

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
<p>KR1. (page 2, recommendation 1)</p> <p>(page 8, para 5)</p> <p>(page 9, para 3)</p>	<p>Build upon your effective and well-embedded budget planning arrangements into the future by ensuring that you: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take appropriate steps to minimise reliance on New Homes Bonus (NHB) as a means of sustaining the base revenue requirements of the organisation. 	<p>The MTFS recognises the likely withdrawal of NHB from the next financial year.</p> <p>Information is currently being gathered to allow Transform Working Group to understand the scale of the deficit that this will cause and the choices that will need to be made between services and council priorities, if the full effects of the withdrawal are felt. Recommendations from the working group will be made to the appropriate decision making body.</p> <p>Detailed scenario planning regarding the regulatory framework is not possible at the current time and our central understanding of the position will be fed into financial planning until the position is either clear or resources are free to undertake scenario analysis.</p>	<p>Head of Finance and Asset Management</p>	<p>December 2021 June 2022</p> <p>Complete</p>	<p>The reliance on NHB as a funding source has been reduced in recent years from £3.6m to £1.6m as the government withdraws funding for the scheme. An interim MTFS has recently been produced which details scenarios for the temporary extension and then complete withdrawal of the scheme. No information has been provided by the government for a replacement scheme since the consultation in Spring 2021 and therefore no assumption has been made in the MTFS about an ongoing income level from a housing delivery reward scheme. An interim MTFS 2023/24-2024/25 will be considered at Executive Committee on 1 June then for adoption at full council.</p> <p>No further commercial property purchases are planned and we are now in a phase of managing the existing portfolio. The council will be complying with the regulatory framework around borrowing for commercial investment.</p>

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
	<p>- Prepare for possible changes to commercial investment regulatory framework through detailed scenario planning.</p> <p>(incl. continued and possible widened use of Transform Working Group would support greater organisational input into defining future plans and in doing so, ensure the financial landscape is understood by all members and officers). And;</p> <p>The Garden Town Programme represents major investment in and by the borough council, but successful delivery is dependent on Homes England funding of around £8.1 million and this is a risk to the council. Enhanced planning around alternative options – and likely impact – should these funds not materialise in part or in full would enhance financial and risk.</p>	<p>TWG will be used to review the gap between cost and resource and make recommendations on the changes necessary to ensure the council remains financially sustainable.</p> <p>In addition, the MTFS will become a biannual exercise to increase member understanding and awareness of the financial challenges facing the Council.</p> <p>The council is dependent on the funding being secured in order to deliver the bridge. Given the MTFS deficit, it is not possible to add to this in order to self fund the bridge. All resources will be focussed on ensuring the funding is available and drawn down. It is expected that a first draw could take place by December 2020.</p>		<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>	<p>TWG will continue to be briefed on emerging issues which will have a transformative or financial impact. Future agendas could include details around the Environment and the Planning Bills and their impact on the organisation.</p> <p>Agreements are in place with Homes England for the delivery of the bridge and quarterly draw downs of funding are taking place.</p>

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
<p>KR2. (page 2, recommendation 2)</p>	<p>Create the necessary senior leadership resilience, focus on prioritisation and overall resource requirements within the organisation going forward so that so that the council is on as sound a footing as possible to continue to meet the challenges facing the sector. As part of this: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify roles and responsibilities of Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Management Team in order, ensuring that opportunities for senior officers to contribute and influence are well understood; - Build on partnership and shared service delivery strengths to cement your 'place leadership' role and from this explore further opportunities as to how these arrangements will help build capacity (see also page 10) 	<p>This recommendation was pre-covid and therefore the financial and resource challenge is more significant than at the time of the LGA report - even then there was a large degree of uncertainty in relation to Local Government finances. Actions undertaken have been around an immediate need to prioritise resource and capacity to support the council's response to and recovery from the pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heads of Service prioritising their work streams to identify what could be deferred including project related work. - Update on capacity list to identify any potential spare capacity - Recovery fund has been approved that could be used for additional resources. - Clarity of roles and responsibilities will be re-affirmed as part of the interim arrangements to cover the Deputy CEO role. 	<p>Corporate Management Team</p>	<p>March 2022 Complete</p>	<p>In the short term and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic a review of key actions within the council plan and Covid-19 recovery plan were undertaken and where necessary actions deferred. Where pressure points have arisen as result of responding to Covid-19 additional resources have been deployed to those areas. 2022/23 budget setting also saw ongoing growth of £450k and one-off growth of £392k to support service delivery.</p> <p>Roles of CLT and management team have been re-affirmed. The resignation of the Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) provided the opportunity for this and those duties have now been absorbed permanently within the roles of Heads of Service. Terms of Reference for both CLT and CMT have been reviewed.</p> <p>Moving forward, and now the council is on its recovery journey then the medium term aspects of the recommendation can be considered, for example senior leadership resilience, partnerships, 'prioritising the priorities'. An Executive Committee/CLT awayday was held on</p>

