

# Peer Review

November 2021

33



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

# Five key recommendations

1

**Restate and redefine a clear narrative about the Council's ambitions for its residents and the future vision for Wokingham - the place, the people and the opportunities.**

## What will we do?

We are refreshing our Council Plan that sets out our ambitions for the borough; this will reflect key post-pandemic concerns such as equalities and poverty as well as changes to health and social care, the ongoing climate emergency and uncertain financial future. We will promote this vision to residents through dynamic marketing and engagement that promotes a sense of civic pride and celebrates success.

## Supporting recommendations

34

Further embedding of the Council vision to act as a golden thread throughout all the strategies, identifying the impact that the adopted strategies have on the council's priorities and delivery plans and consider future opportunities there are for building citizen pride through place making

Identify the impact the adopted strategies have on the council's priorities and delivery plans and what a priority and non priority means. Also invest in identifying how the outcomes of the adopted strategies will be evaluated, analysed and reported against

Undertake a communications review to support building a communications and engagement strategy to use social media to show success and citizen pride in a proactive way to build and share the future vision identified in the Key Recommendations

# Five key recommendations

2

**Recognise the role of council leadership in community and place leadership – and sometimes that means taking criticism and tough decisions**

## What will we do?

We will work with partners, including town and parish councils and the wider community, to involve them in decisions and support them to take ownership of the issues that matter most to them. We will clearly set out our purpose and explain the decisions we take – including those that are most challenging

## Supporting recommendations

Consider how to make Overview and Scrutiny more about positive challenge and producing good policy and less dominated by party political debate. Also, ensuring regular opportunities for member development particularly on overview and scrutiny, modelling equality and diversity & behaviours that underpin good governance and visible leadership

Recommend a review of the current election cycle

Review whether the reporting and reporting lines of deputy chief executive, monitoring officer and head of internal audit represent good governance

Define the accountability and responsibilities of Executive, Scrutiny and the Corporate Leadership Team and the differences between the roles and what that means for civic leadership. Then clarify the roles of statutory officers, their lines of accountability and how you hold each other to account to drive improvement



# Five key recommendations

3

Ensure that there is adequate capacity in core corporate services to drive forward change where needed – HR, Finance, change

## What we are doing:

We will build on the success of our change programmes to make sure we have the right structures and resources to develop services in line with residents needs and aspirations. Our Corporate Leadership Team will oversee this to make sure there is the capacity needed and that it is targeted at the right priorities.

## Supporting recommendations

36

Restate what risk management and mitigation means for the organisation, who is accountable for delivering it and what the consequences on non-delivery are.

Develop financial scenario planning to test and flex wide scale savings plans. To enable the Council to 'future proof' its future financial sustainability in the advent of significant potential financial pressures

Ensure that the Finance, HR & Change functions have appropriate resource and capacity to deliver what the council needs.



# Five key recommendations

4

Continue to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for members and officers, and through the delivery of services

## What will we do?

We will continue successful delivery of our Equality Plan Action Plan to ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded into all service delivery. We will also review our codes of conduct (for elected members and officers) against behaviours that support good governance and leadership.

## Supporting recommendations

Build on the Council's ethos as a "place for growth" by developing a strategic approach to organisational development, including talent management, leadership development, organisational culture and through continuing to promote its role in equality, diversity and inclusion

Articulate and accelerate an ambitious Organisational Development strategy including a clear employer brand



# Five key recommendations

5

Ensure there is a commitment to a long-term vision for the Borough co-designed and co-delivered with partners to become the focus for the entire community

## What will we do?

We will engage with the community as part of our Corporate Plan review that will look at the next few years and beyond to shape our longer term vision

## Supporting recommendations

<sup>38</sup> The Council has introduced co-production as part of the development for new strategies, for example Domestic Abuse, VCS strategy, Anti-Poverty.

It is recommended that this approach continues and, to further enhance it, the new Engagement Platform should be exploited to support early opportunities to seek the voice of the customer and partners in strategic planning