

Name of meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 21 December 2021

Title of report: LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Report

Purpose of report:

A progress report on Council activity relating to the key recommendations outlined in the 2019 Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge report.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – No Private Report/Private Appendix – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director – Corporate Strategy, Commissioning and Public Health 07.12.21
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	07.12.21
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	08.12.21
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Shabir Pandor (Leader of the Council)

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Elected members were involved in the peer challenge visit in July 2019. Scrutiny members and Group Leaders had input into the draft action plan.

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? This report and the action plan contain only aggregated and/or anonymised data and no personal data that identifies a living individual, no sensitive personal data such as health, religion, sexuality and ethnicity and no information about members of staff, users of services, or details of Kirklees citizens.

1. Summary

This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) with information on progress made towards addressing the key recommendations made to the Council through the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken in 2019. The report also references the changed operating context that the Council now finds itself in since the Peer Challenge originally took place.

OSMC are asked to provide comment on the updates provided within this paper, and to consider, given the significant progress that has been made on many of the recommendations, how the various related programmes of Council activity should be in view of the wider programme of scrutiny work going forward.

2. Information required to take a decision

2.1. A changed operating context

- 2.1.1. The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge took place from 9 - 12 July 2019. An Action Plan to respond to the report's recommendations was agreed by Council on the 15 January 2020.
- 2.1.2. Whilst the actions within the plan are still generally reflective of the way in which the Council has been responding to the recommendations in the report, Council priorities and the operating context have changed in the two years since the original Peer Challenge took place. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic significantly changed the operating context in which the Council now finds itself. In its response to the challenges the pandemic brought, the Council worked to updated priorities which needed to take precedent over the last 18 months. In addition to this, since the original action plan was agreed, many of the original actions have now been completed, and have changed focus because of the changed operating context. Some of the LGA's recommendations have now also been completely addressed – for example we've seen our two CCG's merge and begin to be superseded by new health and care governance arrangements, and KNH is now formally part of the Council as 'Kirklees Homes and Neighbourhoods'.
- 2.1.3. The Council is currently focused on leading and supporting recovery across services. In October 2021, the Council published its Council Plan (2021-23) with clear priority action areas going forward, along with associated deliverables and milestones. The actions within the Council Plan provide the Council with a clear focus for recovery activity and corporate improvement going forward. Recommendations from the Peer Challenge align to a number of the deliverables associated with the priority action areas.
- 2.1.4. Some of the recommendations within the LGA's report are still useful for informing our ongoing recovery, however, for the reasons outlined above, including acknowledgement of the significant progress that has been made against many of the original actions, this report does not provide an update against the actions within the original action plan. Instead, this report re-visits each of the major recommendations and presents information on our current position, how the context has changed, and what we see as the major next steps in these areas going forward for supporting our recovery and strategic planning. The report also indicates where related programmes of work are also already part of the wider scrutiny work programme.
- 2.1.5. For the reasons outlined in this paper, Officers propose that future reporting against the 2019 LGA Peer Challenge is covered as part of reporting against the 2021/23 Council Plan, with an annual progress report on the LGA Peer Challenge provided to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for information purposes. It is also proposed that Scrutiny agrees which work programmes related to the recommendations should be in view of the broader scrutiny programme of work going forward.

2.2 Progress against the LGA recommendations

2.2.1 The LGA report provided a series of **key recommendations** to the Council. The following sections provide an update on progress against each of these recommendations since the Peer Challenge took place in 2019.

2.2.2 **Recommendation 1 - Craft and tell your story, externally and internally; and put strategic communications at the heart of the organisation.**

The LGA report said that the Council had a very good story to tell but it had not yet been well crafted. The report also said that we needed more corporate capacity to tell the story successfully so that people can align themselves to it. Since the Peer Challenge, the Council has significantly increased its strategic communications capacity, and developed an approach to delivering strategic communications during the pandemic. Internal communications have also been considerably strengthened through the development of the internal managers group, and corporate listening circles focused on our recovery from the pandemic. Going forward, the implementation of a longer-term Communications Strategy, which addresses both internal and external communications, will enable the Council to really craft and embed our story as we move forward with our recovery.

