

Please ask for: Matt Berry

Extension No: 4589

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8 November, 2019

Dear Councillor,

**CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
4:00 PM ON TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER, 2019
ESPERANCE ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE, CANNOCK**

You are invited to attend this meeting for consideration of the matters itemised in the following Agenda.

Yours sincerely,



**T. McGovern,
Managing Director**

To: Councillors:

Allen, F.W.C. (Chairman)
Hughes, R.J. (Vice-Chairman)

Buttery, M.S.	Startin, P.D.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Sutherland, M.
Fisher, P.A.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Jones, B	Witton, P.T.
Layton, Mrs. A	Woodhead, P.E.
Newbury, J.A.A.	

A G E N D A

PART 1

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

(i) To declare any personal, pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(ii) To receive any Party Whip declarations.

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July, 2019 (enclosed).

4. Quarter 2 2019/10 Corporate PDP Performance Update

To receive the latest performance information for the Corporate Priority Delivery Plan (Item 4.1 – 4.5).

5. Peer Review Follow-Up

Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 5.1 – 5.12).

6. Corporate Scrutiny Committee 2019/20 Work Programme Update

To:

- Review the updated 2019/20 work programme (Item 6.1).
- Receive for information the updated scoping document for the 'Members' Support and Training Requirements' review (Item 6.2 – 6.3).

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 18 JULY 2019 AT 4:00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT:
Councillors

Allen, F.W.C. (Chairman)
Hughes, R.J. (Vice-Chairman)

Buttery, M.S.	Newbury, J.A.A.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Startin, P.D.
Dunnett, Ms. A.J. (substitute)	Sutherland, M.
Fisher, P.A.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Jones, B.	Witton, P.T.
Layton, Mrs. A.	

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor P.E. Woodhead.

Councillor Ms. A.J. Dunnett was in attendance as substitute for Councillor P.E. Woodhead.

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

No declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. End of Year 2018/19 Corporate PDP Performance Update

Consideration was given to the end of year performance information for 2018/19 (Item 4.1 – 4.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Governance and Corporate Services advised that of the seventeen milestones set in the 2018/19 Corporate Priority Delivery Plan (PDP), seven had been deferred to 2019/20 for completion as further work was required. Testing of

the new telephony system was underway, and installation due to take place soon. Work on the development and implementation of a Customer Access Strategy was due to commence later in 2019. In respect of the performance indicators, the percentage of customer telephone calls answered during quarter 4 was below target due to staff sickness within the contact centre team. The time taken to answer calls was currently being reviewed, and the Committee would be updated on this later in the year. Furthermore, the use of online forms was below target in quarter 4 due to the software system being unavailable for part of the quarter.

5. Summary of Complaints Received April 2018 to March 2019 (Annual Report)

Consideration was given to the Report of the Managing Director (Item 5.1 – 5.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council) (*presented by the Head of Governance and Corporate Services*).

The Head of Governance and Corporate Services advised Members that this was the second complaints report to have been considered by the Committee, and the first annual report. The number of complaints submitted to the Council was extremely low when compared to the overall level of customer contact received. Of the 27 formal complaints submitted, 24 were resolved at stage 1 of the Council's complaints process, two at stage 2 and one at stage 3. Additionally, 17 of those 27 complaints were answered within the target date of ten working days. Following a question from a Member, the Committee were also advised that Officers were looking at how compliments were received and recorded by the Council, and how this information could be reported to Members.

RESOLVED:

That the complaints received by the Council and lessons learnt for the relevant period be noted.

6. Corporate Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018/19

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 6.1 – 6.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Governance and Corporate Services took Members through the key aspects of the report, advising that during the year, the Committee had received updates on progress on actions arising out of the 2016 LGA Peer Review and the Council's financial position, and undertook reviews of the Council's Gender Pay Gap and Members' access to ICT and training requirements. In respect of the second review, the Committee, at its 12 March 2019 meeting, recommended that the review be continued in 2019/20 to undertake further work as outlined in paragraph 5.5 of the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and submitted to Council 4 September 2019 for information.

