

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

25 June 2014

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 PEER CHALLENGE REPORT

Summary

To provide Members with the Corporate Peer Challenge report issued by the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review Team

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Members will be aware that a corporate peer challenge, led by a team organised by the LGA, took place at the end of April 2014. The review was based around a number of core guiding questions, common to all peer challenges.

- Does the council understand its local context and has it established a clear set of priorities?
- Does the council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that this is being implemented successfully?
- Does the council have effective political and managerial leadership and is it a constructive partnership?
- Are effective governance and decision-making arrangements in place to respond to key challenges and manage change, transformation and disinvestment?
- Are organisational capacity and resources focused in the right areas in order to deliver the agreed priorities?

1.1.2 The chosen theme for local review at Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council was

- Consider the approach to economic regeneration and in particular whether the council has the right strategy and the capacity to get to where it wants to be.

1.1.3 The review team considered a short pre submission supported by some key documents such as the corporate plan, budget statements and committee reports.

Their assessment was then further informed by meetings with Members, Management Team, other relevant staff and with other agencies external to the Council. The programme was reported in full to Cabinet on 25 March 2014.

1.2 The Corporate Peer Challenge Report

- 1.2.1 The LGA have now issued the report on behalf of the Peer Review Team. The full report is attached at Annex 1.
- 1.2.2 Members will appreciate that there has been little time to fully consider the contents of the report in relation to forward looking recommendations. I would however suggest that the overall tone of the report is to endorse the approach adopted by the Council over the last 2 years, whilst also reinforcing the challenges we know we face looking to the future.
- 1.2.3 There are a number of strands that will serve to focus our thoughts around both the corporate themes, and also in relation to the economic regeneration agenda. These matters need to be given thorough and careful reflection over the coming months to ensure that important changes we may need to consider are well understood and prepare the organisation for the future. I therefore propose that a more detailed evaluation of the report be undertaken over the coming months for consideration by Cabinet at the October meeting.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 None

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The peer challenge review was undertaken at no cost to the Council. It does however provide a thoughtful insight for us to reflect on to help us achieve best value services into the future.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 This report can help us consider options as to how we might manage future challenges and risks especially in relation to achievement of our corporate priorities within an increasingly challenging financial context. It is important to carefully reflect on the issues raised.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 The peer review team be thanked for the work, and the clarity and thoughts expressed in the report.

1.7.2 A further detailed report on the issues raised be submitted to a future meeting of Cabinet.

Background papers:

contact: Julie Beilby

Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	This report does not make any recommendations that would impact on service users, members or staff
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	N/A	As above
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.