internal communications
5. Develop a clear action plan to implement your digital and customer strategy, recognising that a focus on digital and customer experience requires both technology and process change. Make this a clear element of your plans to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
6. Undertake a self-assessment against CIPFA’s new Financial Management Code
7. Ensure that budget manager engagement and ownership is invested in to make self-service a success
8. Strengthen financial forecasting to underpin the refreshed approach to financial management
9. Encourage all levels of the organisation to clearly and succinctly articulate their role in delivering financial sustainability
10. Utilise external commercial expertise to ensure delivery of agreed priorities

4. Next steps

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

As part of the peer review/challenge process, there is an offer of further activity to support this. The Local Government Association (LGA) is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this. Helen Murray is the main contact between your authority and the LGA. Her contact details are: Tel. 07884 312235 and Email helen.murray@local.gov.uk.

In the meantime, we are keen to continue the relationship we have formed with the councils throughout the peer challenge. We will endeavour to provide additional information and signposting about the issues we have raised in this report to help inform ongoing consideration.

Clare Hudson

On behalf of the peer team:

- Matt Prosser, Chief Executive, Dorset Council
- Cllr Paul James, Former Leader, Gloucester City Council
- Cllr John Kent, Former Leader, Thurrock Council
- Bindu Arjoon, Director, Exeter City Council
- Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers & Organisational Development, Cherwell DC and Oxfordshire CC
- Karen Iveson, Chief Finance Officer Selby DC and Assistant Director North Yorkshire CC
- Raj Khera, LGA membership engagement officer
- Clare Hudson, LGA Peer Challenge Manager

Annex A

Further Recommendations from original Peer Challenge report - 2018

1. Be clear about how you identify when something is no longer a corporate priority – and what it means
2. When change is introduced guarantee that it is introduced with greater pace and rigour – with clear lines of accountability at the officer and political level
3. Invest more time in considering what role all levels of the organisation contribute towards corporate aims – transformation is everyone's role. Ensure that transformation is adequately resourced with clear programme and project governance, and appropriate skills.
4. Management approaches need more consistency to support the development of a single corporate culture
5. Establish greater consistency in the foundations of shared services – ICT, HR, Finance should all be enablers of change
6. Re-examine your existing commitments and have an honest conversation about whether they are sustainable, relevant or appropriate
7. Evaluate the opportunities for maximising your influence – and focus your energy and leadership on where you can be most effective
8. Take action at Bromsgrove District Council to raise the conduct of political debate so that it is constructive and does not undermine the council's reputation, as well as the local government sector
9. Review processes for supporting members at council meetings, and where necessary, implement change to ensure members are well supported
10. Ensure that boundaries between officers and members are publicly clarified and that their implementation is regularly reviewed
11. Review Council Procedures to ensure that they can support constructive debate
12. Ensure that report proofing procedures are 'watertight' and errors are not published
13. Establish clearer lines of accountability for the leadership and delivery of major programmes and projects – that is appropriately dispersed throughout the organisation to mitigate potential risk in investing too much in one role.

14. Financial accountability needs greater ownership across the organisation
15. Budget planning needs to be more focused on future financial sustainability and not simply meeting service needs and short term demands
16. Be clearer about how you track progress and manage risk – on delivering savings and key projects
17. Establish a transparent, regularised and proportionate system of reviewing and amending recharges between the two councils – rather than leaving it to specific service areas
18. Expedite the business case and implementation of a new finance system
19. Consider how to meet customer need and expectation within your financial options using the systems thinking approach. This will help you identify what matters to the customer and design efficient processes to meet this need, removing service boundaries where required.
20. Consider how to re-align your customer strategy to most effectively meet customer need within your identified priorities.
21. Consider the impact that digital transformation of services can have, releasing capacity whilst improving the customer experience – develop and implement a single digital strategy.
22. Develop a clear plan to assess what high volume low complexity transactions can be directed towards more cost effective channels. There is no tension between this and a systems thinking approach - many customers expect and are happy to access council services by means other than face- to-face- as indeed they do for services from other public and private organisations.

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