

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	10 January 2019
Subject:	Local Government Association Peer Review – Action Plan		
Report of:	Chief Executive	Wards Affected:	All Wards
Portfolio:	Leader of the Council		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

Following the recent LGA Peer Assessment, this report sets out a proposed action plan responding to the peer team's recommendations. It is presented for Cabinet comments and endorsement.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) Consider the draft action plan and subject to comment authorise officers to progress proposed actions
- (2) Request officers to provide regular monitoring reports highlighting progress against the approved action plan

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

Peer Reviews are a proven tool for sector-led and the Council has always been open to learning from others and sharing our good practice.

The challenge provided external recognition of the things it believes the Council is doing well, highlighted where the Council can learn from other councils in light of best practice elsewhere and recommended a number of key actions.

In December 2018 Cabinet considered the LGA peer review report, accepted the recommendations and requested the development of an action plan.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not appropriate

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

Whilst this report does not have direct implications for finances or resources, actions within the proposed action plan may have implications. In such cases and where they cannot be contained within existing budgets there will be a separate report to Cabinet or Cabinet Member seeking approval.

(B) Capital Costs

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): There are no implications arising directly out of this report.
Legal Implications: There are no implications arising directly out of this report.
Equality Implications: There are no implications arising directly out of this report.

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable:
Facilitate confident and resilient communities:
Commission, broker and provide core services:
Place – leadership and influencer:
Drivers of change and reform: The Council is a self-aware learning organisation and commissioned this peer review from the LGA to assure it plans and learn from best practice. The report findings and recommendations will potentially influence future plans.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:
Greater income for social investment:
Cleaner Greener

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD 5486/18) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 4611/18) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report. Councillors and Council staff were involved in the review and have received the feedback report.

(B) External Consultations

Partners were involved in the peer review process and feedback has been shared with partners.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Annex A – LGA Peer Review Action Plan

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The Council commissioned the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a peer review as an independent check on how the Council is performing in terms of planning for and delivering against our ambitious plans for the future.
- 1.2 The peer review took place in September 2018 and the peer review team was made up of experienced elected member and officer peers. The peer team considered the following five core themes:
- Understanding local context and priority setting
 - Leadership of place
 - Financial planning and viability
 - Organisational leadership and governance and
 - Capacity to deliver.
- 1.3 In addition to the five core themes the peer review focused on the progress that the Council has made in implementing its 'vision for change' and the Council's approach to commercialisation.
- 1.4 The peer review team summarised the Council's strengths as;
- Knowledge of Sefton 'the place' is strong.
 - Strong political and managerial leadership.
 - Vision is in place, priorities have been set and transformation plan in place – which is significant.
 - Local Plan is in place which has required difficult decisions.
 - MTFP linked to strategy and priorities.
 - Committed and passionate workforce.
 - Strong partner relationships.
 - Self-awareness and willingness to reflect.
 - Successfully managed a 51% reduction in grant funding and put in place a 3 year budget.
 - Localities model is the right direction
- 1.5 The following are the peer team's key recommendations to the Council:
- A. **Prioritise the refresh of the core purpose.** This will help ensure the Council's contribution to the delivery of Sefton 2030 by targeting capacity at a carefully sequenced set of key priorities.
- B. **Strengthen corporate performance management.** The Cabinet should receive a comprehensive, corporate performance management report on a quarterly basis. This report should be accessible and allow the Cabinet to understand the progress being made by the Council against the key priorities. A suitable report should also be made available to scrutiny.
- C. **Refresh and make clear form, function, accountability and pace of delivery for the localities model.** The team acknowledged the ambition being shown by moving to this new delivery model and endorsed this as the right direction of travel for Sefton. At this stage it is important the council is clear internally – and with its partners on what this will mean locally.

- D. **Be clear on the Council's parameters around commercialisation.** This requires both officers and members to have a consistent understanding of what commercialisation means for the council as well as the options that can be considered and those which will not. This will allow the council to focus its efforts on the right commercial opportunities for Sefton.
- E. **Accelerate work on a local economic growth strategy alongside efforts in the Liverpool City Region.** This will help Sefton benefit more from the opportunities presented by the Liverpool City Region and ensure that more schemes are in place ready for future funding opportunities.
- F. **Develop the role of all members in a changing context for local government and a changing model of delivery locally.** This should reflect the role of all members in their communities and the capacity they can attract to support the efforts of the Council. This would mean the council more consistently co-producing solutions with communities and partners.

1.6 Cabinet considered the feedback report in December 2018, the recommendations were accepted and Cabinet requested officers to develop an action plan for their consideration.

