

APPENDIX 2 - Corporate Peer Challenge Detail by Action

Unique ref	Recommendation number	Recommendation	Definition	Action	Owner	Timeframes @ Sept 24 Qrt2 update	Update from Officers for Qrt3 Dec 24	Updated from Officers as at end Feb 25.	Status
CPC001	Recommendation 1	<b>Align finance and workforce to deliver the agreed political priorities including a review of organisational structure.</b>	A single narrative needs developing and communicating so that everyone is clear what the priorities are, how they are being delivered and what the timescales are for this. The council needs to ensure its officer structure enables delivery of the political priorities, that officer capacity is directed to the priority areas and the finances are aligned	A restructure of Senior Leadership Team to be launched for consultation in October 2024	Michelle Sacks	Underway - Preparation work commenced. Aim to complete before end of 2024 if possible.	Restructure has been launched, with consultation having been completed. Outcomes will be communicated in January. Further work has also been undertaken by Communications in relation to messaging regarding the priority areas.	Implementation 1st February, transition by 1st March 2025	Green
CPC002	Recommendation 2	<b>Strengthen the internal approach to engagement which ensures the voice of residents/service users are at the heart of decision making.</b>	Building on the good practice shown in consulting on Huntingdonshire Futures, develop different engagement mechanisms to gain the views of residents/service users on their experience of the council and how these can be responded to.	Policy decision about whether Comms is accountable for engagement across the organisation to be agreed	Michael Hann	Underway - scoping and options appraisal live	Links to Senior Team restructure - but ongoing work to refine both communications strategy and also future evolution of Futures Strategy work.	Linked to options paper for Consultation and Engagement which will go to SLT on 24/2/25 for discussion.	Green
CPC003	Recommendation 2			Community health and wealth building - resident workshops to co-deliver a strategy. This is the start of the live engagement opportunities available to our residents	Michael Hann/ John Taylor	Underway - some workshops already held as part of development of strategy (adopted by Cabinet in September).	Full Council approved the strategy and £750k investment into the delivery fund in Dec. Further engagement activities with seldom heard groups has provided more insight into issues we need to solve. Agreement reached with NWAFT to invest c£100k into a shared role focused on employment and skills associated with the rebuild of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital - the site will be an anchor institution channeling back return to Huntingdonshire.		Green
CPC004	Recommendation 2			Options paper created for different engagement events and approval from Informal Cabinet once completed. Depending on the option chosen there will be a likely budget identified but there will be a need for BAU coordinator resource to facilities and advice on service specific engagement activities	Michael Hann	Underway - scoping and options appraisal live	The role of a fixed-term Consultation and Engagement Lead has been identified as a suitable option to manage, co-ordinate and support activity across the council. The post now needs funding and is a budget consideration moving forward. The team have continued to work up potential campaigns and other solutions.	Paper to go to SLT 24/2/25 for discussion	Amber
CPC005	Recommendation 2			Network of Communications Champions established within HDC to share learning and key campaigns, in order to provide coordinated comms and key messaging	Michael Hann	Underway - Quarterly meetings	Staff Network is in place. The next meeting will take place in January 2024.	Status remains the same	Green
CPC006	Recommendation 2			Creation of a corporate consultation schedule to a managed approach to consultation. This will include corporate consultations eg: on budget setting as well as service specific consultations eg: Local Plan	Michael Hann	Underway - continually reviewed, will be picked up alongside service planning	The role of a fixed-term Consultation and Engagement Lead has been identified as a suitable option to manage, co-ordinate and support activity across the council. The post now needs funding and is being considered as part of budget setting moving forward.	Paper to go to SLT 24/2/25	Amber
CPC007	Recommendation 3	<b>Develop a resourced Communications and Engagement Strategy which defines the HDC brand and strategic narrative.</b>	Promote the services the council delivers. Don't undersell the impact being made in the community by leisure, parks and open spaces and operational services. Ensure everyone knows these are delivered by HDC. Be clear about who leads external communications to prevent confusion of messages and brands.	Communications strategy for the year ahead being refreshed and being approved by Informal Cabinet	Michael Hann	Underway - partially complete - LGA engagement undertaken. Early draft completed.	Communications Strategy and Action Plan has been drafted and shared with Cabinet, with an aim to move to delivery as soon as practicable.	Status remains the same. Comms strategy/action plan likely to be updated with service planning.	Green