Developing a Communications Strategy

Immediately following publication of the LGA's Peer Challenge report, the strategic communications team was re-structured, aligned to the Council's directorate priorities with additional capacity put in place. Following the appointment of a new Head of Service in 2020, and recognising the further demands for skilled communications input, the team expanded to provide additional management capacity and support. A key action set out in the Plan, was to deliver a Communications Strategy for the organisation. Preliminary work on such an overarching strategy commenced, including an early briefing with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder. However, once the pandemic arrived, we had to refocus activity on a more specific Covid-19 Communications Strategy. Over the last year, we have operated according to a specific Communications Strategy that was focused on the needs relating to the Council's response to the pandemic. This is now building into our approach to recovery and is central to the way in which we are currently focusing both our internal and external communications.

The service is now developing a longer-term Communication Strategy to be published in April 2022. The strategy will have three main elements, each of which will help the Council to deliver on the recommendations of the LGA Peer Review:

- Development plan – how the service can increase its reach and engagement with people and partners across Kirklees. How we can use data and insight more effectively, use a broader range of channels to reach diverse audiences and learn from best practice in our sector and beyond.
- Business Plan – how the service aligns its work with the priorities of the Council. A forward-looking plan that tells the story of the work the Council is doing across the range of services and develops themes that are meaningful to residents.
- Team Plan – how the team works effectively together as a group to make the most of our skills and experience. It will include our professional values and how we support each other to achieve the objectives of the plan.

Elected members will be a key audience for the strategy. We will be surveying councillors to find out how the service can assist them in their duties. We will explore the channels that engage councillors most effectively and how they can develop their own ways of supporting and informing residents about the Council's work.

Kirklees Leadership Team and Kirklees Leadership Forum

In January 2021, the Council re-launched its internal 'Council Manager's Group' – building on the success of virtually held meetings during the early stages of the pandemic in 2020. The 'Kirklees Leadership Team' and 'Kirklees Leadership Forum' meetings have worked to deliver a strategic programme of sessions focused on key Council priorities and has been successful in strengthening internal communications with Council staff and engaging staff to directly shape our approach to recovery over the last 6 months. This approach to building our internal communications has helped to strengthen the way in which we craft and tell our story internally, supporting a more coherent understanding across managers of the story we want to tell. Sessions over the last year have included: Strategic recovery planning and new ways of working post pandemic, the budget, working with the political leadership, working with councillors in a political environment, and achieving inclusion/tackling inequalities.

Recovery Listening Circles

Recovery Listening Circles with over 450 Council staff were held during June and July. The listening circles have been another important tool for engaging staff on our approach to recovery, including shaping our organisational values and embedding new ways of working following the fundamental shift in the way that we worked during the pandemic. The listening circles have helped to confirm a new set of values for the organisation and showed overwhelming support for the implementation of a new 'hybrid' model of working where Council staff will have a greater degree of flexibility in terms of where and when they work. The listening circles have directly informed and shaped programmes of transformation work including our Assets Strategy, our People Strategy and our related recovery activity. Further listening circles are being planned for the Spring of 2022 to continue this successful model of internal engagement, which provides a direct communication channel between staff across the organisation and the senior leadership. High-level points of feedback from the circles held during the summer include:

- Really positive feedback from staff on the fact that these have been held and the visibility of the organisations Leadership.
- Lots of emotional reflections on the past 18 months – people's mental health has really been affected but both in positive and negative ways.
- Teams really want the opportunity to go into work occasionally together (on a regular but not full-time basis) – to support relationship building and to provide emotional support. People are mainly missing other people and relationships particularly within their teams.
- We need to continue the development of wellbeing support to staff – particularly digital wellbeing at home.
- A range of feelings from people – many excited about the future but also plenty of people very anxious.
- Lots of benefits seen in relation to working from home – reduced travel costs, greater work life balance, environmental impact.
- Confusion about the rules and approach to managing hybrid working going forward – there is more work to do to support key messages and communications filtering down to all staff within the organisation.
- People want to know their HR rights under the new model – rights about working from home, payments, home worker rights, contract changes etc...
- Technological support and equipment provision have been brilliant for staff – however improvements have been suggested for a few snagging issues, for example introducing a clearer process for sorting out getting IT equipment home, also some issues relating to postage and storage.
- A lot of roles don't allow that flexibility – comments about what this all means for those on our frontline.