7. Corporate Priority Delivery Plan 2019/20

Members received for information the 2019/20 Corporate Priority Delivery Plan (Item 7.1 – 7.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Governance and Corporate Services advised Members that in respect of the Environmental Services Review, the actions agreed by the Cabinet would be included in the quarters 1 and 2 performance updated that would be reported to the Committee in November 2019. The purpose of the service reviews was to look at how the Council would operate in the future, with a focus on resource alignment to support the corporate priorities, capacity and service delivery.

8. Corporate Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 8.1 – 8.13 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

A Member suggested that the Committee undertake a ‘deep-dive’ review of the LGA Peer Review Follow-up visit held in July 2019, looking at what the starting point was for the Council following the original review, and where the Council was now after the follow-up visit. The Head of Governance and Corporate Services advised that she would need to discuss this with the Managing Director as the Council had not yet received the final report from the review team.

Another Member then recommended that the Committee continue with the Members’ Access to Information (ICT) and Training Requirements review as suggested by the previous Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That the Corporate Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2019/20 be agreed as follows:

18 July 2019

- End of Year Outturn for the Corporate PDP 2018/19;
- Complaints Annual Report 2018/19;
- Corporate Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018/19
- Corporate PDP 2019/20.

19 November 2019

- Corporate PDP progress report April to September 2019 (quarters 1 and 2);
- Complaints update report April to September 2019 (quarters 1 and 2);
- Review topic – Members’ Access to Information (ICT) and Training Requirements.

14 January 2020

- Consultation on the Council’s budget / financial strategy.

10 March 2020

- Corporate PDP progress report October to December 2019 (quarter 3);
- Complaints update report October to December 2019 (quarter 3);
- Review topic – LGA Peer Review Follow-up Visit July 2019.

(B) The membership of the reviews task & finish groups be as follows:

- Members Access to Information (ICT) and Training Requirements – Councillors Frank Allen, Muriel Davis, Paul Fisher, Andrea Layton and Josh Newbury.
- LGA Peer Review Follow-up Visit – Councillors Bryan Jones, Paul Startin, Mike Sutherland and Diane Todd.

The meeting closed at 4:31 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

Corporate Priority Delivery Plan 2019-2020

Delivery of actions for Q2				
				Total Number of Actions
Action completed	Work in progress but slightly behind schedule. Action will be completed in next Quarter.	Action > 3 months / 1 Quarter behind schedule and action is required to address slippage	Action / project cannot be completed / delivered. Option to close to be agreed by Leadership Team / Cabinet.	
1 (33%)	2 (67%)	0	0	3

Cumulative progress in delivering actions - April to September 2019				
				Total Number of Actions
Action completed	Work in progress but slightly behind schedule. Action will be completed in next Quarter.	Action > 3 months / 1 Quarter behind schedule and action is required to address slippage	Action / project cannot be completed / delivered. Option to close to be agreed by Leadership Team / Cabinet.	
3 (33%)	5 (56%)	1 (11%)	0	9

Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	Frequency of reporting (Q or A)	Last year's outturn	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Customer contact data – response to telephone calls	Q	92.2% average	94%	92%	87.2%		
Use of Online Forms	Q	1,258 per annum	475 per qtr	334	364		
E-payments transactions – Payments made via the Council's website	Q						
• Number of transactions		25,852	6,000 per qtr	7,233	7,186		
• Value of transactions		£3,004,908		£900,806	£900,196		
Payments made via the Council's automated telephone payment system	Q						
• Number of transactions		23,766	5,750 per qtr	6,346	5,778		
• Value of transactions		£2,756,103		£773,573	£708,838		
Payments made by Direct Debit (Council Tax)	Q						
• Number of transactions		311,431	310,000	88,431	88,738		
• Value of transactions		£39.347m	£40m	£11.604m	£11.691m		