CPC008	Recommendation 3			LGA commissioned to create the HDC narrative and develop a comms and engagement strategy to deliver individual campaigns. Within the campaign plans will be a resource and budget profile	Michael Hann	Underway - Partially complete. Narrative complete. Roll out and use commencing during September 2024	Narrative has been approved by SLT/Cabinet. The next stage will be to try and embed this across the council so it is used in our internal/external comms. Examples of this have already taken place, for example references to the	Status remains the same.	Green
CPC009	Recommendation 4	<b>Review the planning service to ensure that within the planning policy framework the council's priorities are being delivered, for example climate, environment and inclusive growth.</b>	Create understanding across all council services that there needs to be a holistic approach to deliver the councils growth and development ambitions. The planning service is a major contributor to fulfilling the longer-term outcomes of the council, but the results will benefit and impact on the whole council and it is important the service is appropriately positioned and supported to deliver these ambitions	Undertake a Peer review challenge on the Planning department through engagement with the LGA to agree timeframes. The review will then provide recommendations and an action plan to take into 25/26	Clara Kerr	Underway - Peer Review planned for November 2024. Pushed back due to availability of LGA support and clashes with conference season.	Peer Review undertaken in November. Feedback awaited, with the report due to be finalised in January. Following that an action plan will be considered and developed.	As at the time of writing, final report being finalised with PAS. Once this has been received early March, a planning staff briefing will be held in advance of wider publication. An action plan will then be developed. Recommendations from the PAS visit has been considered in process of budget setting and service planning for 25/26. Wider Planning Reform changes expected in March which will also require consideration.	Green
CPC010	Recommendation 4			Local Plan consultation on issues and options. Activities and findings to be presented SLT, Management team, Strategic Board, Members	Clara Kerr	Underway - Issues and Options consultation live from 18th September.	Consultation closed. The team are now reflecting on and processing the comments. The team are also responding to recent Gov announcements with a new NPPF and the need to produce an updated LDS by March.	Revised LDS published, and returned to MHCLG confirming submission by December 2026.	Green
CPC011	Recommendation 4			Cultural issue to take an holistic view - want to have monthly briefings on topics for Informal Cabinet and Management team about what's going on and why it's important.	Mike Gildersteeves	TBC - Some activity undertaken, but will be reviewed following Peer Review. Also linked to Monthly Member briefings to be rolled out from November.	No change	Monthly Member briefings actioned - most recent on topic of Standard Method for calculating housing supply, published in Dec 24, and implications for decision making on planning applications. A briefing was also held	Green

CPC012	Recommendation 4			Delivery board, Strategic Board and lessons learnt at both the tactical project level and the sponsor level to inform future HDC delivery of significant change programmes requiring planning	Mike Gildersleeves	Underway - part of continual improvement	Independent project review commissioned of Hinchingbrooke Country Park, draft report back in January will include recommendations regarding corporate planning approach. Internal lessons learned for Hinchingbrooke Country Park (interim) presented to Delivery Board with recommendations endorsed, format of lessons learned approved for future reviews.	No new update	Green
CPC013	Recommendation 4			Facilitation of the continuous improvement journey - that as an organisation we need the peer reviews over a number of different services and not just planning	Mike Gildersleeves	TBC - Some activity undertaken, but will be reviewed following Peer Review.	No change	No change - lessons learned from other projects/service areas considered at Management Team meetings	Amber
CPC014	<b>Recommendation 5</b>	<b>Deliver the imminent Workforce Strategy at pace - including addressing staff concerns.</b>	The extensive consultation on the new strategy has raised awareness and staff have high expectations of what it will deliver. Ensure the strategy addresses the inconsistency in policy and practice and brings services together to support a one council approach, where best practice is shared across services and fairness and equity is at its core.	Action plan to be prioritised and then presented at SLT, Informal Cabinet and then Employment Committee for approval. Will include a scheduled plan to show prioritised actions, timeframes and resources. Employment committee - will be monitoring the WFS action plan alongside established KPIs eg: sickness, staff turnover.	Leanne Harfield	Underway - To be completed by end of October	Complete with quarterly reports being provided to Employment Committee		Green