2.2.3 **Recommendation 2 - Develop and promote a high profile, permanent listening and dialogue action plan with residents and ensure system-wide coordination of engagement activity to harness the voice of residents.**

The LGA report said that by addressing this recommendation, we will ensure an ongoing dialogue with residents on all matters, particularly those of strategic importance, and that this will support the Council to use data, intelligence and insights to inform future service design and policy development. Since the Peer Challenge took place, and despite the pandemic, work to further develop a standardised listening and dialogue approach to harness the voice of residents has continued. Place Standard engagement has become embedded as our principal tool for engagement, and work to develop a new 'citizens outcome' – 'Shaped by People' has been completed. These initiatives, together with corporate survey information (such as CLiK) are now coming together to create a comprehensive picture of what residents are telling us they need from the Council. A new Data and Insight Strategy is also underway, and going forward, this will significantly help the Council to use our data, intelligence and insights to inform future service design and policy development.

Place Standard Engagement

The Place Standard continues to be used as our principal tool for citizen engagement. Over the past year much of this engagement has been virtual, however more recently face to face engagement has taken place for example drop ins, pop up stalls and small group discussions. There has been a steady increase in councillors, community groups and services wanting to host local conversations to hear how people feel about their place and some areas have now developed or are developing their local action plans. To date over 8,500 people have taken part in place standard engagement in 22 neighbourhoods and local places, across 16 wards (plus Council tenants from all 23 wards). Engagement has recently been completed to inform the town centre master plans for Batley, Cleckheaton, Heckmondwike and Holmfirth. So far over 1100 citizens have told us how they feel about their town centre now and what their hopes are in the future with feedback being used to inform project ideas and investment of £1.5M for each centre. A dedicated Place Standard Investment Fund has been approved to support neighbourhood priorities chosen by citizens in local places, starting with an initial £500k this financial year.

The Citizen Engagement Reference Group (CERG) also continues to meet on a regular basis to ensure the coordination of engagement and the development of the way in which the Council engages with residents and ensures their voice is heard.

Shaped by People – a new strategic outcome

As led by the Place Based Programme Board, we have worked with over 100 citizens, local organisations and New Citizenship Project to create a new shared outcome for Kirklees. 'Shaped by People: We make our places what they are' is our new foundational strategic outcome for Kirklees, which we have included in our 2021-2023 Council Plan. Shaped by People is about understanding and measuring whether citizens feel able to shape local places for the better. This outcome has been co-created through a range of workshops and conversations with a diverse group of citizen participants from all wards in Kirklees. It is a vision for enabling active citizenship, written in local people's own words. Our storytelling website www.OurStoriesOurPlaces.org is the home of 'Shaped by People', featuring citizens' stories and updates about this work as it develops, and encouraging participation. We will work with people to measure and track our progress towards this shared goal. We are currently working with local organisations to develop and test our measurement framework. This will include an easy-to-use starter pack of tools and materials for flexible and informal group conversations around particular areas and topics. As part of our measurement framework, we have also included baseline questions about active citizenship in the 2021 CLiK Survey. We are now beginning a wider programme of stakeholder engagement to help everyone understand more about Shaped by People and to encourage everyone to take responsibility for helping to achieve it.

Corporate data and insight development

The Council is developing a Data and Insight Strategy to help the Council to use our data, intelligence and insights to inform future service design and policy development. Progress with delivering aspects of the strategy is underway including the development of a new Data and Insights Function to support delivery of the Strategy.