Projects

Approach	Key Project	Milestone(s)	Action Required	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Delivering Council services that are customer centred and accessible - giving choice to our customers in how they access our services								
Giving choice to our customers in how they access our services	Review the Council's digital requirements with regard to customer services/interactions to inform the Customer Access Strategy and the procurement of a replacement for the CRM system	Commission a review of the Council's digital requirements with regard to customer services / interactions	The Shared Services Strategic Board met in June and agreed the work that is to be commissioned. The specification has been drafted but the procurement process will now be completed until Quarter 3.	●	●			
		Review to be undertaken by consultant	Due to the slippage in Q1, the target was revised from Q2 to Q3	●		X		
		Final report on outcome of the review	Due to the slippage in Q1 the target was revised from Q3 to Q4	●			X	
	Develop and implement a Customer Access Strategy	Draft core requirements of strategy and discuss with Leadership Team						X
		Draft strategy for approval by Cabinet			2020/21			
	Procurement of a replacement for the CRM system	Identify requirements for new customer portal / CRM system and agree with Leadership Team			2020/21			
		Commence Procurement			2020/21			

Approach	Key Project	Milestone(s)	Action Required	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Making the best use of limited resources – managing our people, money and assets							
Managing our people, money and assets	Development of an Asset Management Strategy	Recruit a Corporate Asset Manager	The role was offered to an individual in Q1 – but they withdrew in July; the post has now been offered to an internal candidate who has accepted. Appointment to commence in Q3 – revised target approved by Cabinet.			X	
		Review Condition Surveys for all Council assets and properties				X	
		Undertake Asset Review and prepare draft Strategy					X
	Develop workforce development strategy, incorporating gender pay requirement	Scoping exercise to determine the development needs of the workforce					
		Review of scoping exercise with Heads of Service and Service managers to determine how to address workforce need	Scoping Exercise completed during quarter 2. Collecting workforce skill information is currently being finalised to determine appropriate mechanisms to address the workforce's development needs. This action will be now be completed in quarter 3.				
		Develop content of the strategy and consult stakeholders					X
		Implement strategy including training as appropriate					

Approach	Key Project	Milestone(s)	Action Required	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Making the best use of limited resources – managing our people, money and assets (cont.)							
Managing our people, money and assets - continued	Delivery of the Environmental Services Review Outcomes	Preparation of a business case for bringing together the grounds maintenance and street cleaning services and aligning them in a combined service. To include a review of the operational model for grounds maintenance and in particular highways grounds maintenance.		Due June 2020			
		Undertake an options appraisal for bringing together the Environmental Health and Environmental Protection services together and transforming the service. As part of the transformation work, consideration will need to be given to the service model / level of service provided.		Due June 2020			
	Identifying potential savings options	Service review methodology to be determined and agreed with Leadership Team					
		Programme of Service Reviews to be determined	All service reviews are now to be completed to the same timetable and will not be done in phases				
		First phase of Service Reviews to be completed	The first stage of the service review process is now due to be completed by mid April 2020 rather than Q4				

Report of:	Head of Governance and Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Adrian Marklew
Telephone No:	01543 464598
Portfolio Leader:	Corporate Improvement
Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Cabinet: 19/09/19 Corporate Scrutiny Cttee: 19/11/19

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 NOVEMBER 2019

PEER REVIEW FOLLOW-UP

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the outcome of the return visit to Cannock Chase Council by the Local Government Association's Peer Challenge Team on 15 and 16 July 2019.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Members note:
- (i) the outcome of the follow-up review as detailed in the final letter of the Peer Challenge Team to the Managing Director of 12 August 2019 (copy attached at Appendix 1); and
 - (ii) the comments / actions from the Council following the considerations made by the Peer Challenge Team (see Appendix 2).

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations

Key Issues

- 3.1 The LGA Peer Challenge Team who undertook a review of the Council's Corporate, Financial and Organisation position in September 2016 recently returned to undertake a follow-up review.
- 3.2 The aim of the follow-up review was to assess the progress the Council has made against the recommendations made following the original review.

