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|  Executive 5th April 2017 | | Agenda Item No. 8 |
| Title | Response to the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge 2016 | |
| For further information about this report please contact | Chris Elliott Tel (01956) 456003 Email: chris.elliott@warwickdc.gov.uk | |
| Wards of the District directly affected | All Wards | |
| Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006? | No | |
| Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number | NA | |
| Background Papers | NA | |

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| Contrary to the policy framework: | No |
| Contrary to the budgetary framework: | No |
| Key Decision? | No |
| Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number) | No |
| Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken | No |
| No impact on direct service delivery. | |

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| Officer/Councillor Approval | | |
| Officer Approval | Date | Name |
| Chief Executive | 09.03.16 | Chris Elliott |
| Head of Service | 09.03.16 | N/A |
| CMT | 09.03.16 | Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt |
| Section 151 Officer | 09.03.16 | Mike Snow |
| Monitoring Officer | 09.03.16 | Andrew Jones |
| Finance | 09.03.16 | Mike Snow |
| Portfolio Holder(s) | 09.03.16 | Cllr Andrew Mobbs (Leader) |
| Consultation & Community Engagement | | |
| NA | | |
| Final Decision? | Yes | |
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1. **Summary**

- 1.1 The Council agreed to be part of Peer Challenge process organised by the Local Government Association (LGA) in 2016. The peer challenge was undertaken over the summer of 2016 and a feedback report was presented to the Council in September of the same year. In summary, the Peer Challenge found that the Council was doing many good things but could do even better if it accepts the recommendations and puts them into action. To that end an action plan is proposed for approval in response to the key recommendations. To help ensure and demonstrate that the Council is making progress, a follow up visit is advised in a year to 18 months' time.

2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 To note the LGA Peer Challenge report at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To agree to the action plan at Appendix 2, developed in response to the key recommendations of the LGA Peer Challenge.
- 2.3 To agree to a follow up visit by the peer team in 12 to 18 months' time.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 The LGA offer a Peer Challenge that is free to all of its members as part of its commitment to support Sector-Led Improvement. It is one of a number of resources made available to help t councils continuously improve. The peer challenge process involves a team of experienced elected members and officers who, as peers, provide practitioner perspective and critical friend challenge to help a council with its improvement and learning. It is voluntary process and councils are encouraged to commission one every 4-5 years.
- 3.2 The Council had its first Peer Challenge in 2012 and a follow up visit in 2014. After a further 2 years it was felt appropriate to undergo another Peer Challenge as part of this Council's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. The Peer Challenge was held in July 2016. The report prepared as the outcome of that review is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.3 The peer team found many good things about the Council but that in some ways it was under performing in that it could be doing great things. The Review peer team made 7 key recommendations. In response to these recommendations an action plan has been prepared which is attached at Appendix 2 to this report. This followed the implementation of one of the actions which was to hold an away day.
- 3.4 It is considered that the proposed response to the Peer Challenge Report will help the Council to clarify and achieve its goals, expedite its key projects to delivery and achieve improved partnership working. This though will require some internal focus for Senior Managers' and the Executive's time over the rest of the year.
- 3.5 Part of the commitment to undertaking a Peer Challenge is also agreeing to a one day follow up visit by the peer team in which the to help the Council assess and demonstrate progress. It is proposed that this be undertaken in a year to 18 months' time.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 This proposal is in line with Fit for the Future (FFF) principles of:

Service: To Maintain and Improve Services – as it will help the Council to better deliver its services

Money: Achieve and maintain a sustainable balanced budget – as it will help the Council better manage its finances.

People: Engaged and Empowered Staff – as it will help the Council to make sure it has the right staff in place and that they are appropriately supported and engaged.

5. Budgetary Framework

5.1 Neither the Peer Review nor the follow up attract a cost to the Council other than staff time. The cost of these activities is covered by the LGA's sector-led improvement programme. Similarly, the planned away day sessions do not attract a cost.

5.2 It is not anticipated that any of the proposed actions in Appendix 2 will generate a cost other than staff time.

6. Risks

6.1 The Council could be at risk in respect of its reputation if it did not respond to the key recommendations of the Peer Review Report.

6.2 None of the proposed actions per se generate a risk to the Council but the content of the work proposed when complete may do. As mitigation this will be assessed as each action is undertaken, completed and reported.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 The Council could decide not to agree the proposed action plan or indeed any action plan but this option has been rejected as the Council sought the review in the first place as part of its own commitment to continuous improvement and not to agree any actions to the recommendations would therefore be perverse.

7.2 The Council could decide alternative action in response to particular actions and whilst that is for the Council to consider what they might be, they are not easily to identify.