The 'Current Living in Kirklees' (CLIK) adult population survey is currently live for 6 weeks. The survey is being coordinated by the Council on behalf of a number of Kirklees partner organisations and will provide valuable intelligence on a range of key population indicators and inequalities. Findings will be available in early 2022.

The findings and recommendations from a soft market engagement exercise for a proposed 'Kirklees Learning and Evaluation Project' (KLEP) were presented to the Kirklees Integrated Health and Care Leadership Board (KIHCLB) in September 2021. This project will help the Council to develop and embed a learning culture across all Council services together with key partners. The Board agreed with the proposal to commission an independent consultant to work with a number of partner organisations to undertake an initial 'discovery and engagement' phase. The outputs from this are likely to include (i) a 'toolkit' of existing Kirklees learning and evaluation resources including an assessment of their 'fitness for purpose' based on co-designed criteria which will provide a framework for subsequent phases; (ii) an assessment of our learning culture within and across participating organisations and our 'state of readiness' to develop and embed a learning culture; and (iii) a clear set of recommendations for how to co-design and embed a culture of learning in subsequent phases. This work will be commissioned in January/February 2022.

2.2.4 **Recommendation 3 - Implement the 'Collaborate' recommendations around place-based working and harmonise place-based initiatives, using the lessons learned from Community Plus.**

The LGA said they saw a lot of passion among people working in place-based initiatives but there was more for the Council to do in terms of making sure they are fully coordinated and brought together. The Place Based Programme Board continues to meet and since the Peer Challenge, it has reviewed its workstreams and membership and put in place governance and reporting arrangements to ensure the place-based programme is embedded within the Council and connects and aligns with other strategic priorities. The Programme Board continues to be the key mechanism for coordinating and bringing together place-based initiatives as recommended by the LGA.

A working group (subgroup of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC)) was established to determine and review the development of the approach to place-based working in Kirklees and how this approach would become embedded within the organisation and across Council partners. The final report to OSMC made a number of recommendations around key areas of work and ways of working in order to embed place-based working to ensure its effectiveness and to deliver the best outcomes for citizens.

Since the Peer Challenge, the Board has focused on key areas of work including:

- **Place Partnerships** have focused on improving mental health and domestic abuse outcomes since they were established at Annual Council in May 2019. The lead councillors have worked with their ward councillor colleagues and partners to ensure proposals developed are based on local intelligence and data as well as dialogue and engagement. During the pandemic and first national lockdown in March 2020, work was paused and resumed again in June 2020 and councillors were keen to start by taking stock in order to better understand the impact of the pandemic in their wards so they could ensure that any activity developed was able to lead to the best outcomes in their areas. During September

2020 and March 2021, the Place Partnerships collectively invested almost £1M in supporting people's mental health in local places and £400k in tackling domestic abuse.

Place Partnerships are currently focusing on Active Travel as their theme. Intelligence profiles/packs have been developed for each Place Partnership and shared with Lead councillors and ward councillors to start to identify local priorities and plan engagement with partners which will help to inform and shape proposals for investment.

A number of recommendations relating to Place Partnerships were made by the working group to OSMC in relation to budget allocation and theme development, geographies being reflective of what citizens identify with in their area, having a clear definition of place-based working with a well-defined role for councillors and ensuring there is a communications lead for place-based working in order to promote successes. These recommendations are currently being considered and addressed.

- **Development of Ward Partnerships** - The place standard tool is providing opportunities for councillors and partners to work with citizens to identify what is important in their area and take action together. In addition, a number of wards have long-established partnerships and infrastructures that bring councillors, Council, community and voluntary groups, partners and citizens together to look at local issues and find ways of improving them together. These partnerships are councillor-led and are supported to varying degrees by the Democracy and Place-based Working Service and are a real strength from which to build and learn. There are also ward based organisations and community-led groups which are important assets in the context of place-based working.

