

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

	RECOMMENDATION FROM PEER TEAM	November 2024	RAG Status
1.	Take a strategic/corporate approach to programme and project management, building on and aligning with your existing corporate performance management function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Project Management Office has been established. • CPM in post and has recently undertaken Association of Project Managers, Project Management Qualification. • CPM has recently appointed a Project Officer to the team. • CPM is engaging with external contacts, gathering best practice to feed in to RBC's new PM framework. • EMT have already received an initial update report on Corporate Projects. • New PM framework to begin roll out in January 2025. 	
2.	Invest further in staff and councillor training; ensure councillors in particular take up mandatory, essential and other training, including that on councillor/officer roles, political awareness, code of conduct and other internal processes.	<p>Work has been undertaken over the summer to identify a suitable training provider and scope out training courses for both officers and councillors in respect of political awareness / working in a political environment. These courses will take place in the new year.</p> <p>Officer training will include input from senior officers and councillors so that different perspectives are presented. There will be an introductory level session online for team leaders and officers who have occasional contact with councillors and a more in-depth face-to-face interactive session for those who work with councillors more frequently. The councillor training will be open to all councillors.</p> <p>In addition, work has been done to bring all councillor individual learning records up to date and there has been a renewed push on mandatory training which is now all up to date and complete. The delivery of the Councillors' Training Programme</p>	

		for this year continues and attendance is a above 50% which is 'healthy'.	
3.	Create further time, space, resource and capacity with your strategic partners to identify what could be needed in future regarding changes in the landscape that affect you and your communities, notably the East Midlands Mayoral County Combined Authority (EMMCCA), Development Corporation and Freeport.	<p>A joint Cabinet and Executive Management Team workshop was held in summer 2024 to consider this in more detail.</p> <p>The Leader, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive are taking active role in devolution meetings wherever possible. The Leader is Board Member of the Freeport. The Leader and Deputy Leader both sit on EMCCA committees.</p> <p>Other officers e.g. s151 Officer sit on Freeport Sub-Committees. The Development Corporation is now being subsumed within EMCCA.</p>	
4.	Further develop and align your capital programme with your economic growth strategy once you have agreed the latter for 2024/25, with clear outcomes for both.	The Economic Growth Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in October 2024. An Action Plan has been developed and funding is currently being repatriated, for example £0.5m to help pump-prime, and use to attract, investment, from partners in relation to the pedestrianisation of the Borough's main shopping centre (Cabinet Quarter 1 2024/25 Finance Report) as well as £70k to improve signage into Rushcliffe. This will continue as the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy evolves and financial commitment is balanced against other priorities. The newly formed Capital Programme Working Group will assist with ongoing successful delivery of the Capital Programme given the challenge of scarce resources.	

5.	Use your respected position with all your partners to deliver further defined outcomes across the whole council – you are already using your environmental partnerships to lever in additional funding to support delivery... You should therefore maximise financial potential via these partnership routes.	Since the CPC, the council has secured funding from the Mayor for the Local Area Energy Plan. We also have agreement from CWC the developer of the Fairham site to fund a community development worker to foster community activities and relations in the new settlement prior to the setting up of the new parish council in 2027.	
6.	Explore options through your climate change action plan to maximise delivery of environmental outcomes across your strategic development and growth sites.	<p>The Design Code is currently being processed; however how much we can deviate from the current policy position needs to be explored following the current NPPF consultation.</p> <p>The majority of our strategic sites have been granted planning permission however we will continue to seek improvements across reserved matter applications where possible. The Gamston site SPD is currently in process and the environmental sections are still being worked upon.</p> <p>The GNSP (hoped to be adopted in 2026) includes a climate change policy which is more ambitious than the current policy. This has been worked upon with the other Nottinghamshire Councils. It is hopeful that this policy will achieve a significant improvement in the carbon footprint of developments moving forward. If agreed by the Planning Inspector then when adopted this will give greater requirements to developers when submitting planning applications.</p>	
7.	Integrate climate change ambitions in all your service areas.	The Council's Carbon Management Group has continued to meet on a quarterly basis and the latest performance of the plan has been scrutinised by the Communities Scrutiny Group. The group were very positive about the progress being made by the Council towards its 2030 target.	

		<p>Particular highlights have been the introduction of biofuel as an alternative to diesel for the Council's refuse fleet which has reduced their carbon emissions by 90%. The Council has also been successful in securing external grant funding to improve the carbon efficiency of our Cotgrave Leisure Centre and Gamston Community Hall.</p> <p>The Council is also in the process of updating and streamlining the climate change action plan as a living document which will contain relevant carbon related service plan tasks and other sub service plan tasks for teams across the Council. Furthermore the Council now has a carbon/climate impact check box on all Council reports to ensure that any implications are fully understood by councillors.</p>	
8.	Reduce the number of RBC values, eg to a maximum of five, working with your employee liaison group and trade unions.	<p>This work has been taken forward by our Employee Liaison Group. The Council has now adopted 5 refreshed values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment • Collaboration • Excellence • Inclusivity • Integrity 	
9.	Build up your future, annual or mid-term, light-touch corporate strategy refreshes from community level to best understand and respond to your communities' needs and aspirations for the future.	<p>We will conduct an enhanced mid-term review (2025), with more comprehensive community engagement activities.</p> <p>We are currently evaluating the Corporate Survey results and aligning to service planning and budget work as well as other specific surveys</p>	

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

	OBSERVATION FROM PEER TEAM	November 2024
10	RBC could build in regular constructive, supportive challenge of its income generation and financial plans, and commission an external, independent review of its assets and their future commercial potential	Strategic Asset Review has now commenced, with the first report on Operational Land and buildings to be presented to Scrutiny in Summer 2025. This will take into consideration commercial potential.
11	RBC should continue monitoring and enhancing planning service and its resources to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This includes developing staff as needed to support delivery of RBC's significant strategic sites including Ratcliffe-on-Soar and facilitating joint working to address gaps in provision such as infrastructure.	A new Planning Manager for Development Management has started and will be reviewing the service. We have also set up a series of meetings with other strategic site officers within LPAs to learn and understand what is happening elsewhere and how we can improve our service with this knowledge.
12	Identify additional land for carbon offsetting, as reception sites for BNG credits and so forth, when developers cannot provide increased biodiversity on their sites. RBC however, as a predominantly rural council, has a range of potential tree planting, agricultural land.	A report presenting the Council's approach to Carbon Offsetting was presented and approved by the Council's Cabinet in April 2024. In addition to identifying appropriate financial support the report provides a tiered framework to how the Council will seek to identify and if necessary, acquire to land to achieve its offsetting target. An internal task and finish group has been formed to take this programme of work forward over the next 12 months

13	<p>RBC does not have an engagement strategy but having one would help the council understand and address its communities' immediate and future needs and aspirations. It would also enable more residents to provide feedback and inform council and sub-regional approaches and get involved in council activities. An engagement strategy could also inform and contribute to the council's annual or mid-term, light-touch corporate strategy refreshes from the community level.</p>	<p>The new Communications and Engagement Strategy 2025-2028 is now being drafted with a specific focus on communities' needs and aspirations and that could help shape corporate strategy reviews going forward. The Council is currently assessing its most recent public consultation results to inform its 'direction of travel'.</p> <p>The strategy will aim to identify where our existing consultations and communications can build on more extensive connections including fellow local authorities, partners, communities, charities and hard to reach groups, schools and youth organisations</p>
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