

Key Recommendations – Corporate Peer Review 2023

No.	Recommendation	Actions	Lead	Target Date	Progress (RAG)
1	Fulfil the commitment to develop a new Corporate Strategy, aligned with a refreshed Medium Term Financial Plan, by December this year and underpin it with a delivery plan – with the approach taken to this being as important as the outputs	Commence resident survey via external provider.	Simon Hill & Simon Freeman	June 2023	Complete
		WLT and Cabinet review resident survey results and suggested themes produced.		August 2023	Not started
		LGA run Corporate Narrative workshop with Cabinet.		July 2023	
		SMB/Cabinet develop the new Corporate Strategy key themes.		August 2023	
		Refine Corporate Strategy key themes via staff consultation.		Sept 2023	Not started
		Run public consultation on themes for new Corporate Strategy.		Oct 2023	Not started
		SMB/Cabinet agree draft corporate strategy document.		Nov 2023	Not started
		Present draft corporate strategy document as part of Scrutiny Committee Programme for 23/24.		Dec 2023	Not started
		Approve delivery Plan.		Dec 2023	Not started
		Council approve Corporate Strategy and MTFS.		Dec 2023	Not started
2	Develop jointly, across all stakeholders, a vision and narrative of place	Agree Discover Harlow as place branding with Harlow Growth Board.	Andrew Bramidge	June 2023	Complete
		LGA run corporate narrative workshop with Cabinet.		July 2023	
		Run staff engagement workshops on corporate narrative.		Sept 2023	
		Growth Board agree updated Discover Harlow narrative.		October 2023	

		Create wider Discover Harlow implementation plan with partners.		Jan 2024	
3	Extend the increased external engagement with partners – ensuring the council is appropriately represented at all of the key tables going forward and is seen as a willing partner that delivers	Map existing fora and identify representation for each.	Andrew Bramidge	July 2023	
		Identify third sector, operational and/or commercial drivers for joint initiatives.		Ongoing	Not started
		Ensure comms staff links with external partners feeds into operational work (links to comms strategy).		Ongoing	
		Participate in North Essex Council's Partnership discussions on shared services.		Ongoing	
		Introduce evidence/knowledge base sharing agreements to enhance joint working.		Dec 2023	Not started
4	Consider how to respond to what is seen as the time being ripe for structural change at the Senior Management Board level	Identify senior strategic capacity and clarify future structure.	Andrew Bramidge	Sept. 2023	
		Implement a new permanent senior management restructure and communicate widely.		Dec 2023	
5	Identify and implement the relevant approaches to re-setting relationships across the political and managerial leadership of the council	Hold roles and responsibilities workshop with Cabinet and SMB.	SMB	June 2023	Complete
		Enhance digital training for members where identified.		Ongoing	
		Commence fortnightly Director and Cabinet strategy meetings with agreed agendas and written action points.		July 2023	
		Run joint Chief Executive and Leader of the Council staff briefings on council priorities.		July 2023	

		Cascade agreed Member/Officer relationship guidelines throughout the organisation.		July 2023	
		Introduce twice yearly Director/Cabinet meetings to discuss evidence based issues affecting the town and review priorities for the coming year.		October 2023	Not started
6	Develop clear understanding at all levels of respective officer and elected member roles and responsibilities and the norms of relationships between them	Set up a cross party working group to support / work as champions to strengthen the relationships between Councillors and senior officers.	SMB	July 2023	Not started
		Review the current Officer/Member Protocol to ensure ongoing fitness for purpose.		July 2023	Not started
		Run training and development programme for Members including Leadership development programmes via the LGA.		Oct 2023	
		Adopt model LGA Code of Conduct.		Nov 2023	Not started
7	Establish clear understanding of decision-making processes within the organisation	Undertake a review of officer decision making to ensure that decision-making is delegated to the lowest appropriate level.	Simon Hill	July 2023	
		Develop flow chart of decision-making processes for Members and Officers.		August 2023	Not started
		Identify and communicate roles and responsibilities for SMB, WLT and Statutory Officers.		Sept 2023	Not started
		Run Officer and member training workshops on decision making process.		Oct 2023	Not started

		Internally publish delegations for each management level to ensure Officers are clear where to go for decisions.		Oct 2023	Not started
8	Fulfil the intention to adopt a more joined up and inclusive approach to the budget process going forward	Introduce earlier commencement of budget setting process.	Simon Freeman	June 2023	
		Engagement of all service managers in this process.	WLT	August 2023	Not started
		Engage Portfolio Holders in the process.		July 2023	Not started
		Ensure buy-in from Cabinet at earlier stage in process with options and implications fully considered.		Sept 2023	Not started
		Leader of the Council meet with the Leader of the Opposition regularly, especially during the budget consultation.		Oct 2023	Not started
9	Position the council to take informed decisions by drawing on appropriate evidence bases and then use this to inform the development of key strategies	Engage with ECC (Essex County Council) regarding specific data support for emerging Corporate Strategy.	Simon Hill	June 2023	Complete
		Publish performance datasets transparently on website.		June 2023	Complete
		Report on ongoing requirements for policy and analysis.		July 2023	Not started
		Review ongoing corporate resources available.		Sept 2023	Not started
		Run Officer and member training workshops on specific issues as they arise.		Ongoing	Not started

		Undertake repeat residents survey in accordance with LGA guidelines to allow comparator information and analysis.		June 2024	Not started
10	Complete the devising of a new set of performance measures and ensure comparator data is woven into performance reporting	Publish first datasets for new KPI set at end of May and monthly thereafter and review in light of any revised priorities.	Simon Hill	June 2023	Complete
		Embed the use of data to drive decision making and support district wide improvement.		Oct 2023	
		Agree statistical neighbour basket of comparators and agree key comparator metrics for reporting to Members and senior managers.		August 2023	
11	Ensure the findings from external reviews are consistently translated into action, with clear accountabilities and rigorous monitoring of progress	Update Peer Challenge section of intranet regularly with progress against action plans for Corporate Review and Communications Review, adding in staff and resident survey results when available.	Andrew Bramidge	Ongoing	
		Engage with external partners on progress against action plans for Corporate Review and Communications Review.		Ongoing	
		Introduce action plans arising from external reviews as a standing item agenda for WLT and Statutory Officers meetings and make subject to review by Scrutiny Committee.		July 2023	
12	Establish a hybrid working policy	Run staff survey to include attitudes to working in analysis.	Natasha Terrell	May 2023	

		Consider service impacts of hybrid working policy.		Sept 2023	Not started
		Consult on draft policy with Trade Union.		Sept 2023	Not started
		Implement policy.		Oct 2023	Not started
		Consider changes to contracts.		Nov 2023	Not started
13	Undertake the planned staff survey and ensure the results are widely shared and discussed	Carry out staff survey.	Natasha Terrell	May 2023	Complete
		Deliver results to staff and collate feedback via briefing sessions.		July 2023	
		Develop staff survey action plan.		July 2023	
		Relaunch staff suggestion scheme to encourage engagement and innovation.		Sept 2023	Not started
		Agree resource for annual survey.		Budget 2024/25	Not started
		Use staff survey to build support work on People Resources Plan.		March 2024	Not started
		Introduce regular staff surveys, working with Trade Unions, to seek feedback on values as key stakeholders.		May 2024	Not started