In order to harness the strengths of these different approaches and partnerships at ward level work is taking place to develop an approach that will create opportunities to join up in order to improve engagement with citizens, improve local influence and decision making, create more capacity, identify resources and opportunities that would not otherwise exist, recognise common goals, develop a shared sense of a purpose and build a stronger and more inclusive sense of place. This will require a nuanced and flexible approach with councillors at the heart.

- **Place Based Community Working (Hub co-ordination model)** - The four Hubs continue to evolve with a steering group that meets monthly to share best practice and develop ways of working that they hold in common. The four hubs meet fortnightly with a range of partners, and once the anchor networks are recruited, they will be incorporated into these meetings. The hubs are currently exploring how they can best utilise insight and intelligence, including Place Standard feedback produced within a hub area, to help identify immediate priorities, meet the wider system needs and also consider how they can make this information more easily accessible so it can be used by local services.
- **Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) support, infrastructure and strategy** - A small temporary Board has been meeting since May 2021 with a focus on VCS infrastructure and engagement activity, revisiting our strategy and underpinning relationship with the VCS. The Board is taking the lessons from the community response to inform the next iteration of the place-based working operating model. Working with the Mutual Aid Groups and VCS Anchors during the response to the initial pandemic, helped us make deeper connections to the sector and heightened the importance of working across sectors, and in a place-based way. As a result, we re-visited our Voluntary Sector Strategy and created a set of shared values for how we want to work together, in the context of our place-based approach. The 'We are working alongside' approach was co-created with the voluntary sector and health partners, and engagement to develop this approach will continue. Work has continued to develop draft VCSE Investment Strategy for Kirklees. Further engagement activity, led by third sector leaders, has taken place to better understand the current needs of those organisations who run/manage community spaces, and their support needs moving forward. Engagement with smaller grassroots organisations, many of whom are re-opening after a period of closure, is also being planned by the Council's third sector team to better understand the immediate challenges they are facing and their support needs.

All feedback will be used to help inform the VCSE investment strategy and action plan priorities. Briefing meetings have been offered to Group Leaders to ensure members are involved in the strategy development, to seek their input on the approach and the work that has been undertaken, to share what we have learned and explore opportunities to do things differently.

2.2.5 **Recommendation 4 - Strengthen the corporate centre to develop its capacity; and invest in the Council's ICT systems.**

The LGA report suggested that this will help to drive change across the Council and Kirklees for the benefit of residents so that the ambition that the Council has can permeate right through the organisation and into local communities. The LGA stated that investment in the Council's ICT systems will improve morale, productivity, performance standards and should make the organisation more efficient and effective. Since the Peer Challenge took place, the corporate centre's capacity has continued to grow and be re-shaped, which has helped to support a strong, strategic approach in our response to the pandemic, and now to help with longer term planning as we recover. Major investments in our ICT systems and wider infrastructure have also been made, including supporting an unprecedented shift in new ways of working during the pandemic which required significant ICT investments and effective technological support for the entire organisation.

Development of the corporate centre's capacity

Over the last two years, the corporate centre's capacity has continued to grow and be re-shaped, for example services such as Transformation, 'Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning', Communications, and Intelligence have increased capacity and have been re-shaped to strengthen the development of corporate strategy.

Our People Strategy is currently being revised and puts our workforce firmly at the heart of our organisation. The strategy and associated work programme are helping to strengthen both the corporate centre and services across the wider organisation. This is enabling us to achieve our vision and shared outcomes through a strong focus on great people with the right skills, mind sets and behaviours working well together. The People Strategy Programme has four key workstreams:

- Health and well people
- An inclusive employer of choice,
- Highly skilled, flexible and engaged people, and
- Effective and Compassionate Leadership.

Engagement with employees and People Strategy Board members on the outcomes and measures for the Strategy is complete, and the refreshed strategy will be launched in January 2022. Through the recent Recovery Listening Circles, employees have been consulted on the introduction of a new set of values for the organisation, and new ways of working as we recover from the pandemic. New ways of working and our organisational values will be confirmed in the revised People Strategy in the new year, and work to formally establish new working practices (a more flexible, hybrid model of working from home and in workspaces) is ongoing.

