

Improvement outcomes agreed by CA Board in October 2022 to be delivered over 3 months

Set out below is the progress against identified key outcomes as at February 2023:

1. Shift to a transitional arrangement of Board cycles, adjusted focus, more strategic content

- The proposal for adjusted governance arrangements identify the intention that the CA Board develop a clear focus on strategy, policy and overall performance. This requires the development of a more outward facing role and collective championing of the area. It also includes a revised scheme of delegation for more focused committees. These ambitions and this framework has been discussed at the pre-board strategy meeting twice, the senior management team and Audit & Governance Committee and is rescheduled to go to CA Board in March.

2. A draft 'overarching strategy' document

- The Corporate Plan was approved at the CA Board meeting on 25 January 2023 and the MTFP was also approved which aligns resources to that plan.
- Agreed values for staff and CA Board members have been shared within the organisation. The acronym 'CIVIL' (Collaboration, Integrity, Vision, Innovation, Leadership) has been developed to aid traction of the values expected of all.
- Agreed values have been used in the recruitment of the two vacant Executive Director roles and in the Chief Executive recruitment currently underway.

3. A Medium Term Financial Strategy which reflects the overarching strategy

- CA Board in January 2023 approved:
 - Revenue budget for 2023/24 and the Medium-Term financial Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27
 - Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27
 - A Mayoral precept for the 2023-24 financial year

4. A worked-up transport strategy and bus strategy

- The draft bus strategy went out to consultation on 11 January 2023, and ended on 24 February 2023 following which feedback was considered.

- The Bus Strategy is due to be presented to the Transport and Infrastructure Committee and CA Board in March – with the aim for this document to be approved and adopted as a key strategy for the Authority. In addition, the Combined Authority has now received feedback on the previous Bus Service Improvement Plan and a revised document will be submitted to government following the CA Board meeting in June.
- The draft Local Transport and Connectivity Plan will be presented to the March Transport and Infrastructure Committee. We still await government's revised guidance on the Plan's preparation. This was previously due in autumn 2022 but at the time of writing this report has yet to be received and has led to these delays.

5. Proposals for the next phase of development of the Business Board

- The options paper, drafted by independent consultants Metro Dynamics, followed the joint Workshop between the CA Board and the Business Board and has informed and focused the proposals. This paper is to be considered at the Business Board at its next meeting and the recommended option being presented to the Board in March.

6. Resolution to the current investigations

- An independent investigation was commissioned and commenced in May 2022. When the investigators submit their report there will be consideration by a panel of the Audit and Governance Committee. This is the equivalent of a Standards Committee in local authorities. Training has already been given to the Committee in anticipation of the need to fulfil that role.

7. A senior staffing structure and plan for recruitment

- The leadership and departmental structure was agreed by Board in October and commencement of recruitment processes for the permanent roles began in November and December.
- Executive Director recruitment has been completed and the new appointees commenced at the end of February.
- A recruitment process for the role of Chief Executive commenced in the new year and is expected to reach a conclusion before the end of March.
- The staff structures for the Chief Executives policy and executive office are in place and recruitment substantially completed. This includes provision of support for the Mayor.

8. A period of stability in the workforce

- Vacancy percentage at February 2023 was 5.7% compared to 13.5% in September 2022

- Annualised turnover for period March 2022 to February 2023 was 29.09% compared to 36.65% January 2022 to Dec 2022.

9. Improved collaborative processes between CPCA and constituent authority officers

- The Improvement Plan has provided opportunities to develop trailblazer processes and behaviours that demonstrate collaboration. Examples would be:
 - Workstream D: The bid function strategic review has involved a series of cross authority workshops and identified many common themes across the constituent councils including a degree of agreement about what the scope and reach of a bid function should be to add value to the work of partner councils and also crucially help to promote the one voice to government from the CPCA area.
 - Workstream E: through the active involvement of the lead CEX officers from the constituent authorities work is underway to develop an inclusive set of assurance and performance management frameworks.
 - In addition all Chief Executives of constituent councils play an active and collaborative role across all strands of improvement activity.
 - A number of professional officer liaison groups have begun to meet around issues of common interest. The 'place' Directors have been meeting regularly, and liaison among MOs and CFOs has been developing.