

Finance Peer Review – Council Action Plan

The following Action Plan has been developed to address the LGA Finance Peer Review recommendations. The Council's proposed actions are allocated to a responsible officer, with a clearly defined success measure and target date.

LGA Peer Recommendation		EEBC Action	Responsible Officer(s)	Success Measure	Target Date
1	Bring together into a clear strategic statement the change and recovery intentions of the Council.	1. The Covid-19 recovery plan - Build Back Better - was approved at Strategy & Resources (S&R) Committee on 19 March 2021. 2. Financial implications of the recovery will be assessed and factored into the Council's budget setting process for 2022/23.	Chief Finance Officer	1. The Council's budget framework and projections for 2022/23 will be reported to S&R Committee in September 2021. 2. A balanced budget for 2022/23 will be presented to Full Council in February 2022.	1. September 2021 2. February 2022
2	Review the approach to financial decision making and scrutiny.	1. The Chief Finance Officer will review the Financial Regulations and relevant sections of the Constitution, including the roles and responsibilities of different Committees. 2. The review will report to S&R Committee in November 2021.	Chief Finance Officer	The review will report to S&R Committee in November 2021, with any changes to the Financial Regulations/Constitution presented to Full Council for approval in February 2022.	February 2022

LGA Peer Recommendation	EEBC Action	Responsible Officer(s)	Success Measure	Target Date
<p>3 Consider how members and officers can adapt to support each other through the forthcoming period of change.</p>	<p>1. The Chief Executive will meet the new Group Leader to establish new working relationships.</p> <p>2. The Chief Finance Officer will devise a four-year training programme on local government finance for members – with a minimum of one session per year.</p>	<p>1. Chief Executive</p> <p>2. Chief Finance Officer</p>	<p>Training programme presented for approval at S&R Committee, with members subsequently offered at least one training session per year on aspects of local government finance.</p>	<p>1. June 2021</p> <p>2. March 2022</p>
<p>4 Ensure budget monitoring is considered by the relevant committee(s).</p>	<p>1. Material budget variances in excess of £100k are already reported to Committees, as per the Financial Regulations.</p> <p>2. The Chief Finance Officer will review budget monitoring procedures within the Financial Regulations and report to S&R Committee in November 2021.</p> <p>3. In the meantime and pending the outcome of the above review, quarterly budget monitoring reports will be presented to Audit, Crime & Disorder & Scrutiny Committee, commencing 2021/22 Quarter 1.</p>	<p>Chief Finance Officer</p>	<p>1. Financial Regulations review to be presented to S&R Committee.</p> <p>2. 2021/22 Quarter 1 budget monitoring report presented to Audit, Crime & Disorder & Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>1. November 2021</p> <p>2. September 2021</p>

LGA Peer Recommendation		EEBC Action	Responsible Officer(s)	Success Measure	Target Date
5	Refresh the approach to the Capital Programme.	<p>1. The Chief Finance Officer will review the Financial Regulations and relevant sections of the Constitution, including the approach to the Capital Programme.</p> <p>2. The review will report to S&R Committee in November 2021.</p>	Chief Finance Officer	The review will report to S&R Committee, with any changes to the Financial Regulations/Constitution presented to Full Council for approval in February 2022.	November 2021 / February 2022
6	Agree a new Local Plan as soon as possible.	<p>1. A programme for producing the Local Plan by December 2023 was agreed by Licensing & Planning Policy Committee on 4 March 2021.</p> <p>2. Funding for the Local Plan programme was agreed by Strategy & Resources Committee on 30 March 2021.</p> <p>3. Progress against the programme will be reported twice yearly to Licensing & Planning Policy Committee. Should funding implications arise, these would be reported to S&R Committee as appropriate.</p>	Head of Planning	Local Plan to be agreed by December 2023	December 2023

LGA Peer Recommendation	EEBC Action	Responsible Officer(s)	Success Measure	Target Date
<p>7 Given the Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2035, assess the costs of delivering this plan both in terms of revenue and capital</p>	<p>1. The Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration will assess the cost of delivering the Climate Change Action Plan and report the updated, costed plan to Environment and Safe Communities Committee.</p> <p>2. The Chief Finance Officer will include any known/agreed financial implications in the Council's updated Medium Term Financial Strategy projections.</p>	<p>1. Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>2. Chief Finance Officer</p>	<p>1. An updated, costed Climate Change Action Plan will be reported to Environment & Safe Communities Committee by January 2022 at the latest.</p> <p>2. Updated MTFs projections presented to Full Council in February 2022 to include known/agreed financial implications of the Climate Change Action Plan.</p>	<p>1. January 2022</p> <p>2. February 2022</p>
<p>8 Collectively reflect further on...progressing the work on shared services...in a phased and managed way.</p>	<p>1. On 16 March 2021, S&R Committee authorised the Chief Executive to progress further collaboration opportunities in the following service areas: waste, building control, IT infrastructure, housing, revenues and benefits, procurement, economic development and leisure services.</p> <p>Authorisation was also given to explore opportunities for collaboration on other service areas and with other local authority partners outside the above priority areas.</p> <p>2. Any concrete collaboration proposals that do arise will be presented to the relevant Committee with a business case to include the financial implications.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>At least one collaboration proposal, if viable, presented to Committee in the current financial year.</p>	<p>March 2022</p>