Corporate Committee

Tuesday, 25 April 2023

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **Corporate Committee** is to be held at **Council Chambers**, **Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Tuesday, 25 April 2023** at **09:30**.

BUSINESS

1. **Sederunt**

2. **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests ***

3. **Resolution**

   Consider, and if so decide, adopt the following resolution:
   "That under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for Items 17, 18 and 19 of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act."

16. **Question Time *****

Consider any oral question on matters delegated to the Committee in terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration.

17. **Forres Flood Alleviation Scheme - Compensation Claim**

- Information on the amount of any expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Authority;

18. **Trade Union Facility Time**

- Information relating to staffing matters;
- Information relating to any consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations;

19. **Corporate Scanning Printing and Copying Contract**

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person(s);

Summary of Corporate Services Committee functions:

To regulate, manage and monitor the finances of the Council both capital and revenue; to deal with staffing policies and practices other than for teaching staff; to deal with equal opportunities policies and practices; to deal with procurement policies and priorities; to deal with all matters relating to the Council's duty to initiate, maintain and facilitate Community Planning; to ensure that the organisation, administrative and management processes of the Council are designed to make the most effective contribution to achieving the Council's objectives; to provide all central support services; to exercise the functions of the Council in connection with the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages; to deal with valuation and electoral registration matters.

* **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests -** The Chair of the meeting shall seek declarations from any individual or political group at the beginning of a meeting whether any prior decision has been reached on how the individual or members of the group will vote on any item(s) of business on the Agenda, and if so on which item(s). A prior decision shall be one that the individual or the group deems to be mandatory on the individual or the group members such that the individual or the group members will be subject to sanctions should they not vote in accordance with the prior decision. Any such prior decisions will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

** **Written Questions** - Any Member can put one written question about any relevant and competent business within the specified remits not already on the agenda, to the Chair provided it is received by the Proper Officer or Committee Services by 12 noon two working days prior to the day of the meeting. A copy of any written answer provided by the Chair will be tabled at the start of the relevant section of the meeting. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than 10 minutes after the Council has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he or she can submit it in writing to the Proper Officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within 7 working days.

*** **Question Time -** At each ordinary meeting of the Committee ten minutes will be allowed for Members questions when any Member of the Committee can put a question to the Chair on any business within the remit of that Section of the Committee. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than ten minutes after the Committee has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he/she can submit it in writing to the proper officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within seven working days.

THE MORAY COUNCIL

Corporate Committee

<u>SEDERUNT</u>

Councillor Bridget Mustard (Chair)
Councillor Kathleen Robertson (Depute Chair)

Councillor Theresa Coull (Member)
Councillor John Cowe (Member)
Councillor John Divers (Member)
Councillor Amber Dunbar (Member)
Councillor Jérémie Fernandes (Member)
Councillor Sandy Keith (Member)
Councillor Graham Leadbitter (Member)
Councillor Marc Macrae (Member)
Councillor Paul McBain (Member)
Councillor Shona Morrison (Member)
Councillor Derek Ross (Member)
Councillor John Stuart (Member)

Clerk Name:	Lindsey Robinson
Clerk Telephone:	07966 120593
Clerk Email:	committee.services@moray.gov.uk

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting of the Corporate Committee

Tuesday, 31 January 2023

Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX

PRESENT

Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Amber Dunbar, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Councillor Derek Ross

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Head of Financial Services, Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Property Asset Manager, Strategy and Performance Manager, Communities Services Manager, and Lindsey Robinson, Committee Services Officer, as Clerk to the Committee.

1.   Chair

Councillor Bridget Mustard, as Chair of the Corporate Committee, chaired the meeting.

2.   Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Order 21 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Councillor Mustard declared a group decision by the Conservative Group in relation to item 8 "Charging for Services".

Councillor Leadbitter also declared a group decision relating to item 8 "Charging for Services" by the SNP Group.

There were no other declarations from Group Leaders or Spokespersons in regards to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

3.   Minute of Meeting of the Corporate Committee of 8 November 2022

The Minute of the meeting of the Corporate Committee dated 8 November 2022 was submitted and approved.

4.   Notice of Motion - Councillors Morrison and Coull - Pregnancy Loss Pledge

In terms of Standing Order 35a, there was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Coull in the following terms:

Miscarriage is the most common loss of pregnancy, affecting 1 in 4 known pregnancies. Miscarriage is legally defined in the UK as the loss of a baby up to 23 weeks and 6 days of a pregnancy and a stillbirth relates to the loss of a baby from 24 weeks.

Under current UK legislation, employees who experience stillbirth are entitled to two weeks Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave. They are also entitled to Maternity or Paternity Leave in addition to any Shared Parental Leave planned prior to their loss. Employees who lose their baby before 24 weeks of pregnancy have no such entitlement instead they have to rely on annual leave, sick leave or unpaid leave if they feel unable to return to work following the loss of a baby.

The loss of a baby at any stage of pregnancy can be a major source of grief and trauma and can have a significant impact on the mental wellbeing of women and men. It is imperative that they are given time to grieve and that their loss is acknowledged by their employer in a compassionate and supportive manner without any potential financial burden or worry about their job.

