

Audit Recommendation:*Embed a culture of Continuous improvement by implementing a corporate approach to self evaluation and benchmarking*

ACTION		Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	NOTES
1	Adopt PSIF as a corporate approach to self evaluation where no service-specific model is already in place. Ensure read-across with all services.	31-Oct-22	67	100%	Whilst we have an agreed model that should be consistently used across all services, regular use and improvement from this needs to be more firmly established as part of regular service planning. This will all now form part of a refocused approach to performance and service improvement across SBC.
2	As part of regular Strategic Leadership Team performance monitoring, review service self-evaluation arrangements, including use of peer evaluations.	31-Dec-22	67	100%	As Action 1. This will be promoted and undertaken as part of the new performance and service improvement approach, and will also include the use of LGBF data for comparisons with other authorities. This will be implemented as the Performance Management Framework becomes embedded across the organisation.
3	Incorporation of self-evaluation and benchmarking data into annual planning process, ensuring learnings inform planned actions.	31-Oct-22		100%	As Action 1. This will be addressed through embedding of the Performance Management Framework where there is an expectation for services to monitor benchmarking data more frequently throughout the year. Self evaluation will be incorporated as part of Service Planning.
4	Review content of customer satisfaction surveys, engaging with partner organisations/providers as required, to maximise opportunities for insight and ensure appropriate questioning & results analysis in future Scottish Borders Household Surveys.	31-Oct-22	62	100%	Throughout 2021 a total of 30 consultations took place via Citizen Space, resulting in over 21,000 responses from citizens. These consultations included the 20mph Public Consultation, Christmas School Holiday proposals, National Entitlement Card Consultation and the Local Housing Strategy 2023-28 Early Engagement Survey . Discussions are ongoing to determine how best to proceed with this as part of our recovery to ensure timely and relevant customer engagement. This will be ongoing and services are encouraged to engage stakeholders appropriately when improving council services.

Audit Recommendation:

Seek to improve partnership working with NHS Borders in order to support the strategic objectives of the Integration Joint Board

ACTION		Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	NOTES
5	Bring together a joint approach to transformation and evaluation process across the organisations.	30-Jun-22	112 – 116	100%	A piece of work has been done previously to look at how Transformation would be considered through the IJB. Both organisations have been focussed on other priorities over the last 2 years. This is being progressed as party of the development of a joint PMO function with NHS Borders which will bring consistency in documentation relating to transformation.
6	Raise visibility of key policies and decisions across respective governance groups including Executive Management Team and Strategic Leadership Team.	31-Mar-22		100%	Linked to action 10. A range of Governance issues are increasingly being discussed at the H&SC Joint Executive Team, in turn raising visibility of these across respective governance groups.
7	Explore co location and shared services opportunities as part of Fit for 2024 and corresponding NHS programmes.	30-Sep-22		100%	In January 2022, SBC began the development of an estates strategy. This is due to conclude at the end of March and will be presented to the new administration in Summer 2022. This will provide an evidence based road map, linked to the Council Plan and Service Needs providing a consistent framework for how we manage and maintain our estate and how we focus capital investment priorities. Alongside this, SBC are progressing with the place making approach which seeks to work with communities and partners to make access to public services easier. These two specific workstreams are expected to realise opportunities for co-location and shared services with a number of public sector partners. Discussions continue with NHSB and the new Earliston Primary School project includes the provision of a new GP surgery. A planning application for this project was submitted at the end of 2021. There will always be exploration of co-location opportunities and therefore this action will be incorporated within the SBC and NHS Borders estates strategies.
8	Enhance governance arrangements and clarity of role of respective partnership groups including IJB Board , Executive Management Team and Strategic Planning Group. - transformation & performance resets. - improving quality and availability of reports outlining proposals to enable these groups to plan and take decisions more effectively.	30-Jun-22		100%	As Action 10. Governance changes proposed include the creation of a 'Future Strategy Group' to report into the Strategic Planning Group. The FSG will develop Directions and manage the work associated with the delivery of the new Strategic Developments. Other governance changes include: - the work of the SIP Oversight Board is realigned to the Audit Committee rather than directly reporting to the IJB. - the Audit Committee to oversee a rapid review of the Terms of Reference and a self-assessment of the IJB Committees to ensure that the IJB and these Committees are able to continue to effectively function in the context of the significant level of work required, in line with the IJB's duties outlined in the Act. Quality and governance of reports will continually be reviewed.
9	Develop a model for localities that adopts a single structure for the management and provision of joint health and Social services.	31-Mar-22		100%	Locality model (CAHs, What Matters Hubs, Daily huddles and Weekly Community Meetings) is in operation across the 5 localities with business manager support in place. NHS attendance at daily huddles has been low. Approval was given by the SBC/NHS board to discuss the option to move the daily huddles to a virtual ward model - two workshops have been arranged and cancelled due to low NHS acceptances. This is now sitting with the NHS to lead.
10	Ensure a joint financial and service plan that is fully endorsed by respective partners is prepared for IJB on an annual basis.	30-Jun-22		100%	Directions Policy now in place from IJB. Commissioning decisions are now costed. Agreement of the 22/23 budget is awaited. This approach will continue in future years.

