

South Somerset District Council

Peer Review High Level Action Plan

July 2017

Recommendation / Finding	Response	Action	Owner	Date to be completed	Status
General					
Overall Peer Challenge Assessment of the Council.	The Council welcomes the Peer Team’s assessment of the Council and will consider their findings in developing and implementing its plans for the future.	i) DX to welcome the report and note the findings	DX	July 2017	In progress
		ii) Leader and Chief Executive to write to the Peer Team and thank them	Leader and CEO	July 2017	In progress
	The Council will agree an action plan.	iii) Hold a Member briefing to outline the findings and the response	CEO	June 2017	In progress
	The Transformation Programme Board will seek to integrate the agreed actions in to the plans of the Council as well as monitoring progress towards delivery.	iv) Hold officer briefings to outline the findings and response	CEO	June 2017	In progress
		v) Publish the Peer Review Report and the Council’s response on the Council website	Performance Manager	July 2017	In progress
	Progress in addressing the Peer Team’s findings will be reported through the update reports on Transformation to the District Executive.	vi) Incorporate the Peer Review progress reporting in to the Transformation Programme update reports.	Performance Manager	July 2017	In progress
Peer Team Recommendations					
1) Articulate the transformation vision simply and clearly. It is essential that all levels within the Council appreciate what you are trying to achieve and why. Create an approach to	Work has been ongoing since October 2016 on the Transformation Vision and the engagement approach. A summary of the vision was included in the Council Plan Annual Action Plan agreed by DX and Council in April	i) Transformation vision to be developed and agreed by Council as part of the Council Plan	Leader and CEO	April 2017	Completed
		ii) Transformation Communications and	Strategic Lead for Transformation	June 2017	Completed

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engagement that builds on written communications and emphasises face to face messages from the top	2017.	Engagement Plan to be developed. iii) Engagement events to be held for staff. iv) Engagement events to be held for Members	Strategic Lead for Transformation Strategic Lead for Transformation	April 2017 and ongoing through life of programme April 2017 and ongoing through life of programme	Commenced and ongoing Commenced and ongoing
2) Invest in further capacity as soon as possible. The scale of the transformation and commercialisation programmes is large and complex. You should invest in additional specialist resources now especially strategic programme management, commercialisation, strategic human resources, communications and marketing.	<p>The Council recognises the need to invest in capacity to deliver, in the form of roles, skills and experience, if it is to generate the benefits and returns it is seeking from both Transformation and Commercialisation & Income Generation.</p> <p>The capacity required to deliver Transformation has been considered in developing the detailed business case which was presented to DX and Council in April 2017. This provides for Strategic Lead and Programme Manager roles together with HR, Change Management and Communications.</p> <p>The capacity required to deliver commercialisation and income generation is being considered through the development of the Commercialisation Strategy, the Commercial Property Strategy and through the service design within Transformation (the first two informing the latter)</p>	<p>i) Council to agree detailed business case for Transformation including the resources to deliver the savings and benefits</p> <p>ii) Recruit Programme Manager, Strategic HR resource and Communications Lead</p> <p>iii) Council to agree the Strategy for Commercialisation and Income Generation and the Commercial Property Strategy, including the resources and approaches to deliver the benefits and income.</p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>Strategic Lead for Transformation</p> <p>Director of Commercial Services</p>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>July 2017</p> <p>August 2017</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Part Completed, part in progress</p> <p>In Progress</p>

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3) Develop a detailed implementation plan for your transformation programme as soon as possible. This will require detailed workstream outputs. Dependencies and integrations between these workstreams must also be identified and communicated. These should dictate the Council's timescales.	<p>The Council recognises the importance of robust a Programme Management approach and the need to adhere to best practice in programme management if it is to successfully deliver the programme and achieve the outcomes and benefits targeted.</p> <p>Detailed programme planning is well advanced and will be taken forward by the Programme Manager, to be agreed by the Transformation Programme Board.</p>	i) Detailed Programme Plan to be developed and agreed by the Transformation Programme Board	Transformation Programme Manager	July 2017	In progress
4) Ensure the Chief Executive and SLT have appropriate personal authority and visibility to see through the changes required. It is important that members understand their strategic role and allow the Chief Executive and his Senior Leadership Team (SLT) personal authority to implement the culture change and system issues which are part of the transformation programme.	The Leader and the District Executive recognise the importance of ensuring the CEO and SLT have the required authority and visibility to deliver.	i) Review the governance of the Transformation Programme ii) Review progress at Leader and CEO regular meetings	District Executive Leader and CEO	May 2017 Ongoing	Completed In progress
5) Make sure your Transformation Implementation Plan is adaptable, and explicitly includes how you will undertake strategic workforce development and	The Council recognises the need to ensure it has an adaptable plan whilst also ensuring it remains focussed on the objectives of the transformation and the target timescales for delivering changes and benefits.	i) Ensure sufficient resources for Strategic Workforce Development a) throughout transformation and b) ongoing after transformation ii) Annual Strategic Workforce	Transformation Board CEO / SLT	April 2017 December 2018	Completed In progress