- 3.3 In summary, the outcome of the review has been very positive and recognises the significant progress that the Council has made over the last three years. The team stated that `the Council is a more confident, ambitious and outward looking organisation than in 2016`.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.4 The Corporate Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the comments made by the Council as it aims to take forward the `considerations` made by the Peer Challenge Team during their return visit.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 A new Corporate Plan has been produced since the Peer Challenge Team's visit in September 2016. As a result, the new Corporate Plan was a key part of the discussions during the team's return visit. The follow-up review considered the Council's new, and refined, corporate priorities of Promoting Prosperity and Improving Community Wellbeing and the range of projects and actions being delivered in support of these priorities.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 In September 2016 the LGA Peer Challenge Team undertook a review which focussed on the Council's corporate and financial planning for the future strategic direction of the Council. The review was timed to support the Council's development of a Financial Recovery Plan in response to the closure of Rugeley Power Station.
- 5.2 The September 2016 review resulted in seven key recommendations being made:
- Further develop and widen the `Customer` priority of the Corporate Plan so as to articulate what the Cannock Chase District Council of the future will look like;
 - Consider broadening and further diversifying the financial strategy so it becomes multi-stranded and adaptable to increase resilience and risk;
 - Continue to utilise informal and formal relationships to maximise influence and leverage, as part of the Council's `leadership of place` role;
 - Review the current democratic decision-making arrangements – including Overview & Scrutiny – to better enable councillors to have a timely and proportionate opportunity to inform, influence and challenge decision making and policy development;
 - Move at pace to finish the work started on governance, assurance and corporate policies;

- Consider how the corporate leadership, organisational capacity and capabilities need to develop further to ensure that the Council has the skills and resources aligned to deliver future priorities; and
 - Draw on the learning from both within the organisation and wider local government sector to support continued improvement and development
- 5.3 Following the original review, an action plan was put in place to address the seven recommendations.
- 5.4 In line with normal practice, the Peer Challenge Team returned in July 2019 to undertake a follow-up visit. The Team was largely unchanged from the one that undertook the original review. The team comprised:
- Paul Wilson, Chief Executive of Derbyshire Dales District Council
 - Councillor Tom Beattie, Leader of Corby Borough Council
 - Elaine Atkinson OBE, Former Council Leader of Poole Borough Council
 - Tricia Marshall, Deputy Chief Executive of Canterbury City Council
 - James Millington, Peer Challenge Manager, LGA
- 5.5 The aim of the follow-up review was to assess the progress the Council has made against the seven recommendations. To assist with this, prior to the site visit, a document was prepared for the Peer Challenge Team, outlining the progress, developments and key projects delivered over the last three years.
- 5.6 The Peer Challenge Team met with and spoke to over 40 officers, councillors and external partners during their follow up visit.
- 5.7 The Peer Challenge Team gave a presentation at the conclusion of their visit and have confirmed their feedback in a letter to the Managing Director. A copy of the letter is attached at Appendix 1. In summary, the Team observed `how the Council appears more confident than in 2016, with the cloud of an uncertain future resulting from the news of the closure of Rugeley Power Station now lifted`. The team `applaud how the Council has dealt effectively with this challenge, and made other improvements` and concludes `that the Council is a more confident, ambitious and outward looking organisation than in 2016`. The team goes on to comment that `in common with other councils, capacity is stretched and to ensure CCDC delivers on its ambitious plans it will want to ensure that its resources are appropriately aligned.`
- 5.8 As with the original review, the Peer Challenge Team has noted a number of “considerations” for the Council and these are summarised in Appendix 2 together with the Council’s response to these.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None

6.5 Human Rights Act

None

6.6 Data Protection

None

6.7 Risk Management

None

6.8 Equality & Diversity

None

6.9 Best Value

None

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1: Letter from the LGA to the Managing Director – 12 August 2019

Appendix 2: Peer Review Follow-Up Summary of Considerations and Comments – August 2019

Previous Consideration

Local Government Association Peer Challenge Cabinet 17 April 2017

Background Papers

None



Tony McGovern
 Managing Director
 Cannock Chase District Council
 Civic Centre
 Beecroft Road
 Cannock
 Staffordshire
 WS11 1BG

12th August 2019

Dear Tony,

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up visit 15th and 16th July 2019

Following the original LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) in September 2016 Cannock Chase District Council (CCDC) asked the Peer Team to make a Follow Up visit to help review and assess progress and development in response to the original feedback and recommendations. This visit took place on 15th and 16th July 2019.

This letter summarises the main observations of the Peer Team. The peers 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 before and during their visit.

Process and peer team

Peer challenge is one of the key tools to support sector-led improvement. It is tailored to meet individual councils' needs, and designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The Peer Team provide feedback as critical friends, not as assessors, consultants or inspectors.