Audit Recommendation:

Improve how the Community Planning Partnership involves communities and the third sector, through greater involvement in local decision making and by accelerating implementation of the Community empowerment act

ACTION		Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	NOTES
11	Work with the Improvement Service and Scottish Gov't to provide guidance and support to gain insight into best practice in the implementation of the community empowerment act.	30-Jun-22	133 - 144	100%	Ongoing - CEA information now appears on every Area Partnership Agenda, and features on SBC website Scope of the CPP Review was approved and a Self Assessment workshop was held on 17 Jan 2022. A draft Improvement Plan will now be considered by the Joint Programme Board on 9 Feb, and the aim is that this will be presented to the CPP Strategic Board on 3 March 2022. The next APR due to Scottish government in Summer 2022 - this along with the participation and asset transfer report will feed in to the Scottish Government national report. SBC continues to work with the Improvement Service and ways to maximise the impact of the CEA
12	Conduct a review of the operation of local area partnerships to inform the development of enhanced local decision making service provision and the allocation of resources.	31-Mar-22	133 - 144	100%	Council approved recommendations on 27 08 2020, and a further update will go back to Council before March 2022 Review has been completed, and officers are now undertaking research of best practice across Scotland in order to present recommendations. Next step is to update Council.
13	Use the experience of the budget consultation process 2020/21 to develop the approach to mainstreaming participatory budgeting. Work with communities to identify priority areas within current budgets. Evaluation of Localities Bid Fund to be undertaken.	31-Mar-22	133 - 144	100%	Evaluation of Locality Bid Fund 1&2 as well as the Community Fund was received by Council 27.08.2020. Covid-19 has delayed the progress of mainstreaming Participatory Budgeting, although there has been a strong focus on this work in order to try and achieve the 1% target for 2021/22. PB Strategic Group meet monthly, and an officer group has also been established that reports in to that monthly. An update report will be presented to Council as part of the Budget process on 22 Feb 2022.
14	Promote the #your part campaign to recognise the contribution of communities.	31-Oct-21	133 - 144	100%	Letters have been sent out & comms on website from Chief Exec thanking communities for playing their part during CV-19. Paper has been considered by SLT re the contribution of volunteers during pandemic, and communities are currently being consulted in relation to what might be appropriate to mark the contribution of volunteers. Report back to SLT potentially end of Feb. Services are using on Yammer - Comms on social media, etc.
15	Undertake an organisational review under Fit for 2024 of how to best develop community capacity in the 3rd sector and localities.	31-Mar-22	133 - 144	100%	9 engagement officers have been appointed across the organisation focussed on developing community capacity and place making. There are ongoing discussions between senior managers in relation to maximising the benefits these posts bring 5 community assistance hubs were set up during pandemic and these are going to be continuing. Weekly and fortnightly meetings with third sectors and partners are being held in each of the localities. extra resources are in place and this will continue to evolve in-line with placemaking agenda.
16	Review Community Plan and Action Plan to ensure actions align to 2020 Strategic Assessment.	31-Mar-22	133 - 144	100%	A new Community Plan is being developed; however, work around place making and the development of a community engagement strategy essentially complete any previous outstanding requirements.
17	Agree Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Performance Management Framework through CPP Joint Programme Board and CPP Strategic Board.	30-Sep-20	133 - 144	100%	Complete - approved at CPP Strategic Board on 10 09 20. To be refreshed/revamped for future performance reporting To be revised following refreshed key priorities and action plan
18	Completion of Locality Plans and Action Plans.	30-Sep-20	133 - 144	100%	Approved by CPP Strategic Board 10 09 20
19	Promote stakeholder engagement through Area Partnerships and community engagement events, with training around leadership/national standards of engagement.	30-Jun-22	133 - 144	100%	a review of area partnerships is being undertaken as part of the identified priorities in the new council plan for 22-23. This will incorporate all of these improvement points and build upon the community engagement exercises undertaken for both IJB and place making activities.
20	Community Empowerment Act to become standing agenda item at Area Partnerships with information to raise awareness and provide support to Communities. Research to be undertaken on SBC performance relative to other authorities.	31-Dec-20	133 - 144	100%	Will always be part of agenda. Research re SBC performance been done, SBC is comparative to others (North Ayrshire / D&G regarding our approach). Action complete although work will continue as BAU.
21	Develop regular reporting of progress on Community Engagement across the whole council, for inclusion in reports to members and CPP Strategic Board.	31-Mar-22	133 - 144	100%	Full round of community conversations has taken place following CV-19 restrictions lifting and in order to kick start greater locality based engagement with all communities. Community engagement activity is now also being reported regularly through updates to elected members on the council plan priorities and will feature as part of the new performance framework around this.

