**Hertsmere Corporate Peer Challenge 2024 – ACTION PLAN**

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| **Recommendation** | **Action** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Officer** | **Portfolio Lead** |
| **Recommendation 1:** Develop a clear and compelling narrative of Hertsmere’s ‘offer’ and vision as a place. | In conjunction with our partners, Cabinet and Senior Managers develop a place vision which articulates our aspirations for the borough.  To include:   * Sustainability as a key thread, reiterating our commitment to net zero. * The views of our local community (via the Hertsmere Together Community Conference) | Commence January for Approval May 2025 | All Senior Management Team / Chief Executive | Leader/  Deputy Leader |
| **Recommendation 2:** Through wider involvement across the political and managerial leadership, develop a clearer strategic direction for the council – centred on a defined manageable set of priorities. | Hold a joint Cabinet and Senior Management Team away day with an external facilitator to develop a manageable set of priorities and agree the vision. | January/February 2025 | Senior Management Team | Cabinet |
| Corporate Plan 2025/26 to reflect updated priorities. | May 2025 | Chief Executive | Leader/Deputy Leader |
| Hold regular joint Cabinet / SMT meetings to identify key priorities and manage delivery of Corporate Plan.   * Utilise one Management Board per quarter. | 4 x per year ongoing | Chief Executive | Leader/  Deputy Leader |
| **Recommendation 3:** Consider the range of elected member forums and bodies that exist and the extent to which they are fulfilling their objectives and securing sufficient benefit – all in a context of overview and scrutiny currently lacking clarity of purpose and depth of understanding around the potential it can offer. | Carry out a review of governance arrangements with the aims of reducing duplication and providing focus and direction for scrutiny:  To include:   * Decision making cycle and structures * Role of Scrutiny * Role and function of Member Panels * Consideration of alternative models and best practice examples. | Before Annual Council May 2025 | Head of Legal & Democratic Services | Cabinet |
| Implement the recommendation of Council in September 2025 to appoint an independent member on Audit Committee | Approved at Council September 2024 | Head of Legal & Democratic Services | Finance and Budget/ Leader |
| Incorporate benchmarking information into performance reports as part of quarterly monitoring to ensure performance management is focused on service delivery in the context of similar authorities. | As of Q3 reporting (March 2025) | Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement | Communities, Neighbourhoods, Enforcement, Economic Development & Transformation |
| **Recommendation 4:** Create an elected member development programme tailored to need and learning style and providing networking and insights beyond Hertsmere. | Build on and develop the existing Member Development Programme.  To include amongst other things:   * Increase core training modules to include (but not limited to) safeguarding, VAWG, media and communications, resident engagement, equalities, personal safety * Identify and promote external learning opportunities * Introduce a mentoring system within the group (with consideration given to incorporating senior officer mentors as required) | Full launch Election 2027 but work to begin immediately and ongoing | Head of Legal & Democratic Services | Resources IT & Digital Transformation |
| **Recommendation 5:** Adopt a Casework management system for elected member casework and enquiries. | Implement a casework management system giving full consideration to the range of external software systems available, comparing these with the abilities of existing systems to deliver the best outcome. | September 2025 | Customer Service Operations Manager | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| **Recommendation 6:** Consider fundamentally what the future is for the council’s wholly owned subsidiaries. | In the light of the agreed Vision, incorporate the future of the Wholly Owned Subsidiaries into the updated Financial Strategy. | Summer 2025 (see Recommendation 8 below) | Head of Finance & Business Services | Finance & Budget |
| Conclude and implement the current review into the future of Elstree Film Studios. | December 2025 | Head of Legal & Democratic Services | Leader |
| **Recommendation 7**: Commission an expert review of the governance arrangements around the wholly owned subsidiaries. | Work with Local Partnerships to carry out a self-assessment and assurance exercise into the ongoing governance of Hertsmere Development Limited.  See above for Elstree Film Studios | December 2025 | Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement / Managing Director HDL | Finance and Budget  /  Chair of HDL |
| **Recommendation 8:** Deliver on the commitment to review and report the council’s Financial Strategy. | Undertake a full update of the Financial Strategy as part of the wider refresh of supporting plans and strategies following the establishment of an updated Vision and Corporate Plan. | Some elements delivered through the budget setting process  Publication of Strategy Summer 2025 | Head of Finance & Business Services | Finance & Budget |
| **Recommendation 9**: Satisfy itself as a council that it is doing all it can to ease the recruitment and retention challenges. | Undertake a full update of the People Strategy as part of the wider refresh of supporting plans and strategies following the establishment of an updated Vision and Corporate Plan | April 2025 | Acting Head of Human Resources | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Refresh the Hybrid Working Policy to reflect the concerns raised through the Peer Challenge process. | To Personnel Committee February 2025 | Acting Head of Human Resources | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Carry out a full review of the Senior Management structure with a view to building strategic capacity. | April 2025 | Chief Executive | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Conclude the ongoing review into the pay and grading structure and implement the findings | Pay review report received November 2024  Implemented by June 2025 | Acting Head of Human Resources | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Conclude the development of and roll out a Development Programme to support middle managers to become future leaders for the organisation. | April 2025 | Acting Head of Human Resources  / ALL | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Ensure all staff are receiving regular appraisals and the roll out of the Clear Review Performance Management System is complete. | Ongoing | ALL | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Identify and implement ways to improve communication between staff and senior managers. | Ongoing | Corporate Communications Manager / ALL | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation / Consultation, Comms & Asset Management |
| Celebrate success more widely including encouraging staff to contribute to journals, enter awards, hold more regular staff events | Ongoing | Chief Executive / Acting Head of Human Resources | Consultation, Comms & Asset Management |
| Implement a communications programme to encourage recruitment which links to the LGA’s national recruitment campaign | Films completed October 2025, wider campaign to run January 2025 | Acting Head of Human Resources / Corporate Communications Manager | Resources, IT and Digital Transformation / Consultation, Comms & Asset Management |
| **Recommendation 10:** Act upon staff wanting to feel that the organisation takes their personal safety seriously. | Reconfigure the reception area to improve staff safety | Spring 2025 | Head of Asset Management | Consultation, Comms & Asset Management |
| Roll out training for staff who deal with complex and difficult customers | Ongoing | Acting Head of Human Resources | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Roll out training for managers to support staff who deal with complex and difficult customers | Ongoing | Acting Head of Human Resources | Resources, IT & Digital Transformation |
| Share corporate response to incidents relating to staff safety more widely e.g. prosecutions/sanctions | Ongoing | Corporate Communications Manager | Consultation, Comms & Asset Management |