

Broads Authority

22 November 2019

Agenda item number 13

Peer Review update

Report by Chief Executive

Summary

This report gives an update on the desk-based review of the Broads Authority's Peer Review Action Plan.

Recommendation

To note the report.

1. Briefing

- 1.1. The Broads Authority committed to reviewing the implementation of its Peer Review Action Plan, and in July 2019 the following was reported to the Board:

In 2017 we invited an expert Peer Review Team to examine our leadership, governance, policies and procedures and suggest any changes to improve our effectiveness. In May 2018, in response to the Team's recommendations, we implemented a number of changes. The next stage is to review the effectiveness of the changes. It has been agreed that the Team's Chair, together with a Lead Member and a Managing Director responsible for two of the Norfolk constituent local authorities, will carry out a brief desk-based review in 2019/20. Following a meeting between the Authority's Chairman, Chief Executive, Norfolk Leaders and Chief Executives in April, Trevor Holden (Managing Director of Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council) was asked to undertake a review of the Authority's Peer Review Action Plan.

- 1.2. The review was undertaken by Trevor Holden and by Steve Blatch, Chief Executive of North Norfolk District Council. They produced a point brief (see Appendix 1) for consideration by the Norfolk Leaders and Chief Executives, who accepted the proposal, including the following actions:

- i. Broads Authority Chair and Chief Executive to be invited to attend the Norfolk Leaders' meetings on a six-monthly basis. Next meeting is in January 2020.
- ii. Broads Authority Chief Executive to attend Norfolk Chief Executive meetings on a quarterly timescale.

- 1.3. In addition, a Local Government Association Regional Peer, Cllr William Nunn, agreed to provide support to the Authority's Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive. One meeting has been held to date.

2. Engaging with constituent Local Authorities

- 2.1. One important element of the Peer Review was the suggestion that the Broads Authority's leadership team should get 'around the table' with key local government players and demonstrate to them how the Authority can add value to local and regional plans and ambitions.
- 2.2. Bill Dickson, as the Authority's Chairman, and the Chief Executive have been meeting the Leaders and Chief Executives of the constituent local authorities. Since the annual meeting in July 2019, they have met with Suffolk, Norfolk, East Suffolk, Great Yarmouth and Norwich councils. The meetings have been very productive, identifying a range of areas for greater collaboration, particularly around carbon reduction and climate change. The intention is to meet with the remaining local authorities (Broadland, South Norfolk, North Norfolk) before the end of 2019.
- 2.3. Looking ahead, we plan to have meetings at least once a year with the Leaders and Chief Executives of each of our constituent local authorities.

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Date of report: 11 November 2019

[Broads Plan](#) objectives

Appendix 1 – Report by the Managing Director of South Norfolk Council and Broadland Council and Chief Executive of North Norfolk District Council to the Norfolk Leaders Group June 2019.

Appendix 1

Point brief for Norfolk Leaders and CEX (NLCEX)

June 2019

The Broads Authority (BA)

Background

At its meeting on the 4 April political leaders raised questions with regards to:

- The actions taken following the Broads Authority Peer Review
- Engagement by the BA with Local Government in the county with reference to the political leadership
- Governance within the BA

As a result of the above the CEXs were asked to review the above and report back to NLCEX.

Introduction

Following on from the meeting it was agreed that:

- A review of the Peer Review Action Plan would be undertaken by Richard Leafe, CEO Lake District and Trevor Holden MD, SNC & BDC
- A review of the BA engagement programme with its constituent local authorities would be undertaken by Trevor Holden MD BDC & SNC and Steve Blatch, CEX NNDC
- The BA would seek LGA support in terms of supporting its leadership in promoting good governance.

Post Peer Review Actions

A review of the Peer Review Action plan and actions taken were carried out which confirmed that areas for consideration had been addressed including (but not exclusively)

- A copy of the action plan is attached at.....Flag A
- A copy of the Peer Review Report is atFlag B

BA engagement plan

– Following a very constructive meeting with the BA it was proposed that the BA engagement plan should include the following:

- 6 monthly – BA Chair and CEX to attend Norfolk Leaders and CEX meeting to give an update on progress and to hear challenges or concerns
- Quarterly – BA CEX to attend NLCEX as a standing agenda item to – Update on areas of concern, discuss any proposal issues impacting or within the potential to impact on other Local Authorities
- *BA CEX monthly – briefing E- Newsletter to all Local Authorities and Parish Councils. An example of which is atFlag C
- BA CEX monthly - Also copy to local Councillors via each local authority
- * 6 monthly Parish Forum

*Denotes already in practice

– None of the foregoing would cut across the BA desire to engage on any issues as they arise on a county wide or individual basis. Equally the BA were keen to engage Local Authorities on themed areas of work such as

- Climate change and sea level rise
- Environmental agenda
- Economic Development/Tourism

Governance

The BA was keen to follow up the work of the Peer Review with regard to governance. This is subject to the National Park review (Glover Review), which is due to report in September 2019. The BA has already engaged the support of the LGA and the Regional Peer (Cllr William Nunn) to support the leadership of the Authority in its relationship with the Local Authorities. This work includes:

- Helping BA members, particularly LA appointees, to better understand their roles and responsibilities
- Supporting improved ways of working between the LA's and understanding each others values
- Supporting the BA in operating within a complex political environment both locally and nationally.

Follow up

Unless requested by Leaders and/or Chief Executives any follow up will be reported at the next scheduled meeting consistent with the Engagement Plan above

T Holden, MD BDC & SNC

Flags

A.....Action Plan

B.....Peer review report

C.....Monthly newsletter to all Local Authorities and Parish Councils