2. **Action Plan**

2.1 The peer team recognised the Council's strengths, identified areas for consideration and the findings of the peer review strongly reflected the Council's self-assessment. This means that many of the recommendations made are already being actively progressed.

2.2 The draft action plan at Annex A sets out the Council's proposed response to the LGA Peer Challenge's recommendations and includes actions underway. Cabinet is asked to comment on the proposed actions made against the recommendations.

2.3 Members of the LGA peer team will visit the Council over the next twelve to eighteen months so assess the progress made and offer additional support and challenge. Cabinet is asked to agree that the progress made against the LGA individual recommendations will be reported to Cabinet through existing channels and a progress summary will be reported in December 2019.

Annex A

Recommendation	Context	What will good look like?	Proposed Action(s)	Owner(s)
<i>Prioritise the refresh of the core purpose</i>	<p>The Core Purpose was refreshed in November 2016 and approved by Council – at that time we said “<i>We will need to continually review how this Core Purpose is effectively communicated to staff and communities.</i>”</p> <p>The Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) is currently reviewing the Council’s Core Purpose with a view to creating a clearer narrative around how the Council will continue to contribute to Vision 2030.</p> <p>The SLB review will result in a set of recommended actions which will be considered by Cabinet and Council.</p> <p>The outcome of this work will inform the production of the next three-year Medium Term Financial Plan and associated strategies and policies</p>	<p>The Council’s contribution to Vision 2030 is clearly defined and articulated in terms of action impact and value added Narrative and principles agreed with Elected Members</p> <p>Our Core Purpose is clearly communicated, understood and owned across the Council and understood by the communities, partners and other key stakeholders</p> <p>A clear planning approach that defines the how, the what, the when - delivered within a financially sustainable envelope</p> <p>The Core Purpose informs future Council plans and priorities.</p> <p>Success is celebrated</p>	<p>Draft narrative and principles to be approved Q1 2019/20</p> <p>Share key messages with workforce, elected members, communities and partners from Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Continually review how the Core Purpose is effectively communicated to staff and communities – Ongoing</p> <p>Assess the impact on the delivery of improved outcomes - Ongoing</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Executive Leadership Team</p>
<i>Strengthen corporate performance management.</i>	<p>Sefton 2030 Vision Outcomes Framework already in place</p> <p>The review of the Core</p>	<p>Clear understanding of what performance management activity works well and where we need to change or improve</p>	<p>Access LGA support Q1 2019/20</p> <p>Develop the Measures and</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Strategic Leadership</p>

Recommendation	Context	What will good look like?	Proposed Action(s)	Owner(s)
	<p>Purpose will facilitate the development of a new approach to corporate performance management</p> <p>Service Performance management is well embedded in most service areas</p> <p>Some inconsistency of approach – One Council solution needed</p> <p>Cabinet, Cabinet Members, Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Audit and Governance Committee already receive several service, workforce, risk and budget related performance data and these will continue.</p> <p>No overarching corporate framework for the Council</p> <p>Partners open to greater sharing of performance management approaches and reporting</p> <p>LGA offer of support to develop what is right for Sefton</p>	<p>Overarching outcome focused framework in place for the Council</p> <p>One Council approach underpinned by efficient and effective systems with a schedule for reporting and clear escalation process</p> <p>Workforce and elected members understand how performance is measured, the impact that we have on our communities and feel empowered</p> <p>Our communities are aware of performance and future plans</p> <p>Partnership performance management reporting shared and joint impact understood</p> <p>Emphasis on management of performance not just measurement</p> <p>Performance Framework informs future prioritisation and resource allocation</p>	<p>Indicators associated with the Corporate Performance Framework Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Share and consult with Cabinet and OSC Management Board Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Agree Corporate Performance report template with Cabinet and commence reporting Q3 2019/20</p> <p>Agree and resource a data and reporting improvement programme Q4 2019/20</p>	<p>Board</p> <p>Scrutiny Committees</p>

