

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 7TH NOVEMBER 2017
 title: CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE UPDATE
 submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
 principal author: MICHELLE HAWORTH – PRINCIPAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER

1 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – The scope of the Peer Challenge can be tailored to reflect local needs. We may, like many other
- Corporate Priorities – authorities, wish the Peer Challenge to look at how
- Other Considerations - well we perform in achieving Corporate Priorities.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 As part of their 'sector led improvement' support to local government, the Local Government Association (LGA) offers the delivery of a Corporate Peer Challenge. The Peer Challenge is designed to help Councils improve their performance.

2.2 There will be a core component that looks at issues of leadership, governance, corporate capacity and financial resilience. In addition the scope of the Peer Challenge has been agreed with the LGA and was reported to this committee in September 2017.

3 UPDATE

3.1 Since the last meeting of this committee a number of arrangements have been made regarding the Peer Challenge. The dates have now been confirmed as 20th – 22nd November 2017.

3.2 The Peer Challenge is conducted by senior/experienced officers and councillors and supported by an LGA Review Manager. The team has been confirmed as:

- Fiona Marshal – CEX of Maldon DC
- Chris Millar – Councillor from Daventry DC (former Leader)
- Charles Holmes – Head of Community Services from Allerdale BC
- Tracy Darke – Head of Development Services from Warwick DC
- Cindy Lowthian – LGA Review Manager

3.3 A 'Preparation Guidance for Councils' document has been received and considered. Based on this an initial 'Welcome and Scene Setting' session has been organised for 9:00am on the 20th. Several informal feedback sessions have also been organised between the team, the Leader and the Chief Executive. A feedback and Q&A session has been organised for 2:00pm on the 22nd to which Committee Chairmen, Cllr Allan Knox, Cllr Paul Elms, CMT and Heads of Service have been invited.

3.4 A number of interviews and focus groups have been organised at the request of the peer team. The peer team will be split into pairs to facilitate meetings and discussions. Some examples of the member and officer interviews with individuals and focus groups which have already been organised are:

- An interview with the Leader of the Conservatives and an interview with the Leader of the Opposition
 - An interview with the Chief Executive
 - An interview with the Director of Resources and an interview with the Director of Community Services
 - A Focus Group of Committee Chairs
 - A Focus Group of Heads of Service and a Focus Group of Staff
 - An interview with a Trade Union Representative
- 3.5 The peer team will also be reviewing the Council's policies, strategies, and performance. The following documents have been requested and sent off electronically:
- A Position Statement (to be circulated to all individuals involved)
 - The Corporate Strategy
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - Annual Governance Statement
 - Organisation Structure Chart (senior management)
 - Annual Audit Letter
 - Latest Staff Survey Report (2017)
 - Latest Resident Satisfaction Survey Report (2015)
- 3.6 Other arrangements made include:
- Security Badges and Parking passes
 - Room bookings for interviews and committee room 1 to be set up as a base room
 - Box of stationery supplies
 - Provision of sandwiches, tea, coffee and biscuits
- 4 RISK ASSESSMENT
- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications
- Resources - The Council is currently a subscriber to the LGA. The Corporate Peer Challenge is provided by the LGA at no charge. Officer time is required to help organise and support the Peer Challenge. Small cost of lunch and refreshments.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal – None identified.
 - Political – None identified.
 - Reputation – None identified.
 - Equality & Diversity - None identified.

Michelle Haworth
 PRINCIPAL POLICY AND
 PERFORMANCE OFFICER

Jane Pearson
 DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

REF:

For further information please ask for Michelle Haworth, extension 4421