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MEETING:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Sustainable Barnsley Workstream
DATE:	Tuesday 7 February 2023
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

AGENDA

4 Highways Peer Challenge - Outcomes & Actions Report *(Pages 3 - 12)*

To consider a report of the Executive Director Core Services and the Executive Director Growth & Sustainability.

To: Chair and Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee:-

Councillors Ennis OBE (Chair), Bellamy, Bowser, Cain, Clarke, Denton, Eastwood, P. Fielding, W. Fielding, Green, Hand-Davis, Hayward, Lodge, Markham, McCarthy, Mitchell, Moyes, Newing, Osborne, Richardson, Smith and Webster together with Statutory Co-opted Member Ms. G Carter (Parent Governor Representative)

Electronic Copies Circulated for Information

Sarah Norman, Chief Executive

Shokat Lal, Executive Director Core Services

Rob Winter, Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management

Michael Potter, Service Director, Business Improvement, HR and Communications

Sukdave Ghuman, Service Director, Law and Governance

Press

Overview & Scrutiny LGA Peer Review

Page 3 Highway's & Transportation
February 7th 2023



The Peer Review Process



- It is part of the LGA support of sector-led improvement
- Not an inspection – invited in as “critical friends”
- Non-attributable information collection
- Feedback is based on the triangulation of a range of views from various sources (i.e. that we have read, heard and seen). These have come from across the Organisation and from stakeholder.
- People have been open and honest.
- The Peer Team were very grateful for all the support they have had from colleagues in Barnsley.

The Peer Challenge Team



- **Lead Peer:** Simon Green (Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director Commercial at North Lincolnshire Council)
- **Member Peer:** Councillor Gillian Campbell (Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth, Schools and Transience at Blackpool Council)
- **Senior Officer Peer:** Matt Davey (Assistant Director, Highways, Transport and Planning at West Sussex County Council)
- **Senior Officer Peer:** Carol Valentine (Highways Project Manager at Kent County Council)
- **Review manager:** Ernest Opuni (Local Government Support Team, LGA)

LGA Highways Strategic Review - Core Components



1. **Context and priority setting**: This looks at assessing how the council's delivery takes into account national and local transport policy, corporate vision, stakeholder expectations, legal and financial constraints
2. **Planning and performance**: This covers the council's strategy, performance, data and information, and lifecycle planning and works programmes
3. **Enablers**: This component focusses on leadership, risk management, asset management, and performance monitoring
4. **Delivery**: This considers programme and service delivery and procurement

The team were asked to focus the Strategic Review for Barnsley in addressing a range of questions in four main areas:

Highway's & Engineering – Focus Areas (1)



- 1. Financial Aspects:** This included consideration of
 - a) service spends,
 - b) value for money.

- 2. Customer Aspects:** This included consideration of
 - a) engagement and interface with members and customers,
 - b) the contribution from the service Highways Engineering to the council's overall 2030 strategic priorities and
 - c) maturity of the service's strategic partnerships/collaborations

Highway's & Engineering –Focus Areas (2)



- 3. Process Aspects:** This included consideration of
- a) the alignment between BMBC's capital and revenue programmes for highway maintenance with the council's regeneration (e.g. Principal Town Investment Strategy and other operational services such as Neighbourhoods);
 - b) overall condition of the network; and
 - c) areas of potential improvement and innovation.
- 4. People Aspects:** This included consideration of
- a) the culture of the service,
 - b) effectiveness of the service's leadership and management practices,
 - c) how the team is managing resilience and succession planning given the shortage of resources; and
 - d) governance and delivery of South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) funded highway maintenance activities and the effectiveness of sub-regional relationships in delivering improved outcomes

Feedback - Key Areas for Consideration



- 1. Review the structural alignment of highway related services;**
- 2. Better utilisation of external benchmarking datasets;**
- 3. Long term programming of capital investment;**
- 4. Communication with front line; and**
- 5. Strengthening the relationship between the service and Elected Members**

Feedback Key Service Strengths



1. Barnsley has a clear Borough identity which is being taken advantage of;
2. There are good relationships, and a positively regarded delivery record, with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority – “you do well and are well positioned to punch above your weight not only in the sub region but nationally”;
3. Senior Management are bought into and keen to deliver the overall vision for Barnsley;
4. Annual works programme for Highways delivery are clear and longer-term work programmes exist for related areas;
5. Leaders at every level – empowering staff to makes change. This is particularly strong at middle manager level;
6. Recognition schemes are in place and used regularly – Thank you letters, Shout-Out’s, etc;
7. Career grade apprenticeships are working well at Smithies Depot;
8. Staff exhibit high levels of commitment and loyalty to Barnsley.

Next Steps



1. Action Planning Review Day – December 14th 2022;
2. Development of Action Plan (Jan/Feb)
3. Delivery of specific improvement projects / initiatives;
 - a) Integration of Strategic Transportation into Business Unit (Underway)
 - b) Review of external benchmarking data sets (Underway)
 - c) Review of future Capital investment pipeline (Underway)
 - d) Task & Finish Group – Improving Front Line communications (Underway)
 - e) Cross Party Group to explore improvements to the existing Members Enquiries process (Underway)
4. Organisational Development Programme (Underway) looking at;
 - a) Building an enabling culture;
 - b) Building long term resilience through succession planning and skills development; and
 - c) Reviewing overall methods of communication

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