

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Local Government Association Planning Peer Challenge – Update

7 February 2024

Report of Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the latest Update Report regarding the November 2022 Planning Peer Challenge (published January 2023).

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) **That Members note the Update Report.**

1.0 Background

- 1.1 This is the third Update Report following Lancaster City Council's Peer Challenge (November 2022). The Peer Challenge was requested by the City Council, and it was co-ordinated by the Local Government Association (LGA), working with the national Planning Advisory Service (PAS). The aim of the Peer Challenge was to independently review the local planning authority's operations and performance and consider how it can respond to the present and future challenges.
- 1.2 Details of the Peer Challenge process, including the LGA/PAS report (January 2023) and the City Council's subsequent response (the Implementation Plan 2023/24) were set out at the 12 July 2023 Overview and Scrutiny Meeting. Both documents were appended to the July Meeting report.
- 1.3 The LGA/PAS Peer Challenge was a positive experience for internal and external participants, with some pleasing outcomes. The recommendations of this independent review were fair.

2.0 Update Report

- 2.1 The Update Report Table is appended to this covering report. It provides details of progress in addressing the recommended actions. Each workstream activity is given a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating.

2.2 Since the previous Update Report, the PAS team have revisited Lancaster (25 January 2024) to assess progress. Informal feedback was generally positive. The PAS Team will shortly provide a summary of their visit, which if received prior to the Committee Meeting can be circulated. The Council anticipates that it will publish this letter.

2.3 There has been continued progress regarding the workstream activities. Some larger, structural workstreams will begin to be expedited once other exceptional workload (e.g. Supaskips emergency response) has alleviated.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 The next Update Report will be provided in six months' time, August 2024. It is envisaged that this will be the final update due to the (anticipated) completion of the workstreams.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):
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Some of the measures described in the Implementation Plan 2023/24 will have a positive impact in terms of service delivery, particularly regarding accessing relevant planning application information and improved guidance on the Council's website.
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LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications stemming from this report.
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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces
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None, all recommendations can be addressed within current resources.
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SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.
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MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Update Report Table, February 2024. |
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Contact Officer: Mark Cassidy Telephone: 01524 582390 Email: mcassidy@lancaster.gov.uk Ref: N/A
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