

APPENDIX A - LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE - DRAFT OUTLINE ACTION PLAN (MARCH 2023) v.1

CPC RECOMMENDATION NUMBER	RECOMMENDATIONS (GROUPED BY RELEVANT AREA)	PROPOSED OUTLINE ACTIONS
Vision and Priorities		
1	All Members need to identify what they have in common in terms of shared priorities and objectives for your Borough and your residents and use them to progress the delivery of your shared ambitions for Spelthorne.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Local Government Association (LGA) to be invited to come in at the outset after the May 2023 elections to help facilitate a number of sessions to get broad consensus on agreed vision and priorities. b. LGA to look at whether there is a broad councillor consensus around a member led Council or one where members and officers work together as a team. c. Undertake a ‘Strategy Day’ for all Group Leader’s (GL) with the LGA (which can then be fed back by GL’s to their groups). d. Find common ground that all GL’s can sign up to. e. Use Induction training programme to set out the CARES priorities and PROVIDES values in the current corporate plan. f. Use CARES priorities as a basis for the ‘Strategy Day’.
2	Then share your agreed political ambitions for the Borough to create a longer-term vision embodied in a broadly agreed Corporate Plan.	
Time to plan		
5	Take the time today to plan for tomorrow. Do not put off the ‘non-urgent strategic’ work you need to do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Agree at the first Council meeting after the May 2023 elections to continue with the CARES priorities for at least another year, to provide continuity and a basis for agreeing and setting a new strategy. b. New Corporate Plan needs to cover a longer period than four-years and needs to capture short, medium and long term plans/priorities. c. Undertake a prioritisation exercise. d. Be clearer on celebrating our achievements.
Officer/Member relations		
3	Take the opportunity you now have to reset the officer / Member working relationship and agree how it will work differently going forward for the benefit of your residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Schedule a further round table session where officers feed in views and GL’s listen. b. Officers to provide key information to councillors. c. Officers need to be able to clearly articulate those situations where it is not possible to find a solution, or where it would have significant financial, service, resource or equity impacts (link to new logging system referred to below)
4	The discrete but complementary roles of officers and Members need	

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	to be better understood by all to improve working relationships.	d. Consider how best to deliver the suggestion of a number of councillor/officer joint site visits, so that Cllrs can understand how officers work and the legislative background they have to work within.
6	Members need to respect officers' roles and give them the time and space to focus on delivering the important priorities you have agreed.	e. Develop a separate logging system for councillor enquiries (to better manage the process, ensure fairness, understand trends, key issues and response times) f. Consider how to best bring new Cllrs elected as a result of a by-election up to speed and briefed on the Council's processes, procedures and key policies.
Behaviour		
7	Recognise the risk of continued poor behaviour by some Members and the likely impact on the organisation and your reputation as a Council and a place. Take steps to address it.	a. Logging system and process referred up above is needed to ensure that there is equity in how Cllrs approach officers, and issues and responses are logged. b. There is a lot more mandatory training (planning, licencing, finance etc) and with the new cohort of Cllrs there is a greater opportunity to ensure that this is enforced. c. Suggestion that officers need to have permission to challenge Cllrs who have not done the necessary training and for them to speak to GL's to get this addressed d. Follow up on actions arising from the Extraordinary Standards Committee. e. Ensure that the Council's Code of Conduct is fully adhered to and endorsed/actioned by GL's. f. Mandatory training for Cllrs (e.g. on planning, licencing, finance etc) will be enforced. GL's will take up failure of any of their Cllrs to attend mandatory training within their groups, and accept that non-attendance will mean Cllrs cannot sit on the relevant committee. g. Use the new logging system referred to in 7a. above to ensure that there is equity in how Cllrs approach officers, and that issues and responses are logged.
Financial		
8	Continue your efforts to address the issue of outstanding audits of the financial accounts.	a. Ensure induction training is easily understandable and sufficiently focused on the role of Cllrs and Committees in budget setting, annual financial cycle, financial audit, investment portfolio and Knowle Green Estates and Spelthorne Direct Services.
10	Engage in financial training for Members to promote a better understanding of financial implications, project viability and creating robust business cases.	b. Review and refine training as required over time. c. Ensure all reports clearly spell out financial consequences of a course of action. d. Refine financial reports so that they are more visual and user friendly.

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	Committee	
9	Review the working of the committee system by looking at best practice elsewhere to consider how to create a system that is fit for purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use the opportunity created by the new cohort of Cllrs elected in May 2023 to assist all Cllrs to better understand the Committee System. b. Act upon the recommendations of the Committee System Review Group. c. Consider what is required in terms of chairs' training to deal with councillors who do not follow process and procedure.
	Engagement	
11	Improve the balance between communication and meaningful engagement whereby people feel listened to and heard. Use this in the context of evidence and need, to drive priorities and take people with you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Need to consider how we capture the views of those who do not engage, so that we get a wider understanding of the whole community, e.g. those who do not have housing, are in fuel poverty, youth who do not engage. Those who would otherwise fall through the safety net. b. Consider how we capture the views of the business community, and the younger demographic who need to be more invested in issues that will affect them more over the medium/longer term. c. Look at whether there are existing forums/meetings that could be used more effectively. d. Ensure that we regularly feedback to our communities.
	Support	
12	Consider how the LGA can continue to assist with the above recommendations on this reset journey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Engage LGA from the outset as soon as possible after the May 2023 elections to assist councillors in developing the shared vision, priorities and objectives and other areas identified in the Peer Review report.

Note: Outline Action Plan developed following a meeting of Group Leaders and senior officers – 9 March 2023

Purpose of meeting: Initial discussion (pre-election) of the twelve recommendations in the Peer Review document to enable Group Leaders to give officers their initial thoughts and enable the development of a high-level Outline Action Plan to be reported to CPRC on 17 April 2023.

Group Leaders in attendance to actively contribute to discussion (alphabetical order): Cllr Beecher, Cllr Boughtflower (Leader and Chair of the roundtable discussion), Cllr S Doran, Cllr S Dunn, Cllr I Harvey, Cllr Sexton, Cllr Mitchell as outgoing Deputy Leader.

Apologies (alphabetical order): Cllr Beardsmore, Cllr Noble, Cllr Siva

Officers in attendance to observe and assist (alphabetical order): T Collier, F Hussain, J Medcraft, H Morgan, D Mouawad, S Muirhead, L O'Neil, K Sinclair, J Taylor