

**North Norfolk District Council**

**Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge**

**Action Plan**

Peer Challenge Recommendation	Proposed response	Target completion date	Progress made to date – End June 2024
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b></p> <p><b>Stronger focus on strategic finance</b></p> <p>a) MTFS – three plus one rolling year to allow better and more accurate considerations and forecasting.</p> <p>b) More regular monitoring and reporting of the budget and capital</p>	<p>a) New Medium Term Financial Strategy to be prepared as part of the 2024/25 budget process to reflect settlement announced on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023.</p> <p>Agree a framework and approach for undertaking a rolling programme of service reviews to inform future savings and efficiencies over the next two years to March 2026.</p> <p>b) New financial reporting processes to be agreed in terms of frequency, format of reports, scrutiny arrangements etc.</p>	<p>a) End Feb 2024.</p> <p>September 2024</p> <p>b) New report format and reporting cycle be introduced for start of new civic year – ie from</p>	<p>2024/25 budget agreed by Council – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024.</p> <p>Programme of service reviews being developed; all service managers have completed service plan template to inform prioritisation of service reviews.</p> <p>EELGA Talent Bank consultant engaged to undertake review of IT service; and similar proposal developed for a review of management of our Temporary Accommodation portfolio; review of car park management contract and charges also being progressed – all of which are due to report by end October 2024.</p> <p>Consideration is being given to the structure of reports and the reporting cycle for budget monitoring reports and starting the process of the budget preparation much earlier in the year compared to recent years. A</p>

<p>programme to better inform decision-making and promptly identify under/over-spending so that issues can be addressed.</p> <p>c) Alignment of financial capacity with corporate priorities – Statutory Officers are overloaded.</p>	<p>This will be undertaken alongside reviewing and clarifying the relationships and types of business considered by Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and GRAC which is to be externally facilitated.</p> <p>Financial management training has also been provided to elected members and budget holders to inform better budget management moving forward.</p> <p>c) Review of service areas falling within remit of the two Assistant Directors within the Resources Directorate to bring greater focus, service team alignment and increase capacity for financial oversight and governance. Customer Services moves from this Directorate to be directly managed by Steve Hems, Director of Communities.</p>	<p>the May 2024 cycle of meetings.</p> <p>c) End of April 2024.</p>	<p>programme of service reviews, some externally facilitated, has commenced and are due to be reported to members during the autumn period – this includes a review of car park management and enforcement, car park charges, review of IT service structure, review of the Council’s approach to the management of Temporary Accommodation, number and opening periods of some public toilets. These workstreams are all being progressed, despite the calling of the General Election, creating issues of capacity and uncertainty in terms of some funding programmes etc.</p> <p>Agreement has been reached following consultation on a change in the line management responsibilities of the two Assistant Director positions reporting to the Director of Resources. This has seen the Finance (Accountancy and Revenues), Assets and Property Services teams brought together under one AD for Finance and Assets; and the Legal, Democratic Services and IT teams reporting to the second AD for Legal and Governance.</p> <p>Agreement over the new line management responsibilities has allowed advertising of the new AD Finance and Assets post.</p> <p>These new arrangements are intended to provide more capacity, particularly in terms of financial management, providing both the Director of Resources and AD Legal and Governance with more space and capacity to fulfil their responsibilities as statutory officers – Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer respectively.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b></p>			

<p><b>The Corporate Plan needs to drive the delivery of new priorities alongside core services</b></p> <p>a) Align the Corporate Plan to the MTFS and properly resourced to make sure there are the funds to deliver aspirations and enough skilled and experienced officers to deliver them.</p> <p>b) Ensure the golden thread through the delivery plan, service plans, team plans and check-ins, so that all staff understands how they contribute and can feel pride in achieving them.</p>	<p>a) Agree allocation of resources – both staff and finance, to deliver the Council’s aspirations as detailed in the 2023 -2027 Corporate Plan and 2024/25 Annual Action Plan, aligned with the updated MTFS.</p> <p>b) Service/Team Plans and individual personal objectives agreed through the Check-in process.</p>	<p>a) End Feb 2024.</p> <p>End of March 2024.</p>	<p>2024/25 budget agreed by Council – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024.</p> <p>Programme of service reviews being developed; all service managers have completed service plan template to inform prioritisation of service reviews.</p> <p>First service reviews being undertaken of the car park management contract and charges, IT service and management of our Temporary Accommodation portfolio and due to report by end September 2024 to inform key decisions as part of the 2025/26 budget process.</p> <p>All service managers asked to complete service template to assess prioritisation of service reviews more widely across the Council – with early reviews to be undertaken in Customer Services and Licensing where there are high levels of public / customer expectation and known recruitment, retention and resourcing issues.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b></p> <p><b>There is a need for a comprehensive</b></p>			

