



LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

Appendix B: Council Response to Peer Team Recommendations – May 2024

No.	Peer Team Recommendations	Council Response
1.	<p>City Centre masterplan The Council should continue to work at pace to develop a city centre masterplan with the support and involvement of partners.</p>	<p>In February 2024 we began work on our City Centre Vision 2050 which will set out our ambitions for the city centre including high level masterplanning and setting out a development framework for private investment in the city centre. This will be completed in July 2024 – a group of core partner organisations will help guide this work with wider public engagement to follow.</p> <p>One of the key drivers for the City Centre Vision 2050 is how Coventry city centre needs to change in order better serve communities – both people living in or close to the city centre and people travelling into the city centre for work, shopping or leisure. Work is currently underway to consider this, and a number of other drivers – Economy, Mobility, Digital, Open Space, Sustainability and Culture.</p> <p>Another related piece of work is a more focused look at how a 50 acre area on the northern edge of the city centre could accommodate physical regeneration and development and the delivery of new homes whilst making better use of cultural and heritage assets, green space and public realm. This was completed in March 2024 and informs the wider City Centre Vision and we are now looking at how to begin delivery of key sites in this area.</p>

2.	<p>One Coventry Plan The next iteration of the One Coventry plan needs to include a corporate delivery plan supported by consistently developed service plans and should include a review of the corporate strategy framework to ensure strategies are linked and gaps are identified.</p>	<p>New governance arrangements have been implemented with responsibility for oversight and enabling delivery, of key organisational strategies and plans, aligned to the Council's One Coventry Plan vision and priorities. Three new Strategic Boards have been established to support the Leadership Board with a more explicit focus on delivering our One Coventry priorities and taking forward work to ensure we are as efficient and effective as possible.</p> <p>This new governance and performance approach will enable the Council to have oversight of all Council activity and ensure necessary corporate and service delivery plans are in place. This will include the identification of any gaps and response required to address this. For example, work is in progress to respond to develop an asset strategy.</p> <p>An important role of the new governance structure will be to identify synergies and interdependencies across services areas. These relationships can then be managed to ensure the maximum benefits and impact are delivered, in line with One Coventry Plan objectives.</p>
3.	<p>Employees The Council has rich data from the recent staff survey and should develop actions to address the issues it highlights. A key element of this would be ensuring there is further support for the staff networks.</p>	<p>An action plan is currently being developed in response to the workforce survey and will be available in September 2024.</p> <p>In addition to this and as part of our on-going commitment to being an inclusive employer we will ensure continued growth and development of our employee networks. As part of this commitment the Council has commissioned 'Reboot' an external organisation who will provide training for our Network Chairs and Co-chairs in September 2024 in order to support their growth and development.</p>
4.	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy Future financial modelling within the MTFs should</p>	<p>The MTFs is reviewed on an annual basis. This will include a review of wider contextual data, including population and demand projections, to support the medium-term financial planning assumptions of the Council. Specific models are already used in key areas of financial risk such as Adult Social Care, Childrens Social Care and</p>

	consider the full impact and risk of key underlying assumptions e.g. demographic change, inflation, and policy on issues such as real living wage.	Housing to understand and plan for future impact. These models will be reviewed again as part of the next iteration including whether further evidenced based assumptions can be used.
5.	Financial accounts The Council should make swift progress to sign off and publish their outstanding financial accounts.	19/20 Statement of Account (SoA) was approved and published in October 2023. The 20/21 SoA has now been produced and published. The Government have consulted on indicative backstop dates for both prior years' SoAs (September 2024), and the current year SoA (May 2025). The outcome of the consultation is unknown, however the Council are in discussion with its external auditor, Grant Thornton, to ensure there is an agreed plan which aims to achieve both of these.
6.	Transformation programme The transformation programme is at a very early stage of development, and the Council should focus on rapid engagement and mobilisation of the right skills, capacity and capability needed to deliver.	<p>A One Coventry Transformation Board is meeting on a monthly basis to oversee and enable delivery of the Council's Transformation Plan. The role of the Board includes understanding and determining delivery resource requirements and an ongoing responsibility for the One Coventry Transformation Board will be to ensure that sufficient resources are available to deliver what is required.</p> <p>A Transformation delivery resource plan is being developed to identify the resources required to effectively deliver the One Coventry Transformation Plan. This will focus on making best use of existing resources in the first instance but will also identify any gaps in capability or capacity where there may be a requirement to consider commissioning more specialist resource/support for a limited period. This will only be considered where all options to make use of internal capacity have been exhausted or where there is a clear cost benefit (e.g. pace of delivery).</p> <p>The OneCov Squad initiative will also provide support in delivering the Council's transformation ambitions whilst also providing opportunities for employees to develop their skills. A number of Council officers are being matched with projects/initiatives and</p>

		will be working with across a range of services to help to deliver the One Coventry Transformation Plan.
7.	<p>Communications</p> <p>The Council should develop a refreshed external communication strategy.</p>	<p>A refreshed internal and external communications strategy has been researched, prepared and approved with Leadership Board for Cabinet consideration. Approval with Cabinet will be sought in May 2024, with several key actions including strategic key themes for communications, a bigger focus on value for money communications to residents, and using our digital channels more proactively.</p>
8.	<p>Performance management</p> <p>The Council should use the established performance framework to drive improvement and bring greater prioritisation and visibility to areas that require improvement.</p>	<p>A new governance model for Performance has been established including the creation of a Safeguarding and Performance Board, which now meets on a monthly basis. This is supported by a cross-organisation performance Working Group.</p> <p>A review of Data and Performance is underway and is focusing on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A review of corporate performance measures - The creation of new performance reporting products - Maximising the use of corporate data tools - Performance workforce models - Establishing a new performance culture
9.	<p>Member training</p> <p>Members are keen to engage with opportunities for training and development and the Council should review barriers to take up of the current offer and how these can be addressed.</p>	<p>As part of its review of the 2023/24 programme and preparation for next year, the Member Training Advisory Panel is carrying out a survey of Members to identify barriers. The Ethics Committee reviewed the 2023/24 Members Training and Development Programme at their meeting on 21 March when they considered ways in which to increase Members' participation in training and development and to address barriers experienced in accessing the programme. The outcomes from both will be built into their respective work programmes and planning for 2024/25. Members survey will be recirculated to encourage additional responses.</p>

10.	Workforce Diversity The Council should take further steps to improve diversity across the organisation at all levels.	<p>A new Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2025 – 2027 is being written and will cover all 9 protected characteristics. The focus of the new strategy will include both workforce and service delivery D&I actions. In addition to the work that we are delivering on Diversity & Inclusion, we are also taking a pro-active approach in tackling racial inequality across the organisation.</p> <p>We have a new Executive Sponsor for Race and are in the process of producing our first race equality action plan which will be launched in the latter part of 2024.</p>
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