

RAG	Status
R	Action in progress needs intervention
A	Action in progress needs attention
G	Action in progress no issues
B	Action completed
	Action not started/on hold

Brentwood Borough Council

Corporate Peer Challenge

Action Plan (Updated Nov 2022)

Ref	Recommendation(s)	Lead	What we will do	Progress	RAG
PR1	Build your capacity to deliver your ambitions – there is insufficient resilience in the system to deliver all the councils' aspirations.	Chief Executive	The council has agreed a strategic partnership with Rochford District Council (Jan 2022). This will assist both councils with financial efficiencies while also providing organisational resilience through the creation of one team across two sovereign council areas.	<p>The governance, including S113 document, have been developed. Key Change Champions (KCC) training has taken place alongside a developing timeframe to review services ready for roll out from October 2022.</p> <p>Alignment of Tiers 1, 2 & 3 are complete, with 3 of the 9 Directorate posts filled by interim resource. Permanent recruitment is set to take place in the new year.</p> <p>To assist, a Policy & Delivery Directorate was created from 1st Aug 2022 and has begun to drive forward the programme of work that will deliver the OneTeam transformation.</p>	G

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				<p>The vacancy factor currently lies at 4%, but we are building resilience through the new strategic partnership.</p> <p>Business cases will identify the need for integrated services delivering savings and efficiencies.</p>	
PR2	<p>Prioritise on your key projects – Focus on delivering a smaller number of key projects at pace and within the capacity available to avoid undue pressure.</p>	Chief Executive	<p>The strategic partnership with Rochford District Council will assist in enabling both councils to focus and priorities key outcome that have the most impact on our residents and businesses. This will be achieved through a clear and ambitious joint vision and aligned Corporate Strategies/Business Plans.</p>	<p>Work has begun to develop an aligned Business Plan and Corporate Strategy for both Rochford and Brentwood Councils, with similar objectives and outcomes. This will assist the development and delivery of key projects for both organisations. It is intended that this aligned business plan will be in position by the end of 2023 with work already started with officers at a recent workshop.</p> <p>Resourcing and scheduling will be key to ensuring the organisation continues to deliver its priority targets and, as such, HR, Communications and ICT have already begun to develop their OneTeam approach. This will enable the outcomes of the service reviews to be delivered at pace without unnecessary hold ups due to enabling services not being aligned.</p>	G

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				Recognition of budget constraints is having an impact on our ambition, particularly capital projects. We have been impacted by rising costs and inflation, so a natural refocus, and likely reduction in the scope of projects, is occurring as a result of this.	
PR3	Invest in success – Develop a new workforce strategy, align pay, refresh and implement corporate learning and development.	Director of Resources	This is a fundamental first phase of the partnership with Rochford District Council. The intention is to complete this work on the People Strategy by the end of 2022/23.	<p>Work has begun on aligning pay scales and terms and conditions as part of the partnership with Rochford District Council. This work was supported by the approval of a joint pay statement which was approved earlier this year and the early service review of HR which has already seen a joint HR manager in position. Pay harmonisation and T&Cs for both Rochford & Brentwood are being taken to committee for approval by end Jan 2023.</p> <p>An exercise was undertaken to develop a set of values and behaviours. In line with the OneTeam programme, we are looking to create a set of common values and will build on these and the workforce strategy over the coming months. We are also looking at our corporate learning and development, seeking to redesign this to support the</p>	G

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				<p>outcomes of the partnership and strategy.</p> <p>Many of the Tier 3 posts have been appointed to internal candidates, a reflection of our investment in developing our workforce and “growing our own”. A second Aspiring Managers programme is underway, which has now also extended to Rochford teams.</p>	
Ref	Recommendation(s)	Lead	What we will do	Progress	RAG
PR4	Grow your political leaders – Develop and empower councillors to efficiently succession plan.	Leader	We will work with the Local Government Association alongside the Member Development programme within the organisation.	The Leader has now put 4 Conservative Group Members onto LGA leadership development programmes with a 5 th to follow, after May. The Leader also conducted a training needs assessment with an external company in Jan 2022.	G
PR5	Develop a more diverse budget strategy – Expand the focus to include efficiencies through transformation, partnership working and future opportunities.	Director of Resources	Work has already begun to develop a more diverse budget strategy. Such measures will be included within the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy which is linked to our Business Plan and priorities. These will be presented to Members as part of the Budget setting process.	<p>Committee reports are now reported using the Corporate Strategy headlines. This has allowed members to understand how budgets support delivery of the strategy.</p> <p>Work has begun with CLT and ELT to look at efficiencies and opportunities within their service. This will be presented to members to gauge their appetite on proposals. The key focus</p>	G