The Follow Up visit included members of the Peer Team who were involved in the original CPC:

- Paul Wilson – Chief Executive, Derbyshire Dales District Council
- Councillor Tom Beattie - Leader, Corby Borough Council
- Elaine Atkinson OBE - Former Councillor, and Council Leader, Poole Borough Council
- Tricia Marshall – Deputy Chief Executive, Canterbury City Council
- James Millington - Peer Challenge Manager, LGA

To inform their findings, the Peer Team spent a day and a half on site at CCDC, during which they spoke to more than 40 people including a range of council officers, councillors and external partners. The Team gathered information and views from around 20 meetings.

We would like to thank you for inviting us back to Cannock Chase to provide further challenge to the Council and we hope that our feedback helps to support continuous improvement.

Messages and Observations

The focus of this Follow-Up was to specifically review progress and developments in response to the peer challenge feedback and recommendations made in the 2016 CPC. It was clear the Council has taken the 2016 CPC seriously and has progressed implementing the recommendations.

The Peer Team observed how the Council appears more confident than in 2016, with the cloud of an uncertain future resulting from the news of the closure of Rugeley Power Station now lifted. As the Peer Team were on-site in 2016 the news of the closure had just emerged and CCDC was coming to terms with what this meant for the Council, particularly its finances. The Team applaud how the Council has dealt effectively with this challenge, and made other improvements.

Officer and member relations are good and have remained so since 2016. Additionally, our conversations and focus groups with staff have confirmed how staff overall have a good view of the Council – they feel listened to, well informed and support the organisation's vision.

In common with other councils, capacity is stretched and to ensure CCDC delivers on its ambitious plans it will want to ensure that its resources are appropriately aligned. The Council is planning to undertake a series of Service Reviews which will be critical to determining the focus of resources.

The Council is moving into a different type of operating environment than where it was in 2016. CCDC has a confidence to press ahead and realise its ambitions. In supporting this, staff in the organisation may benefit from guidance to clarify the Council's approach to risk and risk management so that whilst maintaining its grip on risk the Council can ensure staff are able to push the boundaries and innovate, within set parameters.

1. Further develop and widen the 'Customer' priority of the Corporate Plan so as to articulate what the Cannock Chase District Council of the future will look like

The Peer Team heard and observed how councillors and the management team have a "dynamic vision for the district" and this is clearly set out in the new Corporate Plan covering 2018-2023. The Corporate Plan has been developed carefully through engagement with the public and partners and the 'customer' priority is no longer a separate feature but now embedded throughout the work of the Council. The Peer Team consider this to be the right approach for CCDC which allows this customer focus to underpin its work.

Although the Council now has two clear priorities in its Corporate Plan there are obviously a number of activities which sit beneath. From our discussions with staff it was not always clear to them how these will be resourced at this stage, although we recognise that the Council's planned Service Reviews will clarify the position. We would encourage you to ensure this is clear to staff once confirmed.

The Council has good mechanisms in place to communicate internally with staff and the different approaches including Core Brief, Managing Director online Q&A and the intranet pages are valued by employees. However, the Peer Team felt that the Council may want to consider how to ensure its exciting plans are communicated widely externally so your communities are aware of the good work you are doing. This was confirmed through comments received in the recent staff communications survey and the Peer Team's discussions with staff and partners on-site. The Council may wish to review how it communicates its messages and successes as wide as possible to ensure that your plans for the future of the District are clearly understood by all your communities.

2. Consider broadening and further diversifying the financial strategy so it becomes multi-stranded and adaptable to increase resilience and reduce risk.

This recommendation was made in the context of the Rugeley Power Station closure decision in 2016. Since then the Council has delivered impressive efficiencies of £1.3M through the Financial Delivery Plan. The Peer Team recognise how the Council has risen to this challenge and commends the difficult decisions taken by members and the work delivered by officers.

The Business Rates Pilot has been a great success for the Council. CCDC has led the approach which involved all authorities within Staffordshire including the Fire Service; Police and Crime Commissioner and Stoke-on-Trent City Council to bring this pilot together and has resulted in the Council benefiting by £500K. The Council has also developed and set its future ambitions through establishing the Housing Investment Fund (£12.9M) and District Investment Fund (£6.5M). Working balances for the Council have also been increased to provide further resilience.

