



OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

18 March 2020

Subject Heading:	Peer Review 2019 Progress Update
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Policy context:	This is the Council's Action Plan to implement the improvements identified through the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge recommendations. These improvements will help the delivery of outcomes required in the Council's Corporate Plan and associated key policies / strategies.
Financial summary:	There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation and monitoring of the improvement plan. The improvements themselves may require additional funding; if this is the case any such decisions will be progress via the appropriate channels as and when they materialise.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	[✓]
Places making Havering	[✓]
Opportunities making Havering	[✓]
Connections making Havering	[✓]

SUMMARY

This report provides a progress update on the Improvement Action Plan produced in response to the Recommendations from the LGA Corporate Peer Review of Havering in 2019.

Overall, significant progress has been made. Actions on the majority of the recommendations have either been completed (with notable achievements) or are under way. One action within the eleven recommendations is not yet due.

RECOMMENDATION

To note progress on the delivery of the Improvement Action Plan (Appendix 1).

REPORT DETAIL

Background

1. This report sets out a bi-annual progress update against the Improvement recommendations from the Council's latest Corporate Peer Review.
2. The Corporate Peer Challenge took place in February/March 2019 by a team of experienced elected member and officer peers through the Local Government Association.
3. The purpose of having the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge was to give an external objective view of the Council's ambition, plans to achieve this and improvement recommendations.
4. The peer team considered the following five questions which form the core components looked at by all Corporate Peer Challenges:
 - a. Understanding of the local place and priority setting: Does the Council understand its local context and place and use that to inform a clear vision and set of priorities?
 - b. Leadership of Place: Does the Council provide effective leadership of place through its elected members, officers and constructive relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders?
 - c. Organisational leadership and governance: Is there effective political and managerial leadership supported by good governance and decision-making arrangements that respond to key challenges and enable change and transformation to be implemented?
 - d. Financial planning and viability: Does the Council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?

- e. Capacity to deliver: Is organisational capacity aligned with priorities and does the Council influence, enable and leverage external capacity to focus on agreed outcomes?
- 5. In addition to these questions, the Council asked the peer team to consider its approach to social care improvement, housing and regeneration.
- 6. In its Feedback Report, the peer team made 11 key improvement recommendations to support the delivery of outcomes required in the Council's 2019/20 Corporate Plan and associated key policies and strategies.
- 7. The recommendations and associated strategic action plan action were agreed by the Cabinet in July 2019. The Senior Leadership Team are collectively the "Lead Officers" for delivery.
- 8. The latest progress on the actions to deliver on these recommendations is shown in the attached table.

Progress on Improvement Action Plan

- 9. Overall, significant progress has been made with the majority completed with notable achievements, or under way and one of the eleven not due yet.
- 10. Due to the improvements being strategic in nature and underpinning the Council's Corporate Plan, a role for Overview and Scrutiny was agreed, in accordance with the statutory role of the Overview and Scrutiny Function as set out in the Council's Constitution.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

- 11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The implementation and monitoring of the improvements is anticipated to be contained within existing budgets. If through this processes pressures on budgets materialise these will be flagged and escalated through the appropriate channels as part of regular monthly budget monitoring.

12. It may be that the improvements themselves require additional funding. If so, any additional funding will be brought back for consideration via the appropriate channels as and when they materialise.

Legal implications and risks

13. There are no apparent legal implications in noting the content of the report.
14. Scrutiny arrangements form part of the Council's executive arrangements as set out in the Constitution and, ultimately, any changes will have to be agreed by Full Council. The Governance Committee is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the operation of the Constitution and, in particular, the role of overview and scrutiny. The Governance Committee can also make recommendations to Full Council about amending the Constitution.

Human Resources implications and risks

15. There are no HR implications or risks that impact directly on the Council's workforce as a result of the recommendations. Plans are already being developed as part of the Havering Transformation and People and Organisation Programmes to develop a more strategic approach to the Council's workforce.

Equalities implications and risks

16. No specific EQHIA is required at this level – actions on the individual recommendations will cover that if appropriate (such as the Regeneration Strategy).
17. Consideration should be given as to whether community engagement and greater inclusion should have specific outcomes/success criteria and whether there is a need for more activity on cohesion and the extending the Council's ICARE Values outward.