

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed:			
Any especially affected Wards	Discretionary	(a) Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide NO			
		(b) Need to be recommendations to Council NO			
		(c) Is it a Key Decision NO			
Lead Member: Cllr S Dark E-mail: cllr.Stuart.Dark@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Cabinet Members consulted:		
Lead Officers: Lorraine Gore E-mail: Lorraine.Gore@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Members consulted:		
Other Officers consulted:					
Financial Implications	Policy/ Personnel Implications	Statutory Implications	Equality Impact Assessment required	Risk Management Implications	Environmental Implications
NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Date of meeting: 18 April 2023

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) - CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

Summary

To consider Notice of Motion (16/22) presented to Council on 1 December 2022. It was resolved that the Motion be referred to Cabinet for consideration and decision.

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet:

approve that a Corporate Peer Challenge be undertaken as set out in the report and the LGA scoping document

delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to agree the final details with the LGA to facilitate the delivery of the Corporate Peer Challenge

Reason for Decision

To respond to the Motion to Council on 1 December 2022.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Notice of Motion (16/22) was presented to Council on 1 December 2022:

“This Council will, without any delay, arrange with the LGA to organise an immediate Peer Review of its Scrutiny and Transparency practices.”

- 1.2 Council resolved that the Motion be referred to Cabinet for consideration and decision

2. ARRANGEMENTS FOR A CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

- 2.1 The Notice of Motion focused on a Peer Review of the council’s Scrutiny and Transparency practices. In discussion with the LGA it is recommended that a Corporate Peer Challenge be undertaken with a focus on the following five high-level themes which have been adopted for all LGA Corporate Peer Challenges:

1. **Local priorities and outcomes:** Are the council’s priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the council delivering effectively on its priorities and achieving improved outcomes for all its communities?
2. **Organisational and place leadership:** Does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
3. **Governance and culture:** Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of respect, challenge and scrutiny?
4. **Financial planning and management:** Does the council have a clear understanding of its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a clear plan to address its financial challenges?
5. **Capacity for improvement:** Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?

- 2.2 A peer challenge usually takes around 6 months lead-in time, including to secure time in peers’ diaries. In discussion with the LGA and given the elections in May 2023 it is suggested that it is appropriate for arrangements to be made for the peer challenge to take place in September 2023. This will provide time for the council to settle post-election, prepare the position statement and timetable and avoid the summer holiday period.

- 2.3 The scoping document for the peer challenge is attached.

3. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The council will need to identify a peer challenge co-ordinator, this will be the Assistant to the Chief Executive, and will act as a day-to-day contact and oversee the practical arrangements, including:

- The council will be required to develop an information and data pack, including a Position Statement in advance of onsite activity
- The peer team will also undertake some pre-onsite conversations with key officers and members
- The council will need to prepare a timetable of meetings and focus groups for the team.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Local Government Association offers all councils a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) at no cost every 5 years.