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| <b>Committee(s):</b> Policy, Resource & Economic Development  | <b>Date:</b> 23 November 2022 |
| <b>Subject:</b> Corporate Peer Challenge Update   | <b>Wards Affected:</b> All    |
| <b>Report of:</b> Steve Summers, Strategic Director   | <b>Public</b>                 |
| <b>Report Author:</b><br>Name: Sarah Bennett, Director of Data & Customer Insight<br>Telephone: 01277 312948<br>E-mail: sarah.bennett@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk | <b>For</b><br>Information     |

### Summary

Brentwood Borough Council invited the Local Government Association to conduct a Corporate Peer Challenge in November 2021. The Peer Team issued their Feedback Report on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022. Alongside a number of positive reflections, the report included a series of recommendations for the council to implement. Subsequently, at Ordinary Council on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022, (min 367 refers), an Action Plan to deliver the Peers recommendations was agreed. This report updates members on the progress of this Action Plan.

### Main Report

#### **Introduction and Background**

1. Brentwood Borough Council invited the Local Government Association to conduct a Corporate Peer Challenge in November 2022. The review took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021.
2. Corporate Peer Challenges are conducted by experienced Member and Office peers from across local government who are chosen to reflect the requirements and focus of the review.
3. They are improvement focussed and tailored to meet individual councils' needs. They are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement plans.
4. The Peer Team spoke to councillors, officers, partners and stakeholders. At the end of the site visit the Peer Team provided a presentation of their findings.
5. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022, the council received the Peer team's Feedback Report, which contained recommendations for areas the council could improve.
6. At Ordinary Council on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022, (min 367 refers), an Action Plan to deliver the Peers recommendations was agreed. It was also agreed that updates on the Action Plan would be reported to Policy, Resource & Economic Development Committee.

7. In accordance with the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge process, the Feedback Report and Action Plan are published on the council's website.

### **Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

8. The Council has made significant progress towards the Peers recommendations, and an update is provided in Appendix A.
9. The Corporate Peer Challenge process includes a six-month progress meeting. This meeting is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and will provide the council's Leadership Team with an opportunity to update the Peer team on its progress against their recommendations.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

10. To ensure that the Peer Review recommendations are implemented and regularly reviewed.

### **Consultation**

11. None

### **References to Corporate Plan**

12. The Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan helps assess the effectiveness of the Council to deliver against the key priorities set out within the 2020-25 Corporate Strategy.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial Implications**

**Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)**  
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(TO BE ADDED)

#### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Steve Summers, Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500/[steve.summers@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:steve.summers@brentwood.gov.uk)**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### **Economic Implications**

**Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director of Place**  
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Growing the economy is a corporate objective measured by the council and relevant to the peer review process. A local authority that is reviewed by peers, and where

performance on recommendations is monitored, is good for the positive running of the local area, and by extension local economy.

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

**Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Partnerships, Leisure & Funding Manager**

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**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

(TO BE ADDED)

**Background Papers**

Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report

**Appendices to this report**

Appendix A: Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan - Update