Investment in ICT systems

Having approved a new Technology Strategy in 2020, the Council is progressing with its implementation, keeping the recovery of the Council in focus. Since then, the Council has almost finalised the implementation of a new housing system and has started the implementation of a new adult social care system. The Council is also underway with the procurement of a new housing asset management and repairs system and a new asset management system for operational services. We will also be reviewing the marketplace in readiness for replacing our contact centre system. We've replaced two of our legacy nurse call systems in two of our care

homes as part of a major technology refresh in our adult care settings. We are also working closely with the NHS to look at wider benefits of technology including remote monitoring devices. We will be working in partnership with the NHS to assess the readiness of the CQC registered care providers to adopt IT systems, get reliable internet connections, devices and the skills staff need to move to digitising social care records.

The pandemic has brought to light issues around digital inclusion, and the importance of this for achieving broader inclusion across society. By the end of this financial year we will have directly provided or facilitated the provision of well over 10,000 laptops into schools, and we have turned on the national 'EDUroam' service for University and College students across all Kirklees Council buildings including libraries, leisure centres and care homes, allowing students to access learning provision and support in a much more flexible way. Going forward, the Council is working with partners across Kirklees to get a better understanding of digital inclusion, and to develop a strategic approach to this, following the many interventions during the pandemic so far.

2.2.6 **Recommendation 5 - Prioritise a decision on the long-term future of the ALMO.**

The LGA report stated that if Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing (KNH), our Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO) were to be brought back in-house, it would allow the Council to maximise the opportunity to embed place-based working into priority neighbourhoods and provide much needed additional corporate capacity to deliver key Council objectives. Since the Peer Review took place, an extensive engagement exercise with tenants and stakeholders was undertaken to support the Council to make this decision, and on 20 October 2020, Cabinet approved plans to transfer the management and maintenance of the borough's Council housing back to the local authority. This decision has established the foundation for improvements to homes and neighbourhoods for over 22,000 Kirklees residents. The results of this engagement exercise are being used to help inform place-based working into priority neighbourhoods. KNH's responsibilities successfully transferred to the Council at the end of March 2021, and KNH is now a part of the Council called Kirklees Homes and Neighbourhoods. All former KNH staff have been inducted to the organisation whether they remained within the new service or they were integrated into existing council functions, which has helped to increase our corporate capacity across a range of Council corporate services.

2.2.7 **Recommendation 6 - Streamline decision-making and bring greater clarity to the roles and responsibilities of Members and officers, including greater congruence between officer and Member structures.**

The LGA report suggested that this would enable Members to focus on developing policy and officers to implement and deliver it, and that this would strengthen Members' community leadership and Council ambassador roles. The LGA report said that the Council should look to develop a more agile and efficient decision-making system, which could involve reviewing the level of decision-making required and the number of meetings held to reach a decision. Immediately following the Peer Review, work to re-design the councillor role profile was undertaken and completed, and work to support the cultural elements of the decision-making process with officers, and the development of relationships with councillors (e.g., awareness and training of officers) has been ongoing.

At the 2021 Annual General Meeting, a motion was introduced asking the Council to consider the establishment of a Committee System. The outcome of this will have implications for any work to streamline and improve decision making process for the current system. Work is now underway to evaluate what currently works well, and not so well in relation to the current governance model here in Kirklees to inform the decision about whether to make any significant changes to the governance model. This work will also inform decisions about what needs to be changed or improved on in relation to the existing governance model if we do retain current arrangements. Going forward, work to review the councillor / officer protocol is also being planned, building on engagement on councillor standards and conversations with members, which will further help to bring greater clarity to the roles and responsibilities of members and officers.

2.2.8 Recommendation 7 - Consider reviewing the electoral cycle to bring it in line with councils that have adopted a longer, more stable electoral pattern with the strong leadership model.

