

## LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

### Action Plan

No	Recommendation from the peer team	Our response and current/planned action	Timescale	Accountable officer
1.	<b>Performance Management Framework</b> Utilising the Council Plan as a base document; the council needs to evolve a SMART performance management framework that promotes timely challenge and proactive management action where needed, and allows the council to better communicate and celebrate its successes	<p>Agreed. We will review the current input-based performance reporting information provided to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny with a more qualitative, outcome-focused approach that demonstrates the Council's progress towards achieving the vision and aims set out in the Council Plan. This work had already commenced with the production of the first bi-annual Council Plan Progress Report in January 2023.</p> <p>We will retain the existing performance framework for internal monitoring of service delivery and performance, as this has proved a valuable mechanism for identifying service challenges and ensuring appropriate and timely action.</p>	December 2023	Policy and Governance Manager
2.	<b>Review delivery arrangements for external communications</b> For the council to be better able to communicate and celebrate its successes, an urgent review is needed of the council's current delivery arrangements for external communications and marketing	Agreed. We will undertake a review of current arrangements, working with the Communications Business Partner and Managers to understand what works and what improvements are required to ensure that external communications are proactive and appropriately resourced. Following the review, we will consider options for future delivery of the service. As part of this, we will consider whether a dedicated LGA Communications Peer Review would assist the analysis.	December 2023	New Head of Transformation and Commissioning
3.	<b>Review HR delivery arrangements</b> The Council needs to carry out a review of its current strategic and transactional HR delivery arrangements with a view to optimising the ability of Gloucester City Council to recruit and retain the very best staff	Agreed. We will undertake a review of current arrangements, working with the HR Business Partner and Managers to understand what works and what improvements are required. The current arrangements consist of a collection of functions provided by different teams at Gloucestershire County Council and, as part of the review, we will take the time to fully understand the relationships between these functions. Following the review, we will consider options for future delivery of the service.	December 2023	New Head of Transformation and Commissioning

4.	<p><b>Develop and maintain robust project governance arrangements</b></p> <p>If Gloucester City Council is going to continue on its current growth trajectory, it must develop and maintain robust project governance arrangements that provide timely line of sight for the political leadership on matters of budgetary management and control, and risk and sensitivity analysis, for example, it is recommended that the Forum Business Case is subject to continuous review and refresh to consider the impact of increased borrowing costs and contract inflation on delivery and the council's medium term financial plan</p>	<p>Agreed. We recognise that our ambitious growth agenda must be supported by rigorous governance arrangements, resource planning and risk management to ensure its success, while also maintaining the financial viability of the Council as a whole. We have begun formalising the project governance arrangements already in place for our major schemes, and the newly created Major Projects Board will provide the essential leadership and financial oversight needed to balance momentum with risk, through a robust reporting framework.</p> <p>In respect of The Forum, continuous review of the business case is already in place but will be embedded through the new major projects reporting framework.</p> <p>This work will be guided by the new overarching Growth Strategy highlighted in recommendation 5, to ensure that the Council takes a broad view across all major City-wide schemes and projects.</p>	Completed	Head of Place / New Head of Finance and Resources
5.	<p><b>Overarching Growth Strategy</b></p> <p>The council needs to consider pulling all the strands of its growth work into one overarching Growth Strategy which should align with the Council Plan</p>	<p>Agreed. The Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy expired in 2021 and, while the Council's ambitious growth agenda has pushed on at pace, regenerating the City and creating clear economic benefits, we agree that a new strategy is now needed to draw this work together. Building on the work of the City Commission, the new strategy will pull together the Council's priority regeneration projects alongside the actions and objectives of the City Commission, while putting equality of opportunity for all residents at the forefront of our plans. The strategy will also highlight the essential role that our partners play in achieving our vision.</p>	March 2024	Head of Place
6.	<p><b>Address worklessness and improve the skills and employability of local people</b></p> <p>Active consideration needs to be given to the development of new programmes to address worklessness and to improve the employability and skills of people within the city's most deprived communities</p>	<p>Under consideration. The role of District Councils viz-a-viz other authorities such as the County Council in relation to the skills agenda is currently under review, following the County Council's Devolution bid and incorporation of adult skills resource from the Local Enterprise Partnership, and the Government's recent announcement that it is minded to cease funding Local Enterprise Partnerships from April 2024.</p> <p>The City Council is already delivering individual projects to improve the skills and employability of local people through its Social Value Policy application to various projects. In particular, it has contracted with Kier as part of the</p>	tbd	tbd