CPC015	Recommendation 5			Impacts to performance and absence likely to occur in team and services with the introduction of robust implementation of policies and practices - needs to be considered against the KPIs to give context.	Leanne Harfield	Underway - Quarterly updates through Workforce Report to Employment Committee and SLT. Regular raising of issues to SLT and Managers.	This is ongoing and will be for the foreseeable future		Green
CPC016	Recommendation 5			Employee value proposition to be developed, which will feed into the corporate narrative	Leanne Harfield	Underway - scoping and options appraisal live.	This is currently underway as one of the Workforce Strategy priorities for Jan - March 25		Green
CPC017	Recommendation 5			Staff pay review undertaken	Leanne Harfield	Underway - scoping and options appraisal live.	This is currently ongoing		Green
CPC018	Recommendation 5			Well being for staff review undertaken	Leanne Harfield	Underway - Employee Assistance Programme contract due to end in October. New provider to be sought, 4 week process.	EAP contract is completed and new provider is in place		Green
CPC019	Recommendation 5			Policy and practice review undertaken	Leanne Harfield	Underway - BAU and not a specific task. Continual review and improvement.	Ongoing and constantly under review		Green
CPC020	<b>Recommendation 6</b>	<b>Continue to strengthen the council's approach to governance, compliance and risk.</b>	To support the council's improved governance approach: Review the council's constitution	Establish a Constitution Review Working Group - constitutional review, supported by Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) for 6 meetings. An opportunity for Members say what they are concerned with and work up proposal to address. Paper will go to Governance committee and then full council for approval	Suzanne Jones	Underway - working group has been set up and has met twice - key areas of focus identified. Potential of 12mth project.	Ongoing with a further meeting scheduled on 6/2/25. Currently reviewing Council Procedure Rules and Scheme of Delegation	Meeting held in Feb 2025 as planned. Now looking at order in which aspects of the Constitution are reviewed taking account of prospect of Local Government Review	Green
CPC021	Recommendation 6		Provide additional capacity for MO and DMO roles	Recruitment for MO and DMO roles to ensure dedicated resource for each individual council in the shared services partnership.	Suzanne Jones	TBC - To follow completion of Senior Team restructure as per action against recommendation 1	New Monitoring Officer is part of the new Senior Team restructure. Actions relating to this will follow the implementation of the amended structure.	Advert live in early Feb. Subject to process, final appointment panel is set for March 17 2025.	Green
CPC022	Recommendation 6		Ensure sufficient investment and resource for member development	Full programme of member training to identify concerns of Peer review and from Members. Certain number of sessions already delivered to the Cabinet, about how officers and Members work together. Ways of working can be optimised with LGA training	Suzanne Jones	Underway - Some additional training already provided (eg Scrutiny), some already planned in (eg finance). Member Development Working Group meeting in September to consider future training.	Ongoing with a number of training courses already provided using external training support. Member Development Working Group scheduled for 13/1/25 to consider the draft Member Training and Development document, reviewing Member training attendance and development of a Member Intranet Portal to access resources	Remains on track	Green
CPC023	<b>Recommendation 7</b>	<b>Support and develop a member led scrutiny work programme and prioritise areas where they can add value and help mitigate risk - SLT support.</b>	Ensure there is adequate time between Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet for members to add value to the process. Support them to shape agendas and work plans and contribute to policy development.	Agendas changed for the meeting - chairs briefing also includes the future plan for meetings In September update on priority one to partnership O&S panel (quarterly) - OM	Suzanne Jones	Underway - processes and approach to briefings has changed. Training has been provided. Will further review once feedback from self-scrutiny exercise complete	Ongoing improvement - Further discussion about work programme during meetings at end of 2024; further external support available to assist committee development. Members taking forward some discussions to feedback to Officers.	Corporate Director for Place and for Communities have been working together as they lead each of the Panels	Green
CPC024	Recommendation 7			Centre for Governance & Scrutiny to come in and do a review - to help understand best practice and steps we can undertake to improve our scrutiny panels	Suzanne Jones	Paused pending feedback from Scrutiny training by EELGA. May not be needed. Discussion with Chairs to take place following self-scrutiny exercise.	Ongoing to ensure less pre decision scrutiny and less for information items. Focus on the development of a clearer forward plan of items for consideration making use of service plans actions, identifying additional topics outside the scope of service plans, identify policy development to be involved in, identify topics for the agenda following monthly member briefings and identify appropriate external partners to present at Panel to identify weaknesses and strengthen partnership working	See comment on CPC 023	Green

