



PART B:	RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL
REPORT TO:	POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
DATE:	15 NOVEMBER 2018
REPORT OF THE:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE STACEY BURLET
TITLE OF REPORT:	CORPORATE PEER REVIEW REVISIT
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present a copy of the Peer Review team's revisit report, and highlight the key areas of development that have been identified by the Lead Peer Reviewer.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council is recommended to:
- (i) Note the content of the Corporate Peer Review Revisit report, which is attached at appendix 1.
 - (ii) Note the key areas of development that have been highlighted to the Chief Executive by the Lead Reviewer.
 - (iii) Approve the proposed actions for addressing areas of development outlined at paragraph 6.4 – 6.7.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Peer Review Revisit report and areas of development highlighted by the Lead Peer Reviewer provide an important reference point for Ryedale District Council. The findings presented represent an external professional view of our current performance. The Team included elected members and officers.
- 3.2 The 3 key areas for development, which have been highlighted, are critical for any strong and successful organisation. Ryedale District Council aspires to be a great employer, strong local authority and to make a real difference for everyone living, working and doing business in Ryedale. Addressing the findings will support us to achieve these goals.

3.3 The Chief Executive is new in post and has been carrying out her own review of the Council and its development needs. The 3 areas highlighted by the Peer Review Team have also been identified as requiring attention during this review.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS

4.1 Not taking action on these matters would not be recommended. The three areas highlighted by the Lead Reviewer requiring development – leadership, valuing the workforce and a strategic approach are critical pillars of a strong and focused organisation. To not take action would potentially result in a demotivated workforce, elected members and officers not focusing on their respective roles, and a lack of focus on the Council's strategic priorities.

4.2 Taking action is not considered to be 'risky' as programmes of activity have already been initiated to address the areas of development that have been highlighted by the Peer Reviewers. Please see paragraphs 6.4 and 6.7 for more detail.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT AND CONSULTATION

5.1 The Corporate Peer Challenge and the Revisit process offer Ryedale District Council with an opportunity to consider an external view of the Council's corporate arrangements and ambitions for growth.

5.2 The original Challenge process and the revisit involved consultation. This included partners, community representatives, elected members and staff.

REPORT

6.0 REPORT DETAILS

6.1 The original Corporate Peer Challenge took place in October 2016. The report and is attached at Appendix 2.

6.2 The Revisit took place in April 2018. The report is attached at Appendix 1.

6.3 The Chief Executive has discussed the report with Jane Toman, Lead Peer, who highlighted 3 key themes, which she recommends are the focus of any development activity:

- Valuing the workforce – comments from the Lead Peer spanned the need for learning and development programming, better internal communications and looking at and addressing capacity issues associated with the Council's operating model.
- Strategic Plan – the Lead Peer highlighted the need to ensure that a strategic and future-focused work programme is in place. There is a view that the organisation has a tendency to focus on operational and procedural issues, which means that medium and longer-term goals aren't being progressed in a way that brings greater benefit to the communities of Ryedale. There is a need to ensure that robust business cases, options appraisal processes, staffing and programme management are also in place to support this approach e.g. in the area of sustainable economic growth.

- Leadership – spanning officers and members, there is a need for a collective and collaborative approach that supports both to play their respective roles to the full.
- 6.4 The new Chief Executive has been undertaking a review of the current health of the organisation. This has included commissioning independent checks on key areas of the business such as HR and organisation development, information governance, health and safety, IT, performance and programmes, finance and legal services. The HR and OD has been completed with other health checks due to be finalised by early December. Following this, the results will be presented to Elected Members, with an action plan for improvement.
- 6.5 As a consequence of the HR health check, a series of activities are underway to improve our performance in this area and ensure that we are proactively demonstrating that we value our workforce. This ranges from leadership training for all managers, an organisational development programme, a review of policies and procedures, a refreshed approach to recruitment and retention, looking to address capacity issues within the organisation and stronger internal communications.
- 6.6 The Chief Executive is now turning her focus to the area of strategy so that the Council is able to deliver on its ambitions for Ryedale. This will particularly focus on the area of sustainable economic growth. It is anticipated that the results will be available for Elected Member consideration in the new year.
- 6.7 Collaborative leadership is also a focus. Efforts are being made by the Council's officer leadership team to strengthen working relationships with the workforce and elected members. Greater focus is being placed on communications and a transparent approach to areas like financial management. In turn, the new member development programme includes a focus on officer – member relationships and the elected member code of conduct. Collaborative leadership will be kept under constant review by the Chief Executive and the Council's Group Leaders so that a rolling programme of improvement is in place.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The following implications have been identified:
- a) Financial – there are affordable financial implications associated with acting on the recommendations of the peer review. For example, in the area of organisational development. This is considered essential investment.
 - b) Legal – there are no legal implications.
 - c) Other – there are positive staffing implications if we act on the findings of the report.

Stacey Burlet
Chief Executive

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