



**North Kesteven**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# **North Kesteven District Council Corporate Peer Challenge**

## **ACTION PLAN**

*Approved by Full Council 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022*

## Corporate Priorities – CPC Recommendation and Project Groupings - Links to 2030 Community Strategy and the NK Plan 2022-25

Key Recommendation (13 in total)	Corporate Priority	2030 Community Strategy Aspirations	NK Plan 2022-25 Ambition
<b>1. Opportunities to embolden Financial Planning</b>	Our Council	Excellent public services providing exceptional value for money	High quality, value-for-money
<b>2. Younger People (aged under 30) engagement</b>	Our Communities	All communities are clean and safe; just, cohesive and inclusive; open in outlook; connected; active and healthy	Promote participation and engagement within our communities as well as recovery from the impacts of Covid-19
<b>3. Costed Climate Pathway</b>	Our Environment	Net zero greenhouse gas emissions within North Kesteven; and from all Council operations	Champion greenhouse gas reduction both within the Council and across the district
<b>4. Consultation and Surveys</b>	Our Communities	All communities are clean and safe; just, cohesive and inclusive; open in outlook; connected; active and healthy	Promote participation and engagement within our communities as well as recovery from the impacts of Covid-19
<b>5. Business Forum</b>	Our Economy	NK has a vibrant economy; regenerating by design; generating high quality jobs, with wage levels in the district well above the national median	Support business recovery in the district; the protection of existing jobs and the creation of new jobs
<b>6. Equality &amp; Diversity: Equalities Standard and Diversity Assessment + Management and wider colleague diversity</b>	Our Communities	All communities are clean and safe; just, cohesive and inclusive; open in outlook; connected; active and healthy	Promote participation and engagement within our communities as well as recovery from the impacts of Covid-19
	Our Council	All council services fully accessible and universal; systems based and innovative	Maintain a strong focus on our customers
<b>7. Succession Planning</b>	Our Council	Excellent public services providing exceptional value for money	High quality, value-for-money
<b>8-13. Constitutional Innovation (all elements)</b>	Our Council	Civic engagement is vibrant with a knowledgeable and informed electorate involved in making decisions which impact on people and place	Open and Accountable

# Content : KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Page	KEY CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE RECOMMENDATION	PRIMARY Project Category	ACTION PLAN PROJECT
4	1. Be bolder in your spending plans, investments, commercialisation etc	1. Financial Planning	1. Financial planning
4	2. Work and review with a wide range of young people, ie those aged under 30 years old from a range of demographic groups, their needs and aspirations - to understand and respond to them	2. Younger People	2. Younger People (aged 30 and under) engagement
4	3. Develop a costed and funded roadmap with your members, staff, communities and partners on how you will deliver your climate emergency aspirations and priorities	3. Climate Pathway	3. Costed Climate Pathway (Roadmap)
5	4. Make the most of your consultations and surveys – from question design re equality, diversity and inclusion, to using the segregated data to inform future service delivery	4. Consultation and Surveys	4. Consultations and Surveys Review
5	5. Consider reinstating your local business forum to assist local businesses and your economic development work	5. Local Business Support	5. Local Business Forum + 5a. Council website – business signposting
6	6. Consider the equalities standard for local government as a means to benchmark commitment to equalities that officers have clearly articulated	6. Equality and Diversity	6. Equalities Standard and Diversity Assessment + 6a Management and wider colleague diversity
7	7. Consider a succession plan for your senior leadership	7. Succession Planning	7. Succession Planning
7	8. Undertake a fundamental review of scrutiny	8. Constitutional Innovation	8. Scrutiny Review
7	9. Consider the introduction of portfolios for Executive Board members to increase accountability and credibility, externally and internally, and to speed up areas of decision making		9. Executive Portfolios
8	10. In relation to gender, age and other equality dimensions, consider how to further encourage councillor candidates from broader demographics and upskill members to take up more senior positions		10. Member Diversity and Skills
8	11. Reduce the membership of the Planning Committee		11. Planning Committee
8	12. Use newer members, the Chief Executive and external support, eg the Local Government Association (LGA), the Planning Advisory Service and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, to encourage and/or lead on political changes, eg those recommended in this report, and introduce those changes gradually		12. Constitutional Innovation Support
9	13. Keep Covid-19 instigated decision making protocols via the council's constitution		13. C19 Protocol opportunities + 13a Increasing meeting access and effectiveness

**CPC Recommendation Group : Be bolder in your spending plans, investment commercialisation**

Project	Project	1. Financial Planning			OUR COUNCIL	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
Consider opportunities to be bolder in spending plans	RS	Within future planning cycles from 2022/23	None	The range of existing ExCITE initiatives and other investment plans	Capacity to deliver and availability of suitable schemes	Pipeline of bolder investment projects