CPC025	Recommendation 8	Define and communicate your approach to transformation/continuous improvement.	Put in place the cross-cutting foundations (technology, workforce, structures, culture, communications) to prepare the organisation for holistic service transformation rather than reinforcing some silos and risk services continuing their own custom and practice.	Combine the outputs from the ADP process with the 3 cross-cutting service reviews; customer, leisure, planning - with appropriate governance in place (through Delivery Board)	John Taylor	Underway - To be reviewed during October as part of consideration of budget setting and service planning. Service plans have been coordinated in to a single plan. New transformation director has started also.	Appointment of a new Chief Digital Information Officer across the shared IT service reporting to the Chief Executives to drive focus change. A new appointment to the role of Business Performance and Transformation Manager, with the Improvement Team becoming the Transformation Team. Action identified to combine the outputs from the ADP process with the three cross-cutting service reviews; customer, leisure, planning - with appropriate governance in place. A new approach to service planning has been established, approved by SLT, and launched for 2025/26 to generate a single Transformation Plan focused on change projects (replaces the ADP and Productivity Plan). The scope and focus of the Council's Ideas process is under review to compliment this simplified focus on transformation. SLT have approved a consolidated approach to a single ADP for HDC. A plan is in place to coproduce the Service Plans for 25/26 which will in turn populate a consistent and published ADP. This will give a single location for all the transformative work to be coordinated and reported against.		Green
CPC026	Recommendation 8			Play back to SLT the update from the continuous improvement/transformation plan to confirm strategic activities and prioritisation	John Taylor	Underway - To be reviewed during October as part of consideration of budget setting and service planning. Service plans have been coordinated in to a single plan. New performance and transformation manager has started .	SLT have approved a consolidated approach to a single Transformation Plan for HDC. The Service Plans for 25/26 will generate a three year outlook, the initial year populating a consistent and published Transformation Plan - a single location for all the transformative work to be coordinated and reported against. The Customer Change Director's programme of work is now in place and reports to SLT regularly. Changes are being made to the website, eforms and significant discovery work on AI is also underway. A review of the outcomes of the Ideas process has completed and presented to SLT who have endorsed a subsequent revision to the objectives and approach in connection with Service planning for 2025/26. This will be drafted in Q4 with insight from service managers so it supports transformation of their services.		Green
CPC027	Recommendation 8			Improvements to data will be managed on a risk-based approach in order to manage workloads and impacts across the organisation	John Taylor	Underway - Staffing in performance and projects teams (data analysis) has been subject to change due to staff turnover. Linkages to 3CICT work. New Transformation director has involvement in this area and will shape future approach.	Resources are now in the performance and insights team, and work is underway to review key HDC metrics against the corporate plan. In addition a Chief Digital and Information Officer has been appointed to lead 3C ICT (renamed as 3C Digital) which will accelerate the use of data at HDC. Work continues with Cams Police to pilots a shared environment for data analysis - focused initially on the Serious Violence Duty. Subject to full Council approval the budget includes funding in 2025/26 to undertake a review of data use and risk in order to establish a priority based action plan for data management. This will be developed in conjunction with the Chief Digital and Information Officer.		Amber
<b>Additional comments and actionable activities</b>									
CPC028	Additional comments		To meet the council's ambitions for enhanced partnership working, peers recommend the council reviews the skills and capacity needed to support this work with senior stakeholders and partners.	Identify a maturity assessment tool, and develop proposals for how it is used. With supporting training and action plan.	Michelle Sacks	TBC - Continual engagement with partners at various levels, continued dialogue to ensure meeting each others needs. Partially linked to Senior Team restructure as identified against recommendation 1. Continued review of engagement with groups, boards and partnership meetings to ensure value for money and beneficial attendance.	16/12/24 - possible link <a href="https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-05/VH_Partnerships-Analysis-Tool_web%5B1%5D.pdf">https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-05/VH_Partnerships-Analysis-Tool_web%5B1%5D.pdf</a>		Amber