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your desired cultural change. The plan must be adaptable to your own needs and capable of being adapted further as it proceeds. It needs to have a clear statement as to the development needs that will be required of the workforce and a definition of the cultural changes the Council requires.	Transformation has many aspects to it and the Council recognises that the most important aspect concerns people. The Transformation HR workstream has a focus on how we will support people through change and also how we ensure people are developing and adaptable to the ongoing change that the Council will have to go through post-Transformation. Budget has been provided for this in the detailed business case agreed by Council in April 2017. This will include the establishment and implementation of a Strategic Workforce Development Plan. The Council also recognises that the changes to be delivered through Transformation will require cultural change in the organisation and has been developing plans to support this including through engagement of staff in helping shape the future and in the development of its Attitudes and Approaches Framework.	Development Plan to be agreed by SLT iii) Cultural Change Plan to be presented to Transformation Programme Board	HR Lead	September 2017	In progress
			Strategic Lead for Transformation	August 2017	In progress
6) Create a co-ordinated commercialisation approach that has a clear focus on what areas you will and will not pursue. The Council needs to back up its commercial intentions with a clear council wide	The Council accepts the need for a coordinated approach to commercialisation and income generation. Work has commenced on both a Commercialisation Strategy and a Commercial Property Strategy. In	i) Council to agree the Strategy for Commercialisation and Income Generation and the Commercial Property Strategy, including the resources and approaches to deliver the benefits and income. <i>(repeat of action 2ii</i>	Director of Commercial Services	August 2017	In progress

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commercialisation strategy. This strategy must be realistic regarding which areas of commercialisation are most likely to be successful in and be clear where commercialisation will not be pursued. There is also a need to establish clear governance arrangements around this programme including the creation of new trading operations.	addition, commercialisation now forms part of Transformation and consideration will be given to what roles, skills and approaches will be needed to be successful in this regard as well as cultural changes and governance.	<i>above)</i>			
7) Ensure a more structured, rigorous and timely process to the assessment of capital investments. The Council should ensure that a clear criteria and process for determining capital allocations within its overall strategy is in place. This should support as far as possible its commercialisation/ income generation ambitions.	<p>The Council recognises that it has a healthy capital position but needs to use this in a focussed way to meet its income generation ambitions and its wider community priorities.</p> <p>Through the Commercial Strategy, revised criteria are being developed to determine capital allocations.</p>	Council to agree the Strategy for Commercialisation and Income Generation and the Commercial Property Strategy, including the resources and approaches to deliver the benefits and income. <i>(repeat of action 2ii and 6i above)</i>	Director of Commercial Services	August 2017	In progress
8) Take action to see if there are any 'quick wins' to help the Council's financial position by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing reserves and capital allocations to see if all are required. The Council has significant 	The council has set aside reserves for a variety of purposes, and recognises that it is important to review these to ensure they remain allocated to	i) Review and challenge earmarked reserves to ensure they remain appropriate, and recommend	S151 Officer	July 2017	In progress

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<p>reserves and capital allocations in addition to its unallocated capital receipts. The scale of these justifies review, as there may be scope for re-allocation or further support to revenue pressures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing charging for services and car parking. There is scope for a financial 'quick win' as regarding charging for existing services including adding premium charges when the service is 'gold standard'. 	<p>current priorities and risks. Similarly capital plans may change over time and supports a regular review of these.</p> <p>The Council agrees is it appropriate to review the strategy and policy for fees and charges including parking, including consideration of the pricing model applied for different types and quality of service.</p>	<p>any 'surplus' reserve is reprioritised or released to general balances.</p> <p>ii) Review capital budget allocations, including the schedule of 'reserved' schemes, and recommended de-prioritisation.</p> <p>iii) Review Treasury Management Strategy and investment of reserves to optimise investment income</p> <p>iv) Members will be advised of recommended changes to the Financial Strategy to include a target for income generation through fees added to the Medium Term Financial Plan, reflecting relevant regulations, freedoms, service costs and market conditions.</p> <p>v) Establish officer team to review income generating services with a view to increasing yield.</p>	<p>S151 Officer and</p> <p>S151 Officer and CEO</p> <p>S151 Officer and CEO</p> <p>Director of Commercial Services</p>	<p>July 2017</p> <p>August 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>June 2017</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress and ongoing</p>
Other Findings and Recommendations					
Economic Development - the peer team felt that the Council has not invested sufficiently in the officer resource to support the priority and that the size of the economic development team was small in relation to the task it faces		Review capacity in economic development to ensure it is consistent with ambitions through the Transformation Programme	CEO and Director of Service Delivery	April 2018	In progress

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Scrutiny of transformation and commercialisation - the arrangements for this were not clear to the peer team		Review governance of transformation including agreeing revised scrutiny arrangements.	CEO	April 2017	Completed
Section 151 - it is understood that plans are not yet being implemented for a permanent replacement. This position should be resolved as soon as possible and the new Section 151 officer placed at a level within the organisation that reflects the complexity and importance of the Council's financial position		i) Appoint an interim S151 Officer to provide appropriate financial leadership during transition to the new operating model.	CEO	April 2017	Completed
		ii) S151 Officer responsibility to be established within the new structure and recruitment undertaken.	CEO	January 2018	In progress
Management - In order to make progress at a sufficient pace the next management levels need to be embedded urgently		All Management roles to be included in phase 1 of Transformation Programme	Strategic Lead for Transformation	October 2017	In progress
The Council should ensure that it establishes clear governance arrangements for creation of new companies and commercial activities.		To be addressed through the commercial strategy.	S151 Officer and Director of Commercial Services	August 2017	In progress
A brand management strategy should be established if the Council intends to expand its commercial activities		To be addressed through implementation of the commercial strategy and through the Communications and Marketing Team proposed to be established through Transformation structure.	CEO and Director of Strategy	April 2018	In progress