Similar to other authorities, CCDC has investigated the benefits of commercial opportunities and through a structured review process with a steering group have decided upon their preferred approach. The Council's decision was to focus on the generation of additional income, cost savings and exploiting opportunities of existing services. The Peer Team recommend that you keep your position regarding commercialisation, and the opportunities it presents, under review and consider future opportunities within parameters that you have set yourself.

3. Continue to utilise informal and formal relationships to maximise influence and leverage, as part of the Council's 'leadership of place' role

The Peer Team received excellent positive feedback from partners about the Council who continue to consider CCDC as a major player in the leadership of place. The Council is a well respected and critical partner, for example with the Police in the important role it plays in community safety and with South Staffordshire College in providing crucial support and funding of £500K to ensure that quality and local educational provision remains within the District. Partners spoke about CCDC as an important and valued partner that is "proactive" and able to "make things happen" and importantly, that the Council strives to maximise its influence for the benefit of its communities.

It was recognised that the Leader has "facilitated cross-party working to deliver the ambitions of the Council". This approach will continue to be important in order to deliver for the District's communities. Similarly, we heard how the Managing Director is "engaged, supportive and open to change" and this was recognised and supported across the Council's partnership arrangements.

The Local Enterprise Partnership agenda is challenging given the Council is currently a member of both the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP and Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP and as part of the LEP Review the Government does not support local authorities being members of two LEPs. Despite the fact that the Council may favour one LEP over another it is evident that the Council continues to play its part, continuing to work closely with the both LEPs, and this is appreciated by your partner organisations. For Cannock Chase DC the benefits have included attracting important funding to the District (totalling more than £1M in 2017/18) from the GBSLEP alone.

The Peer Team recognise that the Council is doing some tremendous work on building and maintaining relationships and encourage you to continue - as your approach is very much

appreciated.

4. Review the current democratic decision-making arrangements - including Overview & Scrutiny - to better enable councillors to have a timely and proportionate opportunity to inform, influence and challenge decision making and policy development.

Since 2016 the Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) function has been reviewed twice, and this process has now led to a better balance of resources and improved processes. Member training has also improved and this has been valued by councillors.

The Team observed an energy from the O&S Chairs who are keen to add value to the organisation and particularly harness the enthusiasm and commitment of the newer councillors who have recently joined the Council.

We would encourage you to maintain your approach and continue a rolling review of the effectiveness of O&S, particularly with Chairs and Members as they have ideas and observations to be considered in adding value to Scrutiny and CCDC. This review may include assessing the frequency of meetings, the impact O&S has on the organisation and the Council's ability to deliver in its priority areas.

Additionally, the Peer Team would encourage you to ensure that your decision-making processes continue to be agile and timely according to the needs of the organisation.

5. Move at pace to finish the work started on governance, assurance and corporate policies.

The Council has completed the Financial Regulations and Code of Governance policies and is on track to deliver revised Code of Conduct and Information Governance Framework policies.

The Peer Team would ask the Council to ensure that its approach to risk and risk management is understood by staff and embedded corporately. As the Council is now moving forward the outlook is different to 2016 so we would encourage you to not let a more traditional risk averse approach hold you back too much as you have ambitious plans to deliver over the next period.

The Council will also want to ensure its approach to digitisation is Council-wide and embedded corporately. The Peer Team heard that currently the approach varies across the organisation but we would recommend that this is an organisational change which is owned by the whole of CCDC. We would encourage CCDC to maintain a close hold on this important agenda.

6. Consider how the corporate leadership, organisational capacity and capabilities need to develop further to ensure that the Council has the skills and resources aligned to deliver future priorities

The Peer Team heard how managers feel supported and are aware and support the priorities of the Council.

In the 2016 CPC sickness absence was an issue for the Council (11.62 FTE days per employee). This has been addressed through implementing a new Managing Sickness Absence policy since April 2018 – and has received positive feedback from managers across the organisation. Since its introduction absence levels have reduced by over 2.5 FTE days

per employee. The Peer Team heard about the support in place for staff including the 'Time for Change' initiative which has embedded the authority's approach to supporting staff with mental health issues. The Council is also further considering the provision of chiropractor support for its workforce.