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
(page 6, para 2)	<p>- Build on existing corporate project evaluation mechanisms to develop a clear process for prioritisation and changing resource requirements ('prioritise the priorities – see page 10)</p> <p>(incl. thought be given to succession planning to fulfil the council's leadership responsibilities re: city region, midlands connecting corridor)</p>				<p>9 November to start dialogue on the strategic challenges ahead and corporate management team have also met to map out these challenges.</p> <p>The appointment of the new Chief Executive provides the opportunity for an additional viewpoint to the challenges ahead.</p>
<p>KR3. (page 2, recommendation 3) (page 6, para 7)</p>	<p>Consider ways and approaches to promote the 'Tewkesbury Brand' more effectively as part of your successful leadership of place approach.</p> <p>(incl. more proactive approach to external comms)</p>	<p>Branding, particularly around the Garden Town project will be considered moving forward.</p> <p>An additional communication's officer has been recruited to give additional resilience to corporate communications.</p>	<p>Head of Development/Garden Town Programme Director/Head of Corporate Services</p>	<p>Spring 2021 December 2021 September 2022</p>	<p>Tewkesbury Garden Town have initial branding in place arising from the Thinking Place borough-wide commission undertaken in 2018. However, this is different to the Tewkesbury branding.</p> <p>A dedicated garden town communications officer has also been recruited and is focusing on improving internal and external communications about the garden town, including an improved web presence and a regular newsletter.</p> <p>Following a helpful audit and forward planning exercise, working with a communications expert from the LGA,</p>

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
					further external marketing support is also to be commissioned shortly to prepare a comprehensive strategy and action plan in support of the evolution of the garden town programme.
<p>KR4. (page 2, recommendation 4) (page 6, para 6) (page 9, para 7)</p>	<p>Agree how you can proactively move the Garden Town delivery programme to the next phase by establishing/ developing stakeholder governance and engagement structures and processes. (incl. community liaison and engaging with members at the earliest opportunity) and; (the council would benefit from taking time to map in more detail the likely organisational resource implications of the Garden Towns across their projected delivery timescales)</p>	<p>TGT team are working with ARUP to develop the governance and are working to establish governance structures for the program. The TGT team meet regularly with Northway and ARPC and Member Reference Panel to engage them with the work being carried out and this will be continued. A terms of reference are being created to support the group. There will also be full member briefings to ensure all members are kept up to date with relevant work.</p>	<p>Garden Town Programme Director</p>	<p>Complete Spring 2021 Submission September 2022</p>	<p>A governance structure has been agreed by Council and is now being implemented. This includes a member liaison group and distinct engagement with community and business. (Business and community panel). Resourcing is under review as funding becomes available. Building on this foundation, TBC has been successful in securing support through the government's New Development Corporation Competition (NDCC) and a specialist consultancy commission is currently preparing a detailed business case, for submission to government later this year, considering options for the establishment of an appropriate delivery vehicle for the garden town.</p>

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
		The TGT are currently recruiting a Place Manager which will focus on developing the “place” aspect of the Garden Town. Along with discussions with finance regarding for funding for wider Garden Town support.		Complete	This post is in place and now leading a Design Manual commission in support of defining the ‘place’ aspect of the garden town.
KR5. (page 2, recommendation 5) (page 8, para 3)	Building upon your existing sound governance arrangements review both: - - the timings of key meetings so that all members can contribute effectively - the length/ style of member reports so they more effectively inform and enable better decision making. (incl. greater use of technology to promote virtual engagement.)	The Council determines the Schedule of Meetings, including the time those meetings commence. Individual Committees are always free to review and revise start times and any changes are made in consultation with the Chair and Lead Member as appropriate. Similarly, Working Groups, Ad-Hoc meetings, seminars etc. are set in consultation with the appropriate Lead Member and take place at a variety of times in the morning, afternoon and evening to cater for all Members .	Head of Democratic Services	Current practice, no change is anticipated.	Not applicable.