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				will be the OneTeam transformation workstream. Once this is embedded, future opportunities can be identified.	
PR6	Rationalise the investment structure – Review the interrelation of Brentwood Development Partnership (BDP), Seven Arches Investments Limited (SAIL) and BBC.	Chief Executive	The council has a number of delivery vehicles. Work is being undertaken to review the outcomes and benefits of using these different models.	<p>A review of the investment structure will be undertaken by the Strategic Director (Deputy Chief Exec) and a report made to the appropriate committee.</p> <p>SAIL brings quarterly updates of the business performance and performance of the asset portfolio to PRED committee so that Members are kept up to date.</p>	A

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PR7	<p>Promote the “Brentwood Way” – The culture of BBC is the councils unique selling point to continue to grow and develop and maximise externally.</p>	Chief Executive	The council will establish a new communications and engagement strategy that will ensure this opportunity is maximised. The intention is to create and adopt a new strategy within the first year of the partnership with Rochford District Council.	<p>We have engaged additional resource (starting October) to create capacity so the service can develop a communications and engagement strategy. This strategy will identify the two organisations’ unique selling points and determine the best strategic options to leverage opportunities arising from this.</p> <p>This includes developing a Rochford/Brentwood way, in line with the OneTeam transformation. To achieve this, the organisation appreciates the need to develop a culture that embraces, and does not fear, change.</p>	G
				<p>Staff events, such as the three peaks challenge and Tag Active have been organised to encourage the two councils' staff to network and engage about the partnership.</p>	
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PR8	Have a plan for partnerships – review the existing arrangements to ensure they are value for money and meeting the council's objectives.	Corporate Leadership Team	The Council undertakes an annual review of its partnership arrangements which includes value for money and how they meet the corporate objectives. This year's review was undertaken in June 2022.	The partnership register and partnership checklist was circulated to Extended Leadership Team in September to inform them that they will need to undertake a review of the partnerships that they are responsible for as part of an annual review to be completed by March 2023.	A
PR9	Consider wider opportunities – Other partners and stakeholders want to work with you to help deliver services.	Corporate Leadership Team	We will work with partners and stakeholders to identify further collaborative ways of working to help deliver services for residents.	The authority is in a strong position in that its partnership with Rochford aligns the two authorities to develop a strong relationship where economies of scale and the synergies of bringing two authorities services together will be beneficial. Further, our work and leadership within ASELA creates further opportunity across South Essex. We already have strong working partnerships with Thurrock, Braintree and Basildon which has increased our resilience and improved our service to the public, whilst reducing costs.	G

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				<p>Our leadership of ASELA is driving a review of the current regional programmes and projects. We are also looking to expand opportunities for collaboration in other service areas i.e., waste. Collaborative conversations have intensified with broader Essex partners as we consider opportunities around devolution.</p> <p>The council has also created a unique Community Hub in the Town Hall which has brought together the Police, South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP), health, enforcement and licensing teams.</p>	
PR10	<p>Demonstrate good standards in public office – Councillors can also demonstrate and adopt the “Brentwood Way”.</p>	Monitoring Officer	<p>The Members Training programme will include sessions on good standards in public office and Officers will work with Councillors to demonstrate and adopt the “Brentwood Way” in these sessions.</p>	<p>The Model Code of Conduct was adopted by the Council in July 2022 and incorporated into the Constitution.</p> <p>A Member training and development programme is being developed for both Brentwood and Rochford councils and will include mandatory training on the Code of Conduct and also on other aspects of good standards such as the member / officer protocol etc. This will be implemented after the May elections for both new and current Members.</p>	R