The Peer Team observed how cross-team working, particularly in Housing, is working well. One example was the identification of vacant council owned sites for the delivery of council housing, which needed commitment from a number of teams across the Council in order to realise this complex project. Staff have shared objectives and work closely to deliver the Council's priorities in housing.

For most organisations capacity is always likely to be an issue and CCDC will want to be mindful of its capacity to ensure that your priorities can be delivered. The Council has plans to undertake Service Reviews and the Peer Team would emphasise that these will be critical to understand and realign resources according to priorities. Additionally, the Council will want to ensure that communication of the purpose, methodology and timescales for these Service Reviews and how they will be resourced is made clear to staff across the organisation.

The Council has faced some challenges to recruiting into some areas including planning and environmental health. It will be important to recruit the right calibre of people to deliver your ambitions and also to develop and grow your own where those opportunities exist. The Peer Team support your intentions to develop your Workforce Development Strategy and Recruitment & Retention Strategy as these will be vital to support the delivery of your ambitions.

7. Draw on the learning from both within the organisation and wider local government sector to support continued improvement and development.

The fact that CCDC has invited the Peer Team back to review progress is testament to its approach in this area. The Council has made clear its intentions for continual learning and development. Additionally, prior to this Follow-Up the Council has received support from the LGA including a Scrutiny Workshop for members and are currently planning a Ward Leadership session for members in the summer.

The Council are also aware of the opportunities for staff internally to learn and develop from one another and the Peer Team would recommend that this approach is explored further to draw on the expertise across the organisation. This, along with a corporate approach to learning opportunities, could be considered further and incorporated into your Workforce Development Strategy.

The Peer Team would encourage you to continue to call on support and to use your networks to maintain your approach as a learning organisation.

We appreciate that the Council 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 move forward.

Your LGA Principal Adviser, Helen Murray, will be happy to work with you to identify any additional support the LGA can offer to help you respond to the points set out in this letter. Helen can be contacted on 07884 312235 or Helen.Murray@local.gov.uk.

ITEM NO. 5.

**PEER REVIEW FOLLOW-UP
SUMMARY OF CONSIDERATIONS AND COMMENTS**

1. Further develop and widen the 'Customer' priority of the Corporate Plan so as to articulate what the Cannock Chase District Council of the future will look like

Considerations

- Ensure that you communicate your ambitions widely to the public. Do you make the most of your good news and communicate this widely to your residents?
- Although now have two priorities – ensure the delivery of the activities which sit underneath these are understood by staff across the organisation and resourcing is considered.

Comments/Actions

- The Council is pro-active in issuing press releases to communicate good news and projects that have been delivered. We will endeavour in future to make links back to the Council priorities in these press releases. We are also looking to communicate directly with businesses in the District about the work that we are doing to support them and our residents in delivering our priorities.
- The activities that support the Council's 2 key priorities are reported on at the employee briefing sessions

2. Consider broadening and further diversifying the financial strategy so it becomes multi-stranded and adaptable to increase resilience and reduce risk.

Considerations

- Has your approach to commercialisation contributed to your financial position? – keep this under review to explore further opportunities which you may want to pursue in future

Comments/Actions

- The Council will be considering opportunities to be more commercial as part of the service review process and will continue to be kept under review thereafter.

3. Continue to utilise informal and formal relationships to maximise influence and leverage, as part of the Council's 'leadership of place' role.

Considerations

- Maintain your work on building relationships – your approach is appreciated!

Comments/Actions

- The will continue to work closely with its partners and maintain good relationships with them.

4. Review the current democratic decision-making arrangements - including Overview & Scrutiny - to better enable councillors to have a timely and proportionate opportunity to inform, influence and challenge decision making and policy development.

Considerations

- Ensure that your decision-making processes are appropriate to the needs of the organisation.
- Continue to review the effectiveness of O&S (including frequency of meetings) and the impact this has on organisational decision making and delivery.

Comments/Actions

- No changes are planned at present pending the outcome of the Boundary Review.

5. Move at pace to finish the work started on governance, assurance and corporate policies.

Considerations

- Complete the review of your Code of Conduct and Information Governance Framework documents.
- Ensure that the Council's approach to risk and risk management is understood and embedded.
- Consider how digitization is delivered and embedded corporately.

