

LGA Peer Challenge Review – Response to Recommendations & Action Plan

	Recommendation	Response	Action
1	In the post-Covid context, reset and renew the vision, ambitions, strategies and plans for Rother, with a focus on key priorities and financial resilience.	Accepted	Cabinet have already informally reviewed the priorities and agreed the key areas to focus on. These relate to the delivery of key corporate objectives and will be reported to Members in the usual way.
2	Strengthen partnership work, utilise existing partnerships and create new ones to achieve the vision for the area and deliver for Rother.	Accepted	A review is underway of the Rother Local Strategic Partnership and local partnerships in general. To establish and Age Friendly Rother and Anti-Poverty Steering Group.
3	Urgently increase capacity to deliver and ensure that services are supported to succeed with key posts filled and expertise provided. Consider opportunities for shared services and joint working with other councils to increase capacity and counter recruitment issues.	Accepted	Increased capacity has already been introduced in project and programme management areas and this is already proving to be beneficial. Shared services are regularly looked at and when opportunities arise.
4	In light of the senior restructure, an exercise needs to take place to strengthen the cohesion of the SMT, supporting and developing key posts.	Accepted	Restructuring of the Management Team has already taken place and the next stages of the restructure are underway. Corporate Management Team membership has been extended to include managers reporting to director level.
5	Financial Stability Plan (FSP) needs impetus and urgent action in order to deliver the savings and income growth required. Ensure the plan is robust, and deliverable, with joint ownership and buy-in across the organisation.	Accepted	A dedicated project resource has been allocated to ensure delivery of the FSP objectives. A Devolution Officer Working Group has been established to oversee the transfer of assets/services to Town and Parish Councils and where appropriate community organisations.
6	Conduct an asset challenge. Review investments the Council currently holds to ensure they are achieving adequate returns in light of the new economic circumstances and policy changes.	Accepted	Proposal in place to work with the LGA/Local Futures to undertake a review.

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7	Create a Capital Programme Board to provide cohesion and act as a critical friend on key projects.	Accepted in part	The Council currently has a Corporate Programme Board (CPB) and a Property Investment Panel (PIP). The role of the CPB has recently been expanded to include the Financial Stability Programme and so it is proposed that this recommendation be covered across both these existing mechanisms.
8	Finesse the regeneration strategy, ensuring that proposals provide more detail to demonstrate deliverability, consider risks, social value and provide a cost-benefit analysis	Accepted	Proposals are in hand to develop a revised strategy as the economy continues its journey in the post COVID-19 era.
9	Urgently review the governance and financial viability of the housing company, producing a clear and robust plan that includes financial health, risks, and expertise, strengthening the integrity of the company.	Accepted	Work already under way on this area using external expertise.
10	Ensure that service risk registers feed into the corporate risk register to ensure rigour and transparency in the management of risk, with member oversight.	Accepted	A wholesale review has been carried out using our insurers, Zurich Municipal, of the Corporate Risk register and this will be extended into the service risks through a revised service planning process. The risk register is reviewed by Audit and Standards Committee.
11	Capitalise on social action and create a plan for asset-based community development, working with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).	Accepted	Rother DC has always worked closely with the VCS and will continue to do so. The approach put forward in this recommendation will also form a key plank of the new Leisure Strategy for the District.
12	Data collection, insight and analysis needs to be improved (workforce, demographics, and the local economy) to inform services and strategies.	Accepted	The second stage of the staff restructuring will deal with the use of data to inform our services and strategies .