

APPENDIX A

Independent Governance Review – Initial Plan of Action

Recommendations	Initial comments / Scope	Proposed Workstream	Resources Required and Milestones
<p>10.1 Establish what it means to be a Best Value Unitary Local Authority in its geographic area delivering appropriate services and community leadership to every resident and entity in its area. To do this, it needs new seasoned local government professional leadership at the top of the organisation now to help it do this.</p>	<p>The Group agreed the following proposed actions:</p>		
	<p>1. Following review, a restructure of senior management be implemented as soon as practically possible. This should start with the two top tiers and be based on ensuring capacity and focus to deliver the Council's priorities. Further tiers of senior management will be restructured in line with the top tier structure. As part of this, the number of interim senior posts will be reduced.</p>	<p>Structure & Recruitment</p>	<p>TBC</p>
	<p>2. The senior management restructure will ensure the Statutory Monitoring Officer post has appropriate seniority and visibility within the organisation to contribute to the good governance of the Council.</p>	<p>Structure & Recruitment</p>	<p>TBC</p>
	<p>3. A working group be established to refresh and refine the Council's approach to Best Value. The Council's Best Value plans will be integrated into a redrafted Corporate Plan. This work will involve learning from best practice Best Value plans in other authorities as well as advice and Guidance from the Local Government Association (LGA).</p>	<p>Planning & Performance</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>10.2 Once this has been done, it needs to -</p>			

10.2.1 Redraft its Corporate Plan in terms of the Administration's Goals and Objectives, moderated by the capacity of the organisation and the legislative framework,	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		
	5. To reframe and redraft the Corporate Plan as part of the annual budget-setting cycle for 2022/23. The new Plan will set out a more granular articulation of milestones and outcomes to achieve the Council's priorities and will demonstrate more clearly the role of service performance (for all services) on delivering the Council's vision.	Planning & Performance	TBC
	6. As part of the annual budget setting cycle, ensure a clear 'golden thread' between the Corporate Plan, spending plans (budget), service planning and personal appraisal.	Planning & Performance	TBC
	7. To engage widely with Members, partners and residents on the Corporate Plan, on the same timescales as the Budget setting process.	Planning & Performance	TBC
	8. Ensure the Corporate Plan is embedded in the organisation and with Members, through communication, engagement and training.	Planning & Performance	TBC
10.2.2 Ensure the values by which it seeks to operate are lived within the organisation	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		
	9. Review and, if needed, refresh the Council's Values Statement.	Culture & Values	TBC
	10. To develop a fresh programme of Member and Officer engagement and training on the Council's values.	Culture & Values	TBC
	11. To develop and agree a set of outcomes to measure progress on living the Council's values.	Planning & Performance	TBC
10.2.3 Use the data it holds, collects, or needs to collect to define priorities and monitor and improve	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		

performance in a systematic way and publish the outcomes.	12. To undertake a review of use of data and supporting IT systems to make better and more systematic use of the data. The review findings and recommendations to be reported to the Council's Executive Team and Cabinet and other Committees as appropriate. Work on this is already underway.	Planning & Performance	TBC
	13. Produce a statement outlining what performance information will be reported to Council committees, including frequency. The statement will ensure increased frequency of reporting and greater transparency and understanding of service performance as well as senior officer performance.	Planning & Performance	TBC
	14. In line with Action 6 (above), ensure a clear 'golden thread' between the Corporate Plan, spending plans (budget), service planning and personal appraisal. This will more clearly demonstrate the link between service activity and outcomes.	Planning & Performance	TBC
10.2.4 Review and redraft the Constitution to ensure that decisions that should be taken at Member level, by Cabinet, Committee, Individual Member or Full Council are clearly identified and that the recording and scrutiny of officer decisions, both individually and in aggregate, is unambiguous.	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		
	15. To continue the review and redraft of the Council's Constitution. This should be streamlined as far as possible and be in line with a refreshed Value Statement as per Recommendation 10.2.2 above and be informed by best practice constitutions in other authorities.	Constitution & Standards	TBC
	16. To develop a programme of training on the Constitution for Members and Senior officers.	Constitution & Standards	TBC
10.2.5 Review and redraft the codes of conduct which regulate Member and officer behaviours and working relationships with each other, to make it clear what the expectations of each party should be and how robust	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		
	18. To review and redraft the Codes of Conduct.	Constitution & Standards	TBC
	17. To increase the Membership of the Constitution Working Group to support actions 15 and 16 above.	Constitution & Standards	TBC

challenge can be handled, to ensure proper accountability can be achieved. This needs to recognise the legitimate rights of Councillors for information to enable them to do their role and for Councillors to recognise that policy is the preserve of the Council unless delegated and saying no is a legitimate outcome.	19. To develop and communicate a clearly processes for resolving complaints (Member to Member, officer to Member) informally. Further training will be provided on the Code of Conduct and Group Leaders will emphasise within their respective groups the need to consider informal resolution as a first step.	Constitution & Standards	TBC
	20. To revisit existing complaints that are at the initial assessment stage to explore with the relevant parties whether informal resolution is possible.	Constitution & Standards	TBC
10.2.6 Establish a rationale for the establishment or continuation of any company established under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		
	21. To produce a statement of principles and tests for establishing or continuing Council companies established under the Localism Act. This should build on work that has already been undertaken as part of the Strategic Review of Advance.	Companies	TBC
10.2.7 Establish a specific governance framework by which, for those companies wholly or partly owned by NCC, their Directors are appointed, report on performance are presented to a Cabinet Sub-Committee, conflicts of interest are dealt with and risk and how shareholder agreements are ratified, by both the company and NCC.	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		
	22. Update the Articles of Associations for Council-owned companies and develop a framework for how company performance will be reported to Cabinet.	Companies	TBC
	23. Review the Council shareholder role and produce a clear definition of the relationship between the Council and Council-owned companies and the remit of the Council shareholder.	Companies	TBC
	24. Increase the number of independent Board Members (i.e. non-officer and non-Member).	Companies	TBC
	The Group agreed the following proposed actions:		

<p>10.2.8 Establish an officer structure which is designed to deliver against earlier recommendations and seek to appoint permanent employees to fulfil those objectives.</p>	<p>25. Following implementation of Action 1 above, further tiers of senior management will be restructured in line with the top tier structure. Where possible, these will be permanent posts.</p>	<p>Structure & Recruitment</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>10.2.9 Establish a scheme of performance appraisal, starting with the Chief Executive at Member level, in line with the JNC provisions, which cascades throughout the organisation so that every employee is clear about their targets and how they fit into plan delivery. As the Chief Executive is accountable to the Council as a whole for their performance, publish the targets and how they have been achieved as an annual statement to Council.</p>	<p>The Group agreed the following proposed actions:</p>		
	<p>26. To review and update the Council's performance appraisal policy, with a particular focus on Chief Executive performance appraisal. This will be considered and agreed by Members. The performance targets for the CX will be published.</p>	<p>Planning & Performance</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>10.3 With the help of the Local Government Association, establish a challenge board with appropriate experience at both top officer and elected Member level in unitary authorities to work with NCC, on a cross-party basis, as it addresses these recommendations.</p>	<p>The Group agreed the following proposed actions:</p>		
	<p>27. To develop, in partnership with the LGA, a menu of options for a challenge board. As well as providing options for challenge on implementation of the recommendations, this should also include options for Officer, Member and Group mentoring.</p>	<p>Review & Challenge</p>	<p>TBC</p>