

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Independent Improvement Board

Terms of Reference

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Improvement Board has been established by the Combined Authority Board to provide challenge and support to the issues identified in the Improvement Framework report presented to the Board on 27 July 2022.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Improvement Board is:

- To provide external advice, support, challenge and expertise to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to ensure focus, grip, pace and effective change on key areas identified.
- To support the delivery of the Combined Authority Improvement Plan agreed by the Combined Authority Board.
- To provide assurance to the Combined Authority Board and external agencies of the progress on delivering the key outcomes and associated activity set out in the Improvement plan.
- To identify and share learning and best practice with Members and Officers on all activities included in the Authority's Improvement Plan, including identification of development opportunities for both members and officers.

This will involve:

- Operating in an open and transparent way with officers, CA Board members and external agencies
- Ensuring there is a single, integrated, and holistic Improvement Plan that can be clearly understood and communicated internally and externally and to receive regular reports on progress against it and the effectiveness of actions taken.
- Providing regular advice, challenge, and support to the Combined Authority on the full range of identified improvement activities, and in particular on delivery of the recommendations in the External Auditor letter, June 2022 and the Best Value Notice January 2023 and any subsequent updates.
- Providing written commentary on the Council's progress to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the Combined Authority's progress.

- Investigating any activity within its terms of reference and seeking any information it requires from any member of staff (in compliance with the CPCA's Member/Officer Protocol); who will be directed to co-operate with any request made by the Improvement Board.
- Obtaining independent legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of third parties with relevant experience if it considers this necessary or beneficial to its work.

2. Accountability

- The Improvement Board will be accountable to the Combined Authority Board and respond as required; through agreed reporting mechanisms and timelines to requests for information on progress, key risks and shared learning.
- The Improvement Board will receive reports from the Chief Executive on a regular and timely manner in line with agreed reporting timelines.
- The Improvement Board will ensure the Chairs of Audit & Governance Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive regular updates on all improvement action against agreed timelines.
- The Improvement Board will provide the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities with an update on a quarterly basis on the level of assurance and confidence it has on the progress being made against key areas of concern.

3. Membership of Independent Improvement Board

Members:

A balance of Members and officers to bring a balance of expertise and experience:

- Independent Chair
- Independent Deputy Chair
- Independent external Member representative of political groups
- Independent external members

Attendees:

- Mayor
- Conservative Member rep
- Lib Dem Member rep
- Interim Chief Executive
- 2 x constituent Chief Executives

- Interim Programme Director, Transformation
- LGA representative

Others by invitation

4. Working arrangements:

- Changes to membership can be agreed by the IIB.
- The Board may invite anyone who it believes will be useful in achieving its aims and purpose to attend meetings.
- The IIB may request reports from officers and ask that officers attend if required.
- Individuals may raise matters directly with the IIB if they are within the agreed remit of the Board through appropriate protocols.
- A&G and O&S Chairs may request to attend meetings on behalf of their committees.
- Democratic management of the meetings will be carried out by officers of the CPCA.
- The IIB will be supported by the programme office to ensure that the overall programme plan is proactively tracked, kept up to date and that issues and identified risks are managed on a day-to-day basis through officers.
- Any costs associated with the IIB will be met by CPCA.
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5. Improvement Board meetings:

- It is proposed that the IIB will be in place for at least 12 months from January 2023.
- The IIB will meet on a bi-monthly basis for the first six months when a review will take place and the future frequency of meetings agreed.
- Discussion and interaction during the IIB meetings will allow and enable constructive dialogue; officers and members being treated with respect and courtesy.
- The minutes of the board will not be public as the IIB is an advisory board.

6. Venue for meetings

- To be agreed

7. Agenda

- At each meeting the IIB will agree the content of the agenda for the next meeting. Standard agenda items should include:
 - Actions from previous meeting
 - Matters considered by the Chair to aid the working of the IIB in pursuing its aims
 - Report on progress against the improvement plan
 - Communication (if any) from the External Auditor or DLUHC
 - Progress and any issues to be communicated to key stakeholders (including staff)
 - Matters to be reported to the CPCA Board
 - Additional items for the agenda for the next meeting
 - Confirmation of date, time and venue for the next meeting

8. Review

These Terms of Reference will be kept under review and initially reviewed after six months