CPC029	Additional comments		Creating and communicating key points of entry into the council for partners and stakeholders would significantly help the council to develop its	Simplify the reporting arrangements and responsibilities through Senior Team restructure.	Michelle Sacks	To follow Senior Team restructure as identified against recommendation 1.	Revised SLT as part of the Senior Team restructure to connect with Partners		Amber
CPC030	Additional comments		Peers advise some facilitated top team development would assist the new team in building relationships, understanding leadership styles and create space for strategic visioning.	Implementaion of Senior Team development following restructure.	Michelle Sacks	To follow Senior Team restructure as identified against recommendation 1.	Action post restructure	Ongoing coaching/developmental support in place since December 2024. Will be rolled out across new Leadership Structure including Heads of Service. Programme of wider Managers development also being actioned.	Amber

CPC031	Additional comments		Further work is needed with service managers to improve horizon scanning and feed this into the budget setting process.	Service planning to include horizon scanning and inform transformation, aligning to budget cycle.	John Taylor	TBC - Part of annual service planning and budget setting.	The updated and simplified service planning process for 2025/26 requires all services to undertake a SWOT analysis to be the basis of the actions for change in the next three years for each service area. This is linked to the Contextual Information for Huntingdonshire established in 2024/25 as part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.	Evidence provided as per Recommendation 8 - Service Planning Approach	Green
CPC032	Additional comments		Consideration should also be given to undertaking a full staff survey.	Pulse survey being undertaken in August Full staff survey will be delivered as part of the WFS Action plan dates and resources TBC	Leanne Harfield	Underway - Survey closed mid September. Results being analysed. Communication to follow. Review in 12mths as to whether further pulse survey required.	The role of a fixed-term Consultation and Engagement Lead has been identified as a suitable option to manage, co-ordinate and support activity across the council. The post now needs funding. Pulse survey has been completed and results have been reported to SLT with any concerns raised with the relevant managers		Green
CPC033	Additional comments		The Ideas Board should be taking a more strategic approach to reviewing requests for funding, making sure any bids are aligned to the councils' priorities and clearly drive innovation. There also needs to be consideration given to how any projects funded on a trial basis could be sustained in the longer term if deemed successful.	Review the Ideas Process to focus on transformation, simplification, deliver more focussed support to develop outline business cases for consideration including financial benefits realisation and/or process to project initiation Revise terms of reference and governance to reflect a transformation focus, council wide view on change projects.	John Taylor	Noted and some action already. More detailed review to be undertaken once SJ has arrived and gained understanding of existing processes. Refinement of New Ideas process and budget links as part of continual improvement.	A review of the outcomes a focus of the ideas board has been completed and presented to SLT. SLT approved a review of the New Ideas process and purpose for Q4 2024/25 with a focus on enabling Transformation and invest to save. The revised scope and focus of the Council's Ideas Board is underway to complement the simplified focus of service planning for 2025/26 on transformation actions with defined efficiencies and savings.	Approach to Transformation approved by SLT, actions being developed. Ideas process under review in February/March. Evidence provided for Recommendation 8.	Green
CPC034	Additional comments		The council to continue driving efficiencies and value for money across the organisation through service improvement and contract management to enable focused delivery on political priorities	Revise Council's approach to transformation and contract management.	Suzanne Jones	To follow once SJ has arrived and gained understanding of existing processes. Additional support in to Contract Management; Audit and Transformation have been recently added.	SLT have set a 15% savings expectation as a clear driver as part of the 2025/26 Service Planning Process with all services to develop change actions to contribute towards this target. An external review of fees and Charges has been completed to support member considerations of opportunities to increase contributions to costs through charging, benchmarking the Council against CIPFA near neighbours.	Contract Management is part of the work being led by the Interim Procurement Lead as part of the overall Procurement Act implementation work. Draft Service plan actions focussed on transformation due end February 2025 for internal review by Transformation team, Directors and Supporting Services in March.	Amber