The LGA made this suggestion as it believed it would provide us with greater stability, better continuity, and a platform for more longer-term decision making. Any changes to the electoral cycle would need to be considered as part of a broader boundary review for Kirklees. In July 2021, the Boundary Commission wrote to the Council seeking views about the preferred timing of such a review. Views of Group Leaders were informally sought about the potential timing of a review and as part of that whether there was any appetite to change the electoral cycle. It was established that there was no appetite to make any changes to the electoral cycle. A response to the Boundary Commission was provided on that basis.

2.2.9 Recommendation 8 - Push for the establishment of a single Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

The LGA made this recommendation as they suggested it would help enable the health and care system to move away from planning based around acute trust footprints and improve strategic planning and commissioning across all of Kirklees to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for residents, as well as supporting a shared clinical and political dialogue for the benefit of residents and patients.

After comprehensive discussion and engagement, NHS Kirklees CCG was formally established on Thursday 1 April 2021. NHS Kirklees CCG now serves a registered population of around 440,000 people and have a membership of 64 General Practitioner (GP) practices and remains committed to maintaining roots in local communities and working closely and in partnership with primary care networks, GP practices, Kirklees Council, health and care providers and other partners.

The 2021 Health and Social Care Bill is currently progressing through Parliament. The Bill makes provisions for establishing new health and social care governance arrangements across the country. In April 2022, a new Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership will be established for West Yorkshire. In Kirklees, the Health and Wellbeing Board will remain and will continue in its role developing and agreeing a strategy for improving health and wellbeing in Kirklees, working with the newly established West Yorkshire Integrated Care Partnership to develop health and care strategies for Kirklees in the West Yorkshire context. The legislation will also introduce local/place-based committees of the regional Integrated Care Board.

The Kirklees Integrated Care Board Committee will develop an annual plan to deliver the Kirklees Health and Wellbeing and West Yorkshire Integrated Care Partnership strategies and will arrange for the provision of health services in Kirklees. The purpose of these new arrangements is very much aligned to the comments made in the LGA Peer Challenge report at the time – these new arrangements should help local areas to move away from planning based around acute trust footprints and improve strategic planning and commissioning across all of the Kirklees district. Scrutiny will continue to be involved in conversations about the developing arrangements here in Kirklees.

2.2.10 Recommendation 9 - Risk appetite and delivery planning (this was included from the LGA's wider observations and was not part of the key recommendations)

The LGA report also referenced a need to consider i) a greater appetite for risk, and ii) the means of improving delivery planning. The Council included these elements in our original Action Plan as additional aspects we wanted to consider at the time alongside the original 8 recommendations.

Risk appetite

The LGA report said that we have good financial management arrangements in place, and that the Council considers risks through a Risk Panel of senior officers and the Corporate Governance

and Audit Committee. These panels remain in place and continue to play a valuable oversight role and work to raise awareness as to how risk is managed across the council. There has been further work looking at risk and our approach to it with Internal Audit. The approach to projects and how we manage risks forms part of that. Post-pandemic, recent public interest reports outlining the experiences of other councils will also inform our approach to risk and will be considered as part of this approach.

The LGA did also identify a 'lack of risk appetite' in the Council, which they said could constrain the Council's pace and ambition. The report said that existing governance processes should be strengthened to support a bolder approach to risk and opportunity – and that taking calculated risks will help the Council to move forward with the delivery of its long-term ambitions for the place and people.

Since the Peer Challenge took place, our ongoing investment in the Huddersfield and Dewsbury Blueprints, and our longer-term regeneration ambitions is an important demonstration of our increased appetite for seeking and investing in opportunities which will have longer-term benefits for our places and people. This provides clear evidence of the council's increasing ability to take more calculated risks for the delivery of our longer-term ambitions. Going forward, the Governance Review work referenced in recommendation 6, will also help to support the development of a bolder approach to risk and opportunity by improving the understanding of officer-level delegated decision making, and reviewing the current arrangements for more detailed decision-making on projects.