		Forum development to develop a skills programme to create employment opportunity in construction and hospitality industries.		
7.	<b>Review staff resources against the Council Plan requirements</b> There is an urgent need to take stock as to the sufficiency of the council's senior staff resources to continue to deliver everything that the council is seeking to do through the Council Plan and at a pivotal time for the local government sector	Agreed. A Senior Management Restructure has been developed, consulted on, and is in the process of being implemented, with the primary aim of increasing strategic capacity by replacing the Director of Policy Resources post with two Head of Service posts, one for Finance and Resources and one for Transformation and Commissioning, along with the bringing together of a number of lines of business to provide greater synergy and cooperation, and to improve the customer journey. Increasing the Senior Management Team by one full time post will add to the capacity and resilience required to ensure that the Council is equipped to deliver the ambitions set out in the Council Plan and the focus on 'transformation' will allow important work to improve the customer journey to continue at pace, while also providing the necessary capacity to meet recommendations 2 and 3.	In Progress	Managing Director
8.	<b>Review the role of members</b> The council is recommended to seek external advice and support to review the role of members within the organisation and to help address a number of current challenges including member/officer relations, member conduct, and clarity on roles and responsibilities. The recruitment of a permanent Monitoring Officer, with sufficient capacity, would also help inform such a review and lead on any identified improvements	Agreed. A permanent Monitoring Officer has been in post since January 2023, and we will undertake a programme of activity, steered by the Council's internal Corporate Governance Group and supported by the LGA as appropriate, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of and update to key documents in the Constitution relevant to Member and Officer conduct and the relationship between Members and Officers.</li> <li>• Refresher training for all Members on the Code of Conduct. Training for Members and Officers to allow better understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• In consultation with the Member Development Working Group, a review of the Member Induction Programme ahead of the 2024 City Council Elections and consideration of how the ongoing Member Development Programme can build on recent positively received sessions aimed at setting realistic expectations and increasing Members' understanding of how the Council works, and the Councillor's role within this.</li> <li>• Discussion with the Overview and Scrutiny (O&amp;S) Lead Members about how, alongside the successful pre-decision scrutiny, O&amp;S can add value through policy development in areas that will have a positive impact on residents and businesses.</li> </ul>	Summer 2023  Post-elections 2024 March 2024  Autumn 2023	Monitoring Officer  Monitoring Officer  Policy and Governance Manager  Policy and Governance Manager

9.	<p><b>Whole organisation review of the cyber incident</b></p> <p>At the anniversary of the cyber incident, it is considered an opportune time for GCC to take stock of its recovery programme; it is important that this is a whole organisation review and not just centred on the technology aspects of the recovery</p>	<p>Agreed. In response to this recommendation, we included questions about the initial and ongoing impact of the cyber incident in the Staff Survey in order to better understand how the incident affected and continues to affect staff morale, and to highlight any blind spots in terms of the ongoing recovery.</p> <p>We will carry out a 'stock take' with our internal staff 'Change Champions' group to delve into the detail of the Staff Survey feedback and discuss the workarounds that improved service provision and should therefore be retained.</p> <p>This work will inform the organisation-wide recovery plan and associated communications plan, to ensure that ongoing recovery workstreams are captured and progress is communicated effectively. As part of an internal review of the incident already agreed to, there will be a full assessment of valuable lessons learned.</p>	December 2023	<p>HR and Communications Business Partners</p> <p>Managing Director</p> <p>New Head of Transformation &amp; Commissioning / Communications Business Partner</p>
10.	<p><b>Develop a strategic priority framework for tackling inequalities</b></p> <p>It is recommended that the council develops a strategic priority framework for tackling inequalities, both internally and with its partners, to be matched by adequate resource</p>	<p>Agreed, we are in the early stages of a scoping exercise.</p>	December 2023	<p>Director of Communities / Head of Culture</p>