Comments/Actions

- Work is scheduled in 2019/20 to complete the Code of Conduct for Employees and the Information Governance Framework.
- A session will be held with Wider Management Team on the Council's approach to risk management and risk appetite.
- A review of the Council's digital strategy and it's approach to Customer Services is being commissioned. This will also link into the service review process.

6. Consider how the corporate leadership, organisational capacity and capabilities need to develop further to ensure that the Council has the skills and resources aligned to deliver future priorities.

Considerations

- Is there capacity in place to deliver the Council's ambitions? Have resources followed the priorities?
- Are the corporate priorities clearly understood by staff?
- Service Reviews – these will be critical for you. Communicate the purpose, methodology and timescales for this and how they will be resourced.

- A Workforce Development Strategy & Recruitment and Retention Strategy will be critical to support the delivery of your ambitions.

Comments/Actions

- The service review process will look at capacity issues and reallocation of resources to the delivery of priorities.
- Updates on the Council's priorities will continue to be provided at Employee Briefings and consideration will be given to providing additional information in the quarterly Core Brief.
- A session has been held with Wider Management Team on the Service Review process and all employees have been briefed as to the purpose of these. A project manager is to be brought in to support the delivery of the process and the Policy & Performance Team will also provide advice and support to Managers.
- Work is underway on both the Workforce Development Strategy and Recruitment & Retention Strategy.

7. Draw on the learning from both within the organisation and wider local government sector to support continued improvement and development.

Considerations

- Draw on the expertise that you have within your organisation for staff to learn and develop from one another.
- Ensure there is a corporate approach to learning opportunities and this is built into your Workforce Development Strategy.

Comments/Actions

- Opportunities for learning and development will be considered and included in the Workforce Development Strategy.

**Work Programme for 2019-20 for
the Corporate Scrutiny Committee**

Meeting Date	Item
18 July 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Year Outturn for Corporate PDP for 2018-19 • Complaints - Annual Report 2018-19 • Annual Report on Work of the Committee for 2018-19 • Corporate PDP for 2019-20 • Determine Review Programme for 2019-20
19 November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate PDP Progress Report April to September 2019 • Peer Review Follow-Up Visit Report • Work Programme Update
14 January 2020	This meeting is for consultation on the budget/financial strategy only
10 March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate PDP Progress Report October to December 2019 • Complaints Report • Scrutiny Review (Members' Support and Training Requirements) • Scrutiny Review (LGA Peer Review Follow-Up Visit)

ITEM NO. 6.



SCRUTINY REVIEW SCOPING DOCUMENT

REVIEW TITLE
Members Support and Training Requirements
SCOPE OF THE REVIEW / TERMS OF REFERENCE
<p>The scope of the review includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information provided to Candidates prior to an election • Information provided to Members upon election to serve as a Councillor • Induction Training Programme • Ongoing training requirements <p>The review will consider how Members are supported by their political groups and the Council in fulfilling their role.</p>
REASON FOR SCRUTINY
<p>Members' induction and training provision is key to ensuring that Members understand and are equipped to full their role as Community Leaders. This is particularly important given the number of new Members that were elected at the May 2019 elections.</p>
MEMBERSHIP OF THE REVIEW GROUP
<p>The task & finish group comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Frank Allen (Chair) • Muriel Davis • Paul Fisher • Andrea Layton • Josh Newbury
KEY TASKS / REVIEW PLAN
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assess the information provided to new Members to see whether it is still relevant, useful and whether there are any gaps. This will include a review of the Members Handbook. 2. To review the Members Induction Programme for 2019 to see how it could be improved for future years 3. To consider what information and training needs are required throughout their term of office and any barriers to training.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Members induction Programme 2019

Training provided during 2018/19 and the year to date

Members handbook

Information provided on the Members Portal

LGA information re new Members and training

TIMESCALE

It is proposed to hold 3 meetings:

1. Discussion of the scoping of the review and review of Induction Programme 2019.
2. Review of Member Information;
3. Review of ongoing Training.

The review ideally needs to be completed by mid February if a report is to be completed for the 10 March 2020 meeting and to influence the Members Induction Programme for 2020.