



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 2

Improvement Framework

To: OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 19 October 2022

Public report: Yes

Lead Member: Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

From: Gordon Mitchell, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: -

Recommendations: The Overview and Scrutiny is recommended to:

- A Note the presentation on the next steps of the improvement framework and proposed report going to the 19 October CPCA Board meeting**
- B Put questions to the Chief Executive, Mayor and supporting Officers on the presentation and the Improvement Framework report going to 19 October CPCA Board**
- C Welcome/ Endorse/ Comment on the proposal to bring an Improvement Framework Highlight Report to future Committee meetings**
- D Undertake pre-scrutiny of the Improvement Framework report going to the 19 October CPCA Board**
- E Give consideration to what needs to be included regarding the improvement framework in the Committees 2022/23 work programme**

Voting arrangements: A simple majority of all Members present and voting

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the agenda item is to provide the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to undertake pre-scrutiny of the Improvement Framework report going to Board on the 19 October 2022.
- 1.2 The agenda item will also provide the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to question the Chief Executive and the Mayor on the Improvement Framework and to consider the role of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in the improvement journey.

2. Background

- 2.1 The need for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CA) to undergo a self-assessment process followed by improvement planning was outlined in a paper presented to the Board on 27 July 2022 by the interim Chief Executive.
- 2.2 In summary, concerns raised by auditors that the organisation needed to take steps to ensure it had 'sufficient appropriate leadership capacity to be able to deliver its objectives and statutory responsibilities' followed by engagement with DLUHC highlighted a range of concerns that needed to be addressed.
- 2.3 It was identified that a future Improvement Plan needed to be both comprehensive in content and credible in the eyes of external stakeholders and whilst there was a range of evidence already available, a self-assessment needed to take place to gather additional information, demonstrate awareness of issues within the Authority, internally recognise the need for improvement and identify areas of improvement for immediate focus.
- 2.4 The Chief Executives of the constituent local authorities have been engaged in shaping the assessment report, the summary material used in informal discussions and the role and make-up of the Independent Improvement Board. In addition, Chief Executives have aligned themselves to support each strand of improvement work.

3. 17 October – Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting

- 3.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has an opportunity to undertake pre-scrutiny of the Improvement Framework report going to the Board on 19 October, any comments from the Committee will subsequently be fed back to Board to assist them in their considerations.
- 3.2 Pre-Scrutiny is an important tool in the armoury of the Overview & Scrutiny function. Looking at decisions before they are made provides an important means to influence those decisions, and to improve them. It gives scrutineers an opportunity to challenge assumptions that may have been made as the decision was developed; it also gives them the chance to consider how decision-makers have considered what risks might arise from the implementation of the decision, and how those risks might be mitigated.
- 3.3 Overview & Scrutiny can bring a different perspective to the decision-making process than that provided by Board members or officers, which can help decisions to be more robust. Looking at a decision before it is made can often be seen as a more effective means of scrutiny than looking at a decision after it is made (for example, through the call in process), when the opportunity to influence and change that decision is quite limited. Of course, post-decision scrutiny can help to influence future policy changes in the medium to long-term.

- 3.4 The Improvement Framework report to Board will be published on the 12 October, it will be accessible via this link: [CMIS > Meetings](#)
- 3.5 To assist the Overview & Scrutiny Committee a presentation on the Improvement Framework will be presented at the meeting, a copy of the presentation is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.6 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee will have an opportunity to question the Chief Executive and the Mayor (as Chair of the Combined Authority Board) on the Improvement Framework report and presentation.

Significant Implications

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 At the Combined Authority Board in July £750,000 was agreed to fund improvement and transformation activity relating to the self-assessment.
- 4.2 The proposed Improvement Board arrangements set out in this report identify that any costs associated with the Improvement Board will be met from within the agreed funding.
- 4.3 All costs held against the agreed Improvement Budget will be recorded and reported in line with existing budget reporting.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Improvement Framework report going to CPCA Board on the 19 October sets out the proposed terms of reference for the Improvement Board. The Monitoring Officer has confirmed the arrangements are in line with good governance arrangements.

6. Public Health implications

- 6.1 No Public Health implications are directly identified within this report at this stage.

7. Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 7.1 No Environmental and Climate Change implications are identified within this report at this stage.

8. Other Significant Implications

- 8.1 The External Auditor and DLUHC have set out clearly the expected focus for improvement. It is important that the CA can demonstrate its commitment to improve and also the progress it is making on this journey so more formal interventions are not put in place; the unfreezing of future funding is dependent on this.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix A – Presentation on Improvement Framework

10. Background Papers

- ☐ July CA Board Report Improvement Assessment
- ☐ Governance review
- ☐ External Auditors letter