**CPC Recommendation Group : Improve engagement with and understanding of younger people**

Project	Project	2. Younger People (aged under 30) engagement			OUR COMMUNITIES	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
To better understand the most effective approaches for better engaging younger people (under 30s). Develop and roll out preferred option(s) Set up metrics to measure success	EW	Understanding and options in place by June 2022  Approach rolled out in engagement activities / consultations / surveys from July 2022; incl Local Democracy Week  Initial review of progress achieved in Jan / Feb 2023	None	Youth Council (recognising disruption during Covid)  Relationship with secondary schools and sixth forms  Learning from increased response rate in Flourishing as opposed to more recent surveys	Becomes officer rather than citizens under 30 led	Approach that delivers increased engagement in surveys from all (relevant) under 30 demographic groups

**CPC Recommendation Group : Climate Roadmap**

Project	Project	3. Climate Pathway			OUR ENVIRONMENT	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
Development of a costed climate pathway to net zero covering emissions from council operations; the council's housing stock; and the wider district overall; with funding identified where known, and costs identified throughout	TW	by end June 2022	1 Opportunities to embolden financial planning	Work on this is already underway as part of the Climate Strategy Action Plan	Scale and complexity - few if any other councils have produced this  Conflicting timescales for other Lincs councils	Baseline pathway completed; shared and understood across full spectrum of stakeholders

**CPC Recommendation Group : Make the most of your Consultations and Surveys**

Project	Project	4. Consultation and Surveys			OUR COMMUNITIES	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
1. Review approach to question design, particularly in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion  2. Review approach to analysing data - both qualitative and quantitative - captured from consultation and engagement work  3. Review how data and insight captured is practically applied by Service Area  4. Identify any conflicting practises across the council  5. Develop ways to ensure key findings through to more detailed data (if appropriate) are shared and promoted in an engaging manner both internally and externally	EW	1-4 by end May 2022	All E&D related projects			Improvement Action Plan
		5 by end August 2022				Production of best practise case studies
		Roll out actions arising from July 2022 onwards				
		Impact review in March / April 2023				

**CPC Recommendation Group : Consider re-instating your local business forum**

Project	Project	5. Local Business Forums			OUR ECONOMY	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
Explore options for and benefits from the re-establishment of the local business forum	AG	Options development by end March 2022  Implementation Q1 2022/23	None	Past experience and reasons (as alluded to by Peer report) for previous dis-establishment		Value adding Business Forum(s) in place and operational

Project	Project	5a. Local Business Forum : Council webpage improvement - information for businesses				
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
To work with businesses to understand the type of information most useful for them.	AG	by end Mar 2022	None	TBC	Post completion - failure to maintain and update	Webpages fully updated and fit for purpose
Review / Update / Create webpages of the Council Website for such information.						Transition plan to business as usual activity

**CPC Recommendation Group : Equalities Standard**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>6. Equality &amp; Diversity: Equalities Standard and Diversity Assessment</b>			<b>OUR COMMUNITIES</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related CPC Projects</b>	<b>Related Existing Activity</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
<p>1. Review and re-apply the principles and guidelines set out in the Equalities Standard for Local Government. Including a cross-council E&amp;D engagement plan</p> <p>2. Based on this undertake an internal assessment and identify those areas that are exemplars for improving diversity in the council's work and from this develop an action plan for areas less advanced.</p> <p>3. Sense check the proposed actions with a range of communities to provide initial assurance that the actions proposed will recognise differing needs</p>	EW	1. By end Mar 2022	none	The Council already has the Equalities Standard for Local Government in place and has been assessed against it.	Becomes a "box-ticking" exercise rather than a commitment to real and lasting change	Robust evidence base for the Council's level of commitment in this area
		2. By end June 2022				Practical Action Plan to deliver identified improvements
		3. By end July 2022				Engagement Plan
		4. Action plan detail dependent; likely aim all completed in 2022/23				

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>6a. Equality &amp; Diversity : Management and wider colleague diversity</b>			<b>OUR COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related CPC Projects</b>	<b>Related Existing Activity</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
<p>1. Review structure and attendance for CMT, SMT meetings</p> <p>2. Identify opportunities to improve the future diversity of CMT, SMT and Manager Forum</p> <p>3. Extend this to cover the full Council workforce</p> <p>4. Support all work in this area with an E&amp;D internal engagement plan</p>	EW	1&2 by end April 2022	Equalities Standard & Diversity Assessment	TBC - likely links with existing E&D work, and the Our People Programme		Action Plan
		3 by end 2022/23				Engagement Plan
		4 developed in Q1 2022/23				

**CPC Recommendation Group : Succession Planning**

<b>Project</b>		<b>7. Succession Planning : Succession Planning and Business Continuity for Senior Leadership</b>			<b>OUR COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related CPC Projects</b>	<b>Related Existing Activity</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
1. Identify, with legal constraints and sectoral best practise, succession plans for senior leadership roles.  2. Alongside this develop leadership business continuity options; including specifics on all local, regional and national forums where a NKDC's senior manager takes a leading role.  3. Identify opportunities from this practical options for wider sharing of the CMT workloads and responsibilities	ER	1. by end April 2022	None	Our People Programme and existing work already started in this area		Succession and business continuity plans in place
		2. by end June 2022				
		3. by end Sep 2022				Options for spreading CMT workload rolled out