Audit Recommendation:

Establish a structured programme of ongoing staff consultation and engagement

ACTION		Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	UPDATE
22	Continue the process of engagement sessions with staff under the Fit for 2024 programme.	30-Jun-20	36 - 37,	100%	Well established part of the FF24 programme process. Extensive staff engagement has taken place particularly with H&SC staff, staff across A&I and staff in business Support/customer services.
23	Undertake regular large briefing sessions with managers from across all council services & use Yammer as a platform for council wide staff engagement sessions with members of SLT (rolling programme)	30-Jun-20	96 - 97,	100%	SLT have started a series of senior manager meetings on Yammer. This has been supplemented with Senior Manager visits to frontline depots and other sites to ensure engagement and interaction with frontline staff. This will continue to evolve and it is hoped that the roll out of technology to all staff will further assist this engagement.
24	Develop a communications plan for staff engagement and undertake a structured survey of all staff using the online survey tool. Building upon the regular staff engagement and survey work during covid, maintain regular contact with all staff on key corporate issues.	31-Oct-22	153 - 154	100%	Regular senior manager meetings are taking place Regular updates from SLT on Yammer are being published The communications strategy is underway There continue to be regular staff updates (a recent example being those related to the Queen's funeral), and there are plans for more regular updates from HR going forwards. Director Yammer sessions have been taking place and are planned to continue A comprehensive staff survey took place in June and the results are due to be published shortly.

Audit Recommendation:

Update its people plan for 2017 -21 and ensure longer term workforce plans are reflected in service and financial plans

ACTION		Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	NOTES
25	Launch a new appraisal process for staff based on the updated competency framework.	31-Mar-20	90 – 92, 149	100%	Launched 08/06/2020
26	Ensure each department has a 5 year people plan which aligns with the corporate plan and Fit for 2024 principles.	16-Dec-22	90 – 92, 149	100%	New format of People Plans and the introduction of a new Succession Planning agreed with SLT, pilot took place June to July in the E&I Service. All services have now started or completed one cycle of the new digital format of people and succession planning. This is now embedded as a quarterly activity.
27	People planning to be undertaken using a consistent approach as part of Fit For 2024, taking into account Fit for 2024 design principles, staff turnover, succession planning, talent management and future operating models.	31-Dec-20	90 – 92, 149	100%	New integrated People/ Financial/ Transformation planning document has been finalised and rolled out. This incorporates FF24 principles, staff turnover, succession planning, talent management and future operating models.
28	Ensure that resourcing of Fit for 2024 does not adversely impact on business as usual service delivery. Rebalance senior portfolios or use of secondments, backfill, recruitment and/or consultancy as appropriate.	31-Dec-20	35	100%	With the exception of new Chief Executive, CMT roles are occupied with full time officers.

