

Portsmouth City Council

ACTION PLAN

**Our response to the recommendations
of the LGA Peer Review in 2021**

BACKGROUND

In October 2021 Portsmouth City Council welcomed a Peer Challenge team from the Local Government Association (LGA) to look at how we work strategically as an organisation. You can read the full [LGA report online](#).

To have a team of experts look at and assess the way you do things is incredibly useful. The Peer Challenge team found that Portsmouth is a good council, that is performing well and that they found the City Vision to be ambitious, clear and well-articulated.

As always there are suggestions of what we can do differently and the team made a series of recommendations of what we could do to improve the way that we operate. This action plan has been prepared in response to these recommendations. We will monitor progress through the regular Corporate Performance Management processes and report progress through the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee.



REF	RECOMMENDATION	CONTEXT	PROPOSED ACTION	BY WHO	BY WHEN
1	Create more time and space for collective reflection and long-term planning for the future (members, senior officers and then jointly.	To allow for more time and space for strategic discussions between the Directors and the Cabinet it is proposed that at least two joint meetings will be held every year. One of these will take place after the elections and will enable a discussion to take place about priorities and progress in the previous year and the other meeting will take place in November and will enable a discussion to take place around the budget process. In addition to these strategic meetings, operational meetings and briefings will take place between Directors and Members on an ongoing basis.	The action for recommendations 1 and 2 has been put together recognising the considerable overlap. Action: 1. Develop an annual programme of sessions that creates opportunities for collection reflection and long term planning. • Look to set up at least two strategic planning meetings a year between the Cabinet and the Directors to discuss the evidence based on issues affecting the city, review priorities for the coming year and the progress in achieving outcomes for these priorities.	Chief Executive	May 2022
2	Create opportunities for Directors, Heads of Service and wider staff to come together more regularly to understand, discuss, collaborate and contribute to future Council agendas.	The new management Leadership Network held its first meeting recently and as part of the discussion it looked at how the Council could respond to the Peer Challenge. In relation to this issue members of the network came up with some practical examples of how we could respond to these recommendations including, for example, the setting up of a smarter staff directory with clearer information on structure, responsibilities and who does what to encourage cross directorate working and other ideas on how to encourage cross directorate working with results discussed at the Leadership Network. Much of this work can be taken forward through a new Organisational Development Plan.	• Arrange a series of theme based workshops for the management Leadership Network.	Director of Corporate Services	June 2022

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3	The whole Council needs to collectively grip the issue of the Local Plan, housing supply targets and housing delivery - or risk losing control of its destiny in terms of planning powers. It will need strong cross-party working to do this.	In response to the Peer Review a cross-party working group on the Local Plan was set up. This is a key part of the response to this recommendation and is complete. Work will carry on with Group Leaders to further improve the workings of this cross-party working group.	2. Implement the actions in the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan.	Director of Regeneration	Sept 2022
			3. Produce an updated Housing Delivery Action Plan.	Director of Regeneration	Oct 2022
4	Undertake an Independent Review of the internal governance, constitutional and scrutiny arrangements, including a review of officer-member behaviours and the overall culture to ensure closer member-officer relationships.	This independent review will cover all of the culture issues outlined in the recommendation.	4. Work with group leaders to:	Director of Corporate Services	May 2022
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> commission an Independent Constitutional and practice review for Portsmouth City Council which looks at best practice and encourages collaborative working (including the role that member training can play). agree any amendments to the constitution to secure better working relationships. 	Director of Corporate Services	May 2023

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5	Begin a dialogue with members on the approach to training and development taking into account the outcomes of the independent review.	To support the proposed Member training cross party working group some initial work will be undertaken to assess the take-up of existing opportunities for Member training and development.	<p>5. Set up a cross party working group to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider outcomes from the Independent Review (see ref 4) in relation to member learning and development. • agree a core offer of training that all Members must do. • agree an additional offer appropriate for Member learning and development. • agree a supplementary core offer of training that Members should do to undertake specific roles. • agree the most appropriate format and channel for delivery of training. • act as Champions for the offer back with their groups. 	Director of Corporate Services	Dec 2022

REF	RECOMMENDATION	CONTEXT	PROPOSED ACTION	BY WHO	BY WHEN
6	Develop a strong corporate approach to the equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda, learn from good practice and ensure it is embedded across the organisation.	Since the Corporate Peer Challenge the Council has appointed an Equalities & Diversity Officer and a Community Engagement and Inclusion Programme Manager. In response to the Peer Challenge Steering Groups are being set up and action plans agreed which will be monitored through existing governance processes.	6. Set up an Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) steering group and an Engagement & involvement Network and agree terms of reference for both groups.	Director of Corporate Services	May 2022
			7. Undertake an EDI self-assessment of the Council based on the Local Government Framework document 2021.	Director of Corporate Services	June 2022
			8. Use the self-assessment to underpin the creation of the new Strategy 2022-2025.	Director of Corporate Services	Nov 2022
7	Review the key strategies and plans in the light of Brexit, the pandemic and other external changes, balancing short and long term issues e.g. city centre.	The corporate analysis of all the external factors affecting the organisation will be a resource for all directors to use to review any existing strategies and plans. Any revisions can be reported back through the Leadership Network which will further encourage joint working and understanding across directorates.	9. Update the corporate analysis that looks at all the external factors that are potentially impacting on Portsmouth.	Chief Executive	Sept 2022
			10. Use the updated analysis as a source document to review existing strategies and plans and as evidence for new strategies and plans.	All directors	March 2023 and ongoing

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8	Find the most impactful approach to health and care integration changes that ensures the best outcomes for the people of Portsmouth.	<p>We continue to develop arrangements that will ensure we will be an active contributor to our integrated care system, as well as ensuring that arrangements in Portsmouth are as integrated as they can be to ensure that people experience seamless and effective services in line with our vision for health and care in the city.</p> <p>We are developing the building blocks of a place-based governance and leadership in the context of the maturing integrated care system, and we are exploring with our Integrated Care Board colleagues the mechanisms to transfer learning and to use the opportunity of the Integrated Care System to accelerate joint working in key areas. In Portsmouth, we are taking a broad approach to integration, and considering how areas of the business such as housing and Voluntary & Community Sector capacity support are also included in the scope of integration.</p>	11. Continue to strengthen the Joint Commissioning Board for Portsmouth as a mechanism for driving integrated commissioning.	Chief Executive (as Executive Lead for Health and Care Portsmouth)	Ongoing
			12. Broaden arrangements for pooling and aligning budgets through a s75 arrangement that will mirror an integrated plan for health and care in Portsmouth.		July 2022
			13. Develop a mechanism for tracking the impact of integration, so that we can clearly show in performance data, outcomes and case study evidence how integrated ways of working are supporting effective delivery and improving outcomes in the city.		July 2022