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
		A review of the report format is in the Democratic Services Work Programme but due to other commitments it is not anticipated that this will be complete until the end of the next financial year.		March 2022. June 2022	A short questionnaire was sent to Ops Managers and Management Team and this, together with research of report formats adopted by other Councils, shows that only minor tweaks are required to the current report format which will be completed shortly.
		All the Council's meetings are currently held virtually and the use of new technology has been embraced by Members.		December 2021 Complete January 2023	Members have embraced the use of technology and have successfully participated in virtual committee, working groups, briefings etc during 2020/21 and continue to do, where this is permissible within existing legislation. In terms of webcasting, an update on this project was presented to the Transform Working Group on 13 May. Work is well advanced on preparation of the tender documentation which will be sent out in June. Implementation is planned for January 2023 following tender evaluation, training and testing.

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
<p>6. (page 6, para 3)</p>	<p>Building on the knowledge and expertise developed through the Growth Hub, the council may wish to consider slightly redefining its support for local business growth – moving more towards an enabling role rather than delivery. This will help manage resource requirements whilst wishing to maintain a strong economic development focus.</p>	<p>Consideration will be given to the recommendation. This needs to be balanced with the contractual obligation the council has with the Local Enterprise Partnership regards to the running of the Growth Hub. This will be looked at as part of the development of the new Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.</p>	<p>Head of Development</p>	<p>Jun-2021 Complete</p>	<p>Following the Covid-19 Pandemic there is an increased need for business support delivery, so any move towards more of an enabling role will be kept under review as part of the new Tourism and Economic Development strategy. This will still also need to be balanced with the contractual obligation the council has with the Local Enterprise Partnership regards to the running of the Growth Hub.</p> <p>Whilst this was a recommendation from the peer review team, it was only to 'consider'. The Growth Hub through its current model delivers exceptional service as evidenced through the commentary within the council plan performance tracker.</p>

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
7. (page 8, para 2)	Opportunities exist to strengthen the role of Scrutiny in pre-decision and policy development work	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives the Executive Committee Forward Plan at each of its meetings and has been particularly keen to ensure the document is well populated. The Committee also considers its own Work Programme at each meeting and conducts an annual review of policies to ascertain whether they require review and what, if any, the Committee's role is in that review. Progress on projects are reviewed as part of the performance tracker and any requiring further scrutiny are highlighted by Members for further work to be undertaken. The Council and the Executive Committee also refer matters directly to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further work to be undertaken.	Head of Corporate Services/Head of Democratic Services	March 2021 December 2021 Complete (i.e. establishment of action plan)	A productive session on maximising the value of the committee was held in October 2021 with committee members. This was followed up by a training session in January 2022 with an external facilitator. An action plan has been established and published as an appendix to the committee's 2021/22 annual report. The bulk of actions have been completed with remaining actions relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the benefit of pre-briefs • potential of external speakers • relationship with Executive Committee

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
8. (page 10, para 6)	Look at innovative recruitment initiatives, particularly around Planning and One Legal services	We are in the process of procuring and installing a new system for recruitment which will make our 'front-face' much more attractive and modern to prospective applicants. This should be in place by Spring 2021. Also more broadly we are building a 'total rewards' offer to sell the considerable benefits of working for our Council.	Head of Corporate Services/Head of Development/Borough Solicitor	Spring 2021 September 2021 Complete November 2020 March 2022 December 2022	The work to launch both a new digital recruitment system and also a new microsite for recruitment has been completed and launched in July 2021. In respect of 'total rewards', our new microsite showcases the advantages of working for our council including our new Agile Working policy, training and development opportunities, annual leave, Local Government pension, salary sacrifice initiatives such as 'bike to work'. A salary sacrifice car scheme for electric/hybrid vehicles has recently been approved by management team. Recruitment to One Legal and Planning remains challenging – this is in line with the national picture. Both of these services are currently under review, there is a planning improvement plan being presented to Executive Committee on 17 November. In relation to One Legal, a new Director of Law post has recently been appointed and is in the process of developing a project plan which will have a recruitment and retention workstream.

Appendix 1 - Corporate Peer Challenge 2020- Recommendation Action Plan

Recommendation number KR = key recommendation	Details of recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date	Progress to date
<p>9.</p> <p>(page 11, para 1)</p>	<p>Consider the undertaking of a comprehensive and regular resident's survey.</p>	<p>By the end of the financial year the Corporate Services Team will consider the options and engage Member's appropriately. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the undertaking internally of a snapshot survey (using Borough News and online) - commissioning externally a statistically weighted snapshot survey - an ongoing survey through the website and hardcopy forms. 	<p>Head of Corporate Services</p>	<p>March 2021 January 2022 Complete</p>	<p>Stratford District Council were commissioned to undertake the survey and the final report has recently been received. Once analysed, this will be communicated by mid-June.</p>