Recommendation	Context	What will good look like?	Proposed Action(s)	Owner(s)
<p><i>Refresh and make clear form, function, accountability and pace of delivery for the localities model.</i></p>	<p>New operating model, new roles, evolving workforce development plan, prioritised plan in place for next steps</p> <p>Partners are bought in to the model and regular meetings in place to ensure that joint working continues</p> <p>Internal understanding growing but clearer understanding of the how is needed</p> <p>New pathways and policies need to be developed whilst maintaining current service and systems</p> <p>Need to consider the wider role of other teams</p> <p>LGA endorsed as the right direction for Sefton</p>	<p>Shared narrative is understood and owned across the Council and partners</p> <p>Workforce is skilled and equipped for new ways of working</p> <p>Increased level of partnership working – New Realities approach truly embedded</p> <p>Communities understand how to access the new model</p> <p>Increased levels of community, family and personal resilience</p> <p>Reduced demand</p> <p>Next phase of Locality working defined and planned</p>	<p>New Head of Communities will drive forward this agenda</p> <p>Executive Director will continue to champion the model with partners and the community</p> <p>Performance of model will be developed and monitored</p> <p>This activity will continue to be monitored by the Framework for Change Programme Board and by exception Cabinet</p> <p>Prioritised plan to be considered by Cabinet Q2 2019/20</p>	<p>Cabinet Member</p> <p>Executive Director, Andrea Watts and Head of Communities</p>
<p><i>Be clear on the Council's parameters around commercialisation.</i></p>	<p>Council is not new to this type of activity</p> <p>Workforce is developing their own definitions leading to mixed messages</p> <p>Head of Commercial</p>	<p>Generation of additional funds to reinvest in front line Council services.</p> <p>A common and clear understanding of the priority approaches and initiatives to be developed and delivered</p>	<p>Access LGA support Q1 2019/20</p> <p>Cabinet to agree Enterprise Strategy Q1 2019/20</p> <p>Include commercial approach in workforce and</p>	<p>Head of Commercial Development</p>

Recommendation	Context	What will good look like?	Proposed Action(s)	Owner(s)
	<p>Development is working with teams across the Council to develop ideas and explore opportunities</p> <p>Enterprise strategy in development</p> <p>LGA offer of 3 levels of support – including masterclasses for elected members</p>	<p>A clear set of principles to inform and guide which commercial opportunities are brought forward and how</p> <p>Increased skills and confidence amongst appropriate managers and staff with appropriate support</p> <p>An effective balancing of risk and financial and social return</p> <p>The enhancement of the reputation of the Council</p>	<p>member development plans as appropriate Ongoing</p> <p>Embed commercial and risk awareness culture - Ongoing</p> <p>Approve the Enterprise Strategy</p> <p>Monitor the delivery of the priority actions against the success criteria.</p>	
<p><i>Accelerate work on a local economic growth strategy alongside efforts in the Liverpool City Region (LCR)</i></p>	<p>Growth is a key Pillar in the Framework for Change</p> <p>Growth Programme is established and is being prioritised</p> <p>Partners across the Liverpool City Region acknowledge our “can do approach”</p> <p>Significant progress, opportunities for a strong pipeline of projects to increase the level of benefit for Sefton</p>	<p>Clear strategy and delivery plan for inclusive growth</p> <p>Prioritised pipeline of projects, process that delivers against the Council’s economic and social objectives</p> <p>Council/Cabinet approve schemes for consideration</p> <p>Attracting significant Strategic Investment Fund support from the Combined Authority</p> <p>Delivery of planned change</p>	<p>Agree a prioritised pipeline of projects</p> <p>Identify those which should be put forward for Combined Authority consideration Q1 2019/20</p> <p>Assess and implement the capacity required to deliver the programme</p> <p>Continue to champion Sefton within the Liverpool City Region - Ongoing</p> <p>This activity and associated</p>	<p>Executive Director – Sarah Kemp</p>

Recommendation	Context	What will good look like?	Proposed Action(s)	Owner(s)
	Capacity is a challenge Economic Strategy in development	More and better jobs for local people	delivery of agreed plans will continue to be monitored by Cabinet in line with agreed Capital Programme – Ongoing Key performance measures to be included in the Performance Framework.	
<i>Develop the role of all members in a changing context for local government and a changing model of delivery locally.</i>	Local government is changing Leadership of Place is strong Constituency fora are new Localities model is new No Member Development Programme in place – SLB using 21 st Century Public Servant with workforce LGA and North West Employers offer of support	Constituency Fora are well established with increased levels of partner and community participation Clear understanding and ownership of the role of Sefton elected members in the current and future context. Elected member development needs and skills identified and an appropriate development programme developed Member Development Programme implemented and embraced by all	Continue to refine, develop and promote the Constituency Fora - Ongoing Produce an elected member development plan for consideration by the Cabinet Member Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services & Overview & Scrutiny - Q2 2019/20 Identify elected member development opportunities – Ongoing Monitoring participation and outcomes including members satisfaction	Chief Executive & Head of Corporate Resources