Delivery Planning

At the time of the LGA Peer Challenge, the Council was delivering a saving programme. The LGA report stated that the savings programme should be backed up with visible delivery plans which are regularly reported to the appropriate performance board and Members. The LGA also said that the Capital Investment Plan and Corporate Strategy should be synergised and that the Medium-Term Financial Plan needs to better reflect the Council's ambition and priorities.

Since the Peer Challenge took place, the Council has more strongly aligned its financial planning processes with our corporate strategy and put in place clearer financial delivery planning mechanisms. The Budget planning process aligns to our outcome-based approach to achieving our ambitions, as set out in the Council Plan. The most recent public budget consultation has also clearly reflected our outcomes-based approach, which should support a clearer picture of public opinions and priorities, aligned to corporate priorities and then subsequently the way in which we prioritise spending.

Efforts to make our broader corporate delivery planning more efficient and effective have also significantly progressed since the Peer Challenge took place. A 'Corporate Planning' function was developed to support key corporate planning tasks such as the development of the Council Plan, and the action plan associated with the Peer Challenge. Since the pandemic, this function has also been heavily involved in recovery planning and is developing a delivery planning mechanism for reporting on progress against the priority actions and deliverables in the most recent version of the Council Plan, which was approved at Council in October 2021.

During the pandemic, the Executive Team continued to receive updates on transformation activities where they were able to progress them alongside the response to the pandemic. More regular reporting on longer term transformational activity to the Executive Team has now resumed, with the Executive Team meeting as the 'Transformation Portfolio Board' once every 8 weeks. The Transformation Portfolio Board is now supported by a newly established, organisation-wide Programme Management Office (PMO) function, which is helping to improve consistency in transformation approaches and the reporting of activity and delivery planning.

Improved corporate delivery planning has an indirect impact on service users and citizens as it supports the Council to carry out its business efficiently and effectively, and provides more opportunities for transparency and accountability, for example through the public budget consultation, and the publication of the Council Plan.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Recommendation 2 in the LGA Peer Challenge report covers key activity relating to consultation and citizen engagement, including the Place Standard engagement work.

3.2 Working with Partners

The programmes of work highlighted in our responses to the recommendations take into consideration the way we work with and engage with partners.

3.3 Place Based Working

Recommendation 3 in the LGA Peer Challenge report focuses specifically on progress around our commitment to place based working.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Assessments of impact upon the climate and the effect on carbon emissions will be considered as part of each individual proposal / activity, through their own decision-making processes.

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

Although work to improve outcomes for children is not specifically referenced in the recommendations, the related improvement activity will support the organisation to carry out their work in relation to improving outcomes for children.

3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

The Service Director, Legal, Governance and Commissioning, the Service Director, Finance have been involved in the development of this report where relevant.

4. Consultees and their opinions

Service Directors and Heads of Service responsible for delivering the actions arising from the peer challenge were consulted in the development of this paper.

5. Next steps and timelines

Timelines and processes for reporting against the 2021/23 Council Plan are currently being developed as a key next step by Cabinet.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

- Officers propose that future reporting against the 2019 LGA Peer Challenge is covered as part of reporting against the 2021/23 Council Plan, with an annual progress report on the LGA Peer Challenge provided to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for information purposes.
- Scrutiny is asked to agree which specific elements of Council activity /work programmes related to the LGA recommendations (as highlighted in this paper) should be in view of the broader scrutiny programme of work going forward.

7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

- The Cabinet Portfolio Holder recommends that future reporting against the 2019 LGA peer challenge be covered as part of reporting against the 2021/23 Council Plan, with an annual progress report on the LGA Peer Challenge provided to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for information purposes.

8. Contact officer

Michelle Hope, Programme Manager, Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning
michelle.hope@kirklees.gov.uk

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

OSMC: 4 November 2019

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/s32177/Peer%20Challenge.pdf>

Cabinet: 12 November 2019

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=6243&Ver=4>

Council: 15 January 2020

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=6029&Ver=4>

10. Service Director responsible

Andy Simcox, Service Director for Strategy and Innovation