<p><b>Organisational Development Plan which includes:-</b></p> <p>a) Labour market analysis and workforce planning to help research future jobs in the local area, understand the skills needed for certain future roles and the demand for future employment working with business partners.</p> <p>b) Talent management / learning and development to attract, identify, develop, engage, retain and employ officers valuable to the Council.</p> <p>c) Employee survey and action plan – this is needed and</p>	<p>a) The Council has a good level of knowledge in this space but needs to demonstrate this understanding more clearly through a People or Workforce Plan to assist with the recruitment, development and retention of staff at a time of increasing workforce challenges.</p> <p>b) The Council has a strong record of workforce learning and development but could more clearly state and present this through better branding of the support for both existing staff and new recruits to the Council.</p> <p>Articulate our workforce development offer more clearly to existing staff, new recruits and managers so that we are more agile in the recruitment and development of our staff.</p> <p>c) Undertake an Employee Survey to establish some baseline data from which an Organisational Development</p>	<p>a) By end June 2024.</p> <p>b) As above.</p> <p>c) Survey to be completed by end February 2024.</p>	<p>Some work has been completed on this objective, but it has been agreed that this now needs to be incorporated as an element of the new Organisational Improvement Plan (or possibly People Strategy – title to be agreed) as detailed at points c) and d) below.</p> <p>Revised date for completion now end October 2024</p> <p>Some work has been completed on this objective, but it has been agreed that this now needs to be incorporated as an element of the new Organisational Improvement Plan (or possibly People Strategy – title to be agreed) as detailed at points c) and d) below.</p> <p>Revised date for completion now end October 2024</p> <p>Staff survey developed through the LGA Workforce team and partner Kinetiq in period November / December 2023 led by HR Manager supported by a small internal project</p>
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<p>will help to improve organisational culture by delivering on the results.</p> <p>d) Organisational Culture Plan – to help attitudes shift and make the council more agile to future demands.</p>	<p>and Culture Plan can be developed.</p> <p>d) Development of Organisational Development and Cultural Plan.</p>	<p>Results / report to be received by end March 2024.</p> <p>d) By end June 2024.</p>	<p>team.</p> <p>Survey undertaken for three weeks (last week of January and first two weeks of February) with results shared with the Council during March 2024. 60% participation rate and overall positive responses compared to other local authorities and public sector bodies.</p> <p>Following receipt of the Staff Survey results, the Council has engaged an EELGA Talent Bank consultant to work with the Council to develop a new Organisational Cultural Plan or People Strategy (title to be agreed). This consultant will work with the HR team and a newly formed internal project team during June and July to explore key issues and themes with the new Plan to be shared with the Council in September 2024.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b></p> <p><b>To continue to improve the Council needs to rethink:-</b></p> <p>a) Senior leadership of change and transformation – who is responsible for driving this is the organisation?</p>	<p>a) Articulate more clearly that CLT should lead on the change and transformation agenda for the authority – this being separate to the operational focus on Management Team; with the strategic direction being agreed between CLT and Cabinet and then CLT leading the internal change and transformation agenda as an internal organisational development activity in support of the political aspirations as agreed through the Corporate Plan.</p>	<p>a) New model to be agreed and implemented by end February 2024.</p>	<p>Three new Strategic Oversight Boards established to create clear separation between strategic and operational management, and reporting to political structures creating additional capacity through streamlined processes.</p> <p>Each Board is chaired by a Director, with a focus on monitoring progress and performance and reporting to members by exception.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decarbonisation Oversight Board</li> <li>• Major Projects Oversight Board</li> <li>• Performance and Productivity Board</li> </ul>

<p>b) Distributed leadership – ownership, responsibility and accountability – Management Team need to work in sync and provide more operational capacity for transformation and change, compliance with programme and project management governance, creating more space at CLT for strategic planning.</p>	<p>b) See above.</p>	<p>b) New model to be in place by end March 2024 at the latest.</p>	<p>New model implemented from May 2024.</p> <p>See above commentary on the new Strategic Oversight Boards.</p> <p>Also revised arrangements for the review and approval of recruitment and vacancy management meaning Management Team don't need to discuss as a Group as such decisions are now taken between Directors and their ADs, with sign off by Director of Resources in her capacity as Section 151 Officer.</p>
<p>c) Digital vision and strategy to drive improved outcomes and cost efficiencies – need to agree how digital services will enable the delivery of modernised,</p>	<p>c) Engage a consultant or EELGA Talent Bank resource to support the Council in the development of a new digital strategy and IT Plan to support further service improvement / transformation.</p>	<p>c) End October 2024.</p>	<p>EELGA Talent Bank consultant resource engaged with review of the IT service to be undertaken in the period June – September 2024.</p>

<p>streamlined delivery of services and priorities.</p> <p>d) Use data to inform decision-making, improve performance and drive commercial aspiration – smarter, clearer, more targeted performance measures which are effectively used to drive improvements along with more articulated reports, submitted on time and with clear recommendations.</p>	<p>d) Develop and agree a new set of key objectives and performance framework moving forward following decision not to use a proprietary performance management system in the future and develop spreadsheet framework for recording and reporting moving forward.</p>	<p>d) By end March 2024</p>	<p>New corporate performance indicators have been agreed against which our key service performance can be measured and benchmarked over time. Further, progress against the Corporate Plan Action Plan measures is monitored and reported quarterly with the approach being revised in response to comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in terms of the RAG rating approach adopted.</p>
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