Audit Recommendation:

Support members Continuing Professional Development by tailoring training to meet their individual needs and use technology to make training more accessible

ACTION	Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	NOTES	
29	Use Improvement Service Member CPD to allow members to evaluate their continuing professional development needs.	31-Mar-20	28 - 29	100%	All Members offered assessment through the Improvement Service - 5 have taken this up.
30	Undertake a review of induction training with members to establish any gaps.	31-Mar-22	28-29	100%	The full range of induction has now been completed. See Action 32 re questionnaire.
31	Develop a members section of SBLearn where specific materials linked to Councillor responsibilities could be housed.	31-Mar-22	28-29	100%	Online Council Training for Elected Members has been set up on SB Learn and contains specific materials linked to Councillor responsibilities.
32	Survey with the members to identify skills gaps.	30-Jun-22	28-29	25%	A questionnaire is currently being planned to establish any gaps in knowledge. This will be taken forwards before Summer recess as part of the development of the members training programme for 23/24. Newly elected members will benefit from this timing as they now have had time to understand any areas they may benefit from further awareness on.
33	Review the potential for earlier visibility of meeting / Committee content, for members.	31-Mar-22	25	100%	Wherever possible members now receive papers 10 days in advance rather than 7 days

Audit Recommendation:

Ensure performance reports to members and the public are more comprehensively balanced and that they cover service performance and the delivery of the Fit for 2024 programme.

ACTION	Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	NOTES	
34	Redevelop the performance management framework to reflect Fit for 2024 priorities and demonstrate best value within performance reporting.	28-Feb-22	71 - 72,	100%	The reset of the Council Plan will introduce a clearer mechanism for communicating and monitoring the priorities of the Transformation Programme. This will be incorporated in the updated Performance Management Framework as part of the current project to review performance management across the organisation.
35	Ensure that benchmarking data and longer term trend info is included within performance reports and is used to identify improvement priorities.	31-Oct-22	145 – 151,	100%	Executive and SLT Reporting has been revised to include longer term trends and inclusion of a range of LGBF benchmarking data. Following the review of performance management, there will be an expectation for services to better monitor and analyse benchmarking data more frequently throughout the year. There has been greater engagement in LGBF learning events to support a continued focus on the benefits of benchmarking data. including in annual reports within refreshed performance reports
36	Align the approach & sequencing of performance monitoring for Executive Committee, SLT and Directorate Management Team's, incorporating a programme of service improvement deep dives.	31-Oct-22	152	100%	Executive and SLT Reporting has been revised to bring consistency of approach closer; however, more work is required to align and calibrate the selection of indicators at the various organisation levels and frequencies (e.g. strategic down to operational). The review of performance management will deliver a model for services to Assess, Act, Monitor, Revise and Learn from performance information. This review will also create a model for identifying areas of improvement through targeted service deep-dives. Availability of information will improve as the InfoHub project progresses - creating greater opportunity for Managers to focus in on specific issues. The governance of performance information and how this is embedded in to Council activity is also being looked at.
37	Ensure performance reports include adequate commentary on reasons for underperformance and actions to address.	31-Mar-20		100%	Reporting approach updated with greater cohesion around commentaries. Ensuring adequate commentary is included is embedded in the report production process.
38	Develop regular progress reporting on Fit for 2024 for FF24 Board, Strategic Leadership Team and Executive/Public Performance Reporting.	31-Mar-20	154	100%	FF24 progress is tracked in the Financial Plan. Project specific highlights are included in Executive and Public reporting.

Additional points added to the Action Plan, outwith those highlighted in the Best Value Audit Report

ACTION	Timescales	Report Ref	% COMPLETION	NOTES
39 Ensure relevant officers are reminded of their responsibilities to the council and Arm's Length External Organisation(s) at appointment and on a regular basis thereafter.	31-Mar-20	123	100%	This situation was resolved at the time relating to senior officers with dual/seconded roles. However, this situation no longer exists.
40 Review Fit for 2024 implementation plans in light of the council's Annual Governance Statement.	31-Mar-20	155-156	100%	Internal Audit review of Fit for 2024 Transformation Programme was completed on 27 February 2020 and findings reported to A&SC on 9 March 2020. Progress with the three improvement actions discussed at FF2024 Board on 12 May 2020.