

Overview and Scrutiny

Meeting date: 15 January 2024

Member Questions on Peer Review Action Plan

1. Question from Councillor Jackie Chelin

On the **peer review action plan**, there are several mentions of new posts to support various activities, e.g. for GVD, Net Zero 2030, CBH and Communications. Have these been created through vacancies or are they an additional investment? In the sixth peer challenge on the list (about partnerships) I'm wondering how and when the recent introduction of MS Teams might be harnessed to its full potential to help rationalise meetings and improve sharing of information to support partnerships and stakeholder working?

Response from Gareth Edmundson, Chief Executive

New posts created in the organisation with regard to Major Capital Projects such as Golden Valley, Net Zero, CBH and Communications have been created through a combination of realigning investment and temporary funding for transformation from reserves.

For the Golden Valley Development, Council agreed to increase the staffing budget for the Major Development and Regen Team by realigning resources, this was part of a strategic decision to move to having a more dedicated and specialist team to oversee the delivery of critical projects such as GVD and move away from a central project management team.

The appointment of an interim Climate/Net Zero advisor to review the Council's action plans has been funded through existing Director level vacancies.

Progressing the decision to wind up CBH and to create a single organisation will be largely funded through a combination of reserves held by CBH and within Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and will be used for the transformation and to help realise and deliver savings. This includes some additional capacity for Communications as well as covering long term sickness in the team which has temporarily reduced capacity.

The wider shared communications team was funded through bringing together the respective teams at CBC and CBH, combining investment from both the General Fund and the HRA.

The Council has been using software for online meetings since the start of the pandemic. In addition, the Council has introduced technology in meeting rooms to enable more hybrid meetings. The roll out of MS Teams, which is a popular and industry standard product should further enhance the organisation's ability to support

partnership meetings by allowing attendees more flexibility to attend meetings virtually if they can't attend in person.