

CPC Action Plan Summary: 6-month Review

Following the Corporate Peer Challenge which took place in November 2021, Lichfield District Council has continued to undergo a period of transition. We have been steadily working towards the nine recommendations that were outlined in the CPC report– with some of our objectives achieved and many more to be completed soon. Our [Being a Better Council \(BABC\) strategy](#) outlines the outcomes we want to produce for our community. This strategy has helped us focus on what is important locally and, with the right organisational design and culture, it will direct resources where they will have the most benefit. One of the recommendations made was for us to consider whether LDC had sufficient capacity to successfully proceed with the BABC programme at the scale and pace that we had initially outlined. Our response to this was to apply a programme management approach to help us ensure that all our objectives were realised. We have successfully achieved this with the introduction of dedicated programme management, leadership and business analyst support, the creation of a pool of change champions, the identification of resources, and set up of the BABC programme.

The CPC report further recommended that we develop clear outcomes for our strategic plan and identify resources and processes with programme management arrangements. The aim behind this is to produce a golden thread from our strategic intent to our delivery plans. This is well underway. We have looked to re-establish delivery plan targets by reviewing our existing targets and refining them by setting more meaningful goals, milestones and timescales in line with member mid-term priorities. The delivery plan was approved by [Cabinet](#) in May which established all delivery plan projects in an effective corporate programme, linking key data sets and outcomes.

We have been working hard to develop the understanding of BABC objectives. These are: being resident and business centric, being data focused, being performance driven, and being commercially minded. By the end of May, we will have reviewed member training to include coverage of BABC outcomes and how they relate to the role of members in their front line roles and delivered training on our updated structure by September. This will result in members considering how their frontline role could evolve to enable a full contribution to, and effective oversight of, the four outcomes of the BABC programme and increase resident engagement.

Building on this, we are investing time in our decision-making processes by applying a programme management approach to delivery plan outcomes. This also involves establishing a framework of effective corporate programme management. Although we have missed our original target date of March for full completion of this work, we are endeavouring to complete this as soon as possible to align the various project methodologies we use. We are working to deliver training on the use of programme management skills by September. This will allow us to embed skills in LDC and provide better project and programme management across the council.

Investing time is a long-running theme in our transition, as we are also working to improve the council's role as a leader and convenor of place. This was a recommendation that tied directly into our broader objectives and to achieve this, we are identifying areas for improvement using data and new partnership opportunities. Data will drive our decision making and support district wide improvements. More broadly, our Community Power Strategy (CPS) and 2050 District Strategic Plan will pull together our key ambitions and meet our new targets. By the end of May our new SPI data sets will be available. Using these, we will be able to use the data to support district wide improvements this summer.

Our CPS was approved by Cabinet in March and we are currently in the process of finalising a Locality Working paper. The paper will outline how we transition towards meeting the aims of the CPS. In addition to this, a cabinet paper outlining our plans for a Lichfield District Youth Council will also go to Cabinet as we look to further embrace our role as a convenor of place by providing young residents with a say over how their communities are ran. We anticipate that we will have rolled out our CPS by December 2022 with the development of the 2050 Strategic plan coming later this year.

Our CPS also directly correlates with CPC recommendation 7, which suggested that we review our communication and engagement strategy. We want to determine what the appropriate mechanisms are for communicating our progress as a council to partners and residents - particularly in regard to our key priorities. To achieve this, alongside embracing our community power model, we are looking to map the voluntary sector within the district and better use the data available to us. Subsequently, come September, we will be better equipped to develop engagement with stakeholders and residents. As of March 2022, we have also implemented a temporary restructure of our communications team and hope we will shortly have a permanent new structure proposed by Launch Box who are supporting us in this process.

This advancement will assist us with the Birmingham Road Site development as we develop and deliver a clear communications strategy targeted at residents and stakeholders. We have looked to set realistic expectations and thanks to our Interim Regeneration Director, we have established an effective corporate programme that includes all our delivery plan projects. A masterplan is being progressed and we will continue our comms engagement. A full communications and engagement plan will be implemented by December 2022.

A challenge faced by businesses and local authorities alike is the uncertainty surrounding hybrid working and how this post-pandemic model will operate. It was recommended that we take steps to empower our managers to independently establish with their teams how the model best suits them and our customers. Since November 2022 our movement towards achieving this has been significant. Following the ceasing of restrictions on the 26 January 2022 our teams now work within a well-established hybrid model. We have modernised our building to provide a more suitable workspace for staff, while our intranet pages have been updated and FAQs developed – all to help support our staff on the journey to establishing how the new-normal best suits them. Moreover, as of February, we have successfully implemented our Belonging and Wellbeing strategy, which falls under our BABC agenda.

Finally, it was recommended that we recognise, support and protect our tourism and economic offers. These are being supported via use or risk and recovery monies and development of our economic prosperity action plan. We have also included consideration of social value into our procurement strategy which outlines clear social value ambitions to support the high-level outcomes we want to achieve for our community. In the medium term priorities, members have put a target of 40% of all relevant procurements over £10K to include social value. While for procurements that require a procurement initiation plan there is a 10% weighting to social value unless otherwise agreed by the procurement manager. Our Economic Prosperity action plan have been developed and is being implemented by the Economic Development team.