**CPC Recommendation Group : Constitutional Innovation (1 of 3) - Scrutiny Review; Portfolio Holders**

<b>Project</b>		<b>8. Constitutional Innovation Programme - Scrutiny Review</b>			<b>OUR COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related CPC Projects</b>	<b>Related Existing Activity</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
Undertake a review of scrutiny, leading to options for a revised purpose, scope and structure	EW	Proposal to be prepared in time for Annual Council Meeting in May-22	All Constitutional Innovation Programme Projects / Reviews	Scrutiny Survey and associated report	Failure to identify a revised purpose and scope that Members fully engage with	Options identified for consideration by Council

<b>Project</b>		<b>8. Constitutional Innovation Programme - Portfolio Holder Decision Making</b>			<b>OUR COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related CPC Projects</b>	<b>Related Existing Activity</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
Explore and develop options for future Executive decision making based on best practice in local government	MH	Options developed and reviewed by March 2023 latest.	All Constitutional Innovation Programme Projects / Reviews	Dem Services report on constitutional change	Failure to identify a revised purpose and scope that Members fully engage with	Options for the establishment of Portfolio Holders identified for consideration.

**CPC Recommendation Group :Constitutional Innovation (2 of 3) - Member Diversity & Skills; Planning Committee; Support Resources**

Project	Project	8. Constitutional Innovation Programme : Elected Member Diversity and skills			OUR COUNCIL	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
1. Assess opportunities to broaden interest in becoming a councillor from a wider range of communities and demographics  2. Review effectiveness of the existing Member Development Strategy and Action Plan; revising as necessary to incorporate additional CPC insights.	MH	Ahead of next electoral cycle	All E&D related projects  C19 decision making protocols  Meeting access and effectiveness	The Council has an active Member Development Strategy already in place with an active review cycle.	CPC blurs distinction from areas inappropriate for officer involvement	Clearly defined and measurable Action Plan
					Dependencies on other related projects in making becoming a councillor a more attractive proposition	

Project	Project	8. Constitutional Innovation Programme - Planning Committee			OUR COUNCIL	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
Develop options for the size and structure of the Planning Committee	MH	Proposal to be prepared in time for Annual Council Meeting in May-22	All Constitutional Innovation Programme Projects / Reviews	Dem Services already drafting report; plus  the significant amount of work undertaken as part of the Planning Committee review in 2019 should not be overlooked, and is likely to provide useful background information	Failure to develop a robust proposal Members fully engage with and support	Options for the Planning Committee identified for consideration by Council
					Failure to achieve within target timescales	

Project	Project	8. Constitutional Innovation Programme - Support Resources			OUR COUNCIL	
Scope	Lead	Timeline	Related CPC Projects	Related Existing Activity	Risks	Deliverables
Consider the resource requirements, including external expertise, arising from the wider constitutional change projects and develop options for support	MH	Immediately post January 2022 Full Council	All Constitutional Innovation Programme Projects / Reviews	Dem Services already drafting report	Failure to define and implement a support approach	Support and capacity for managing constitutional change commissioned / in place
				Build on past external support through for example the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny	Failure to achieve within target timescales	



**CPC Recommendation Group :Constitutional Innovation (3 of 3) - Opportunities from C19 Decision Making Protocols**

<b>Project</b>		<b>8. Constitutional Innovation Programme Permanent : adoption of Covid-19 decision making protocols</b>			<b>OUR COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related CPC Projects</b>	<b>Related Existing Activity</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
Define the "good and relevant to the future" from Covid decision making protocols and develop options for permanent incorporation into the Council's constitution	MH	Options development by end March 2022  Implementation dependent on wider constitutional review timelines	All Constitutional Innovation Programme Projects / Reviews  Scrutiny review is identified as a specific dependency for the success of this project	Detail of all C19 decision making protocols available  Dem Services already drafting a report on this subject	Links and inter-dependencies between Constitutional Innovation Projects not understood resulting in either duplicated work or gaps	Decision making consistently quicker and more agile
					Failure to achieve within target timescales	

<b>Project</b>		<b>8a Constitutional Innovation Programme : C19 protocols - Increase meeting access and effectiveness</b>			<b>OUR COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related CPC Projects</b>	<b>Related Existing Activity</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
1. Review scheduling of all council and committee meetings to improve accessibility and ability to actively participate by NKDC councillors on those committees  2. Work with Town and Parish Councils to establish new ways of working to enhance all the councils' responses to delivering the Flourishing Communities vision.  3. Review and improve report writing protocols	MH	1 & 2 TBC To be in place for publication of 2023-24 municipal meeting calendar (eg by summer 2022, and becoming effective from April 2023)  3 - by end March 2022	All Constitutional Innovation Programme Projects / Reviews	Dem Services already developing suite of policies to better enable access	Scale and number of stakeholders; leading to ineffective engagement	Increased participation and contributions; faster and