

Appendix D. ACTION PLAN following the LGA Peer Challenge – West Berkshire Council - November 2019

Legend:

Actions in response to Key recommendations – for reporting at **Executive**

No.	Recommendation	Action	Timescale	Governance
A. Peer Challenge Theme: Understanding of the local place and priority-setting				
1.	Key recommendation: Jointly design with residents the mechanisms through which to hear their voice more	Customer First Programme Board to consider a paper on the broader topic of communication which will include further developing the approach to hear the voice of the residents more. Additional resource has been allocated to progress this area.	Oct 2020	Customer First Programme Board (Nick Carter / Andy Sharp)
B. Peer Challenge Theme: Leadership of Place				
2.	Key recommendation: Respond to the desire partners have for the council to lead the setting of a clear direction for West Berkshire into the future and influence the place it should be – raising the ambition, establishing clarity of purpose and sharpening the focus.	Review the 2036 Vision to address this recommendation. Ensure strong links between Climate change, Economic development and Housing agendas.	Dec 2020	Health and Wellbeing Board (Lynne Doherty / Nick Carter)
3.	Key recommendation: Determine West Berkshire’s housing, economic growth and environment priorities, how they need to inter-relate and reflect them in the emerging respective strategies	Ensure that an updated Vision 2036 links with the key strategies around hosing, economic growth and environment.	Dec 2020	Health and Wellbeing Board (Lynne Doherty / Nick Carter)
4.	Key recommendation: Make communications central to the council’s thinking (both as a leader of place and in its role more generally)	Linked to action under recommendation 1: Prepare a paper on how to enhance our communication approach – for approval at Customer First Programme Board	Oct 2020	Customer First Programme Board (Nick Carter / Andy Sharp)
C. Peer Challenge Theme: Financial planning and viability				
5.	Key recommendation: The council needs to reassure	To review the Corporate Programme to determine its ability to	Aug 2020	Budget Board /

	itself that its approaches to demand management, modernisation, commercialisation and digitisation will deliver the anticipated savings for the authority	support the MTFS.		Corporate Programme Board (Joseph Holmes / Andy Walker)
6.	Key recommendation: Take stock of the council's commercialisation agenda and related risk appetite	<p>Review of the Council's Commercial Strategy progressed to a large degree though the Capital Investment Strategy and Property Investment Strategy.</p> <p>In addition, the Council is reshaping its risk approach to produce a Risk Strategy with a clearly articulated risk appetite. This appetite will be used to shape the Council's future commercial agenda, and it will be clear on the risk awareness of the Council Where reports wish to go beyond the risk appetite it is clear how this is effectively managed.</p>	<p>Jul 2020</p> <p>Sep 2020</p>	<p>Commercial Board</p> <p>Corporate Board (Joseph Holmes / Sarah Clarke)</p>
7.	Key recommendation: The council's accounts for 2018/19 have not yet been signed off by the Auditor – this needs to be addressed and the learning drawn out	<p>The audit of financial statements is now finalised and the audit opinion has been completed.</p> <p>A lessons learnt review has been scheduled with the external auditors to improve the process for the following year. Interim arrangements are being put in place to bolster resources for the 2019-20 financial statements.</p>	May 2020	<p>Finance and Governance Group</p> <p>Corporate Board (Joseph Holmes / Andy Walker)</p>
D. Peer Challenge Component: Organisational leadership and governance				
8.	Key recommendation: The Council Strategy needs to become central to the authority's thinking and understanding (incl. link with MTFS and development of the Delivery Plan)	<p>Continue activities to promote the Council Strategy Delivery Plan within the Council and partner organisations. This includes the links with the MTFS.</p> <p>Links with the actions under Key recommendation 4.</p>	ongoing	Executive and Corporate Board
9.	Key recommendation: Look at how to strike a better balance in relation to the council's very extensive governance arrangements – ensuring proportionality through looking at how people use their time	The Executive currently considering whether it would be appropriate to review the Council's governance arrangements. Work planned to be concluded once the current Covid 19 crisis has been managed though.	TBC	TBC
10.	Key recommendation: Extend opportunities for staff engagement	Explore further opportunities for staff engagement in the new Workforce Strategy 2021.	Apr 2021	Workforce Board
E. Peer Challenge Component: Capacity to deliver				

11.	Key recommendation: Establish a focused programme to drive genuine transformation centred on the resident and improving outcomes	This is linked with the review of the Corporate Programme (linked with recommendation 5) Implement an annual review of the Corporate Programme to ensure it remains aligned with the delivery of the Council Strategy.	Feb every year	Corporate Programme Board and OSMC (Joseph Holmes / Sarah Clarke)