

Lincolnshire County Council Corporate Peer Challenge

Feedback from the Peer Challenge Team
September 2011

Scope and purpose of the peer challenge

- You asked the peer team to look at your work around developing a new Vision and Purpose, to help strengthen and develop your thinking further.
 - In addition the team considered the critical issues that provide reassurance about future performance and the ability and capacity to deliver future ambitions:
 1. Understanding the local context and priority setting
 2. Financial planning and viability
 3. Political and managerial leadership
 4. Ability to drive change and exit low priorities
 5. Capacity and resources deployed against plans and priorities
 6. Partnerships
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Overall messages

- You look to have solid services, good governance, and a viable financial plan in place. There are no major areas of concern, although there is one potential risk in a key service area, i.e. Adult Social Care. You have identified this and are addressing.
 - There is a clear drive to provide strong leadership to the organisation and place during a period of challenge and change.
 - There is a realisation of the scale of changes required. It is right and timely that you are looking at the future vision and purpose. Radical and innovative thinking is required to deliver desired outcomes in the future. The key areas for development all relate to the future Vision and Purpose.
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Overall messages

- The intention to become more of a commissioning council makes sense given your track record of successful partnering and outsourcing. It is a model that other councils are exploring and adopting as a means of delivering better outcomes to citizens.
 - You have recognised the benefit of inviting peer challenge to stretch thinking further, and are keen to seek learning externally to inform further development.
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Local context and priority setting – strengths to build on

- There is a good understanding of the local context informed by data, information and intelligence, e.g. using the JSNA to integrate health and well being into service reform.
 - The priorities of the council are determined by strong political leadership. There is a clear drive to provide strong leadership during a period change.
 - You have a succinct statement of future intent regarding the use of resources, commissioning, well being and influencing others.
 - Community budgets projects focus on the some of the known big issues for Lincolnshire, e.g. flooding and ageing population.
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Our questions to you

- As a commissioner, there will be a need to balance a good understanding of Lincolnshire, political view, partner priorities, and service users. How are you listening to others – including partners and services users - to inform your Vision and Purpose priorities and outcomes?
 - Could you strengthen the rationale for the future Vision and Purpose by having an identity and function for the place?
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Financial planning and viability - strengths to build on

- There is a balanced financial plan for the next 4 years and you have confidence that it can respond to challenges if they change or increase.
 - You have rationalised and reduced your capital programme to focus on the economy and broadband
 - You are prepared to take some risks – e.g. underwriting infrastructure risk to ensure major schemes are completed.
 - You have robust programme management and approach to benefits realisation
 - Forward thinking on financial machinery for commissioning – e.g. a focus and investment in counter fraud in contract management.
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Our questions to you

- Are you managing the impact of some of your financial decisions? – e.g. by mobilising Big Society?
 - How confident are you that the changes you are making to Adult Social Care will eliminate the annual overspend?
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Political and managerial leadership - strengths to build on

- There is strong political and managerial leadership and mutual respect between the two
 - We have seen an open dialogue and talking as equals about the key future challenges and big issues
 - There is good and strong challenge from the political opposition
 - Overview and Scrutiny looks is effective at providing appropriate challenge and adding value to decision-making and policy development through task & finish work and pre-decision scrutiny
 - ‘Strong, well managed, prudent and sensible’. Adherence to standards and ethics
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Our questions to you

- How are you ensuring that there is the corporate focus required for a corporate commissioning approach and the debate required on key strategic issues?
 - How are you seeking appropriate external challenge, learning, innovation and creativity to inform your future thinking?
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Ability to drive change - strengths to build on

- You are bold in your willingness to take on major change initiatives
 - There is some good use of commercial partners (especially Mouchel) to support the change agenda
 - There is good, solid process and project management with robust monitoring – e.g. managing workforce change programme
 - Community budgets projects help mobilise the resources of others to support shared priorities
 - There appears to be good semi-structured support process for managers
 - You have invested in mobile workforce and remote working
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Our questions to you

- How do you ensure that change is always strategic and part of your master plan rather than tactical opportunities?
 - How are you using the learning from the community budgets to change culture and approach across the council?
 - To ensure there is clarity amongst staff, how is the distinction and journey between 'core offer' and new 'vision and purpose' - and the financial and possible staffing implications of these - being communicated?
 - How are you realising benefits from your investment in an agile workforce?
 - How will you re-skill and align your workforce to the new Vision and Purpose'?
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Resource deployment against priorities - strengths to build on

- There are good examples of where the council has mobilised, influenced and co-ordinated resources to tackle big issues – e.g. development of the LEP and flooding community budgets.
 - The core offer has helped to protect resources for priority services – e.g. PCSOs and safeguarding children
 - Creation of a joint well-being fund with Health to help deliver shared priorities
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Our questions to you

- How is preventative work, e.g. in public health, the well-being fund and re-ablement money, linked with social care to manage future workloads?
 - How will you address challenges such as the use of the planning system in the context of promoting economic growth?
 - How will you re-invigorate relationships with co-producers following a year of focussing internally?
 - How are you planning for and working with partners on asset transfer and alternative models of service delivery to support Big Society?
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Working with partners to deliver the future Vision and Purpose

- There have been recent examples of facilitated/enabled partnership creation – e.g. LEP
 - There are good relationships with key partners
 - Police – e.g. police post in LCC structure and PCSO funding.
 - NHS partnership with co-working in community health
 - Children’s strategic partnership
 - There is an excellent multi-agency approach to resilience
 - The opportunity exists to accelerate work with parish and town councils based on good historic relationships, including recognised effort of local members
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Working with partners to deliver the future Vision and Purpose

- Excellent cultural alignment with West Lindsey DC and a mutual determination from officers and members to achieve more - 'Why wouldn't we work together?' Reinforced by both councils committed to commissioning model.
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Our questions to you

- How will the learning from the relationship with West Lindsey be used to develop relationships with other partners?
 - How do you find a way to work with different partners at different speeds or on different topics, accepting there are different appetites?
 - Where a fertile relationship does not exist how will you still reach communities and minimise unproductive input to partnerships?
 - How will you refresh partnership engagement and involve partners in developing your partnership strategy?
 - How do you ensure Big Society capacity is accelerated to match current disinvestment (e.g. adult social care)?
 - How can citizens become more involved in the development of your Big Society strategy?
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