The Miscarriage Association is urging employers across the UK to commit to their pregnancy loss standard to ensure employees going through what can be an incredibly traumatic time, get the support and timer off they need.

The standard asks employers to understand and implement the rules around pregnancy related leave, create a supportive work environment, to have a policy or guidance in place to ensure line managers have access to resources to help them manage a difficult situation and to support people including partners back to work by showing flexibility wherever possible.

Committee therefore agrees that a report is brought to Corporate Services Committee outlining the standards advocated within the Miscarriage Association Pregnancy Loss Pledge already adopted by several Scottish Local Authorities and many organisations in the UK and that the report asks the Council to consider embedding these standards within Moray Council's employment policies.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to support the Notice of Motion as stated.

5.   Written Questions **

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

6.   Public Trust - Fife Park Pavilion Keith

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) invited the Committee to consider a proposal to demolish the changing pavilion in Fife Park, Keith.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

i.   instruct the Property Asset manager to seek viable proposals from the community for suitable alternative uses for the Fife Park pavilion;

ii. that in the event of a potentially viable proposal coming forward, to approve in principle, expenditure of up to £35,000 to undertake repairs, subject to final approval by this Committee of detailed proposals; and

iii. that in the absence of any viable proposals coming forward within a period of 1 month of the opportunity being advertised, to proceed with the demolition of the changing pavilion in Fife Park, Keith for reasons of public safety.

7. Proposed Empty Property Relief Policy

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) sought authorisation from Elected Members for the implementation of an empty property relief policy for non-domestic properties following the devolution of responsibility for formulation of this policy to local authorities by the Scottish Government on 1 April 2023.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

i. the Interim Empty Property Relief policy proposed in Appendix 1 to the report for one year (Financial Year 2023/24); and

ii. that during 2023/24, officers undertake a reassessment as set out in the report to identify any changes which would incentivise ratepayers to bring unoccupied non-domestic properties back into use with a report back to Committee setting out revised proposals for 2024/25.

8. Charging for Services

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) asked the Committee to approve revised charges for Council services for 2023/24.

During discussion Councillor Robertson moved the recommendations with an addition to H3 Car Park Charges that charges are frozen for 2023/24. This was seconded by Councillor Dunbar.

Councillor Leadbitter sought clarification as to whether the charges were to be frozen for all of 2023/24 or for a specified period to allow for consultation.

In response Councillor Robertson agreed the charges be frozen for a period of 6 months to allow for consultation with stakeholders to take place and amended her motion accordingly.

In response the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised that 6 months would fall within recess, so officers would work to a timescale of just before or just after this.

Following further discussion Councillor Divers moved the recommendations with the amendment above and an additional recommendation that the 50p charge at A24 was not introduced. This was seconded by Councillor Ross.

Councillor Keith stated that planning application fees were a statutory charge but asked that a letter was written to COSLA and the Scottish Finance Secretary with regard to setting fees locally to help with the recoup of costs.

Councillor Robertson stated that she would change her motion to include the amendment by Councillor Divers and the request by Councillor Keith. This was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to:

i. approve the charges set out in appendix 1 of the report, with the following amendments:

    a. H3 Car Park Charges – to be frozen for 6 months to allow consultation with all stakeholders and that a report be brought back on the outcome of the consultation thereafter;

    b. A24 Post Office/Paypoint Charges – not to introduce a 50p charge.

ii. write to COSLA and the Scottish Finance Secretary in relation to the setting of planning application fees locally; and

iii. to grant delegated authority to officers to vary charges made for use of electricity to ensure the actual cost is recouped in the event of in-year increases in the cost of electricity.

9. Volunteering Policy Refresh

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the need to review the current Volunteer Policy and sought approval of the refreshed Moray Council Volunteering Policy which recognises the different types of direct and indirect volunteering that the council engages with.

During consideration, Councillor Ross sought clarification as to why the Community Councils had not been included in the paper.

In response the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) explained that the scope of the policy had been focussed on co-ordination of volunteers, and how Moray Council engages with volunteers and volunteering. The Chief Executive added that Moray Council recognised the Community Councils and forums across Moray but this wasn't the focus of the report.

Councillor Macrae questioned why tsiMoray were featured so strongly.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advised that tsiMoray have a specific responsibility for the co-ordination of volunteers and linking them with third sector organisations, they also have a role in training and supporting volunteers.

Councillor Ross raised further concerns over there being no reference to the Community Councils and their role with volunteers within the paper and asked for it to be brought back to a future Committee.

In response the Chief Executive advised that if there was a lack of clarity then the report should be deferred.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to defer the report so that there could be wider consultation, including with the Community Councils, to include the voice of volunteers and to broaden the reference in the policy to refer to key local partners and that a report come back to a future meeting of the committee.

10. Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2020-21 Results

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) presented the Committee with a corporate overview of benchmarking performance data for the period 2020-21.

During consideration Councillor Leadbitter sought clarification on the age of the data being used, as more recent data had been debated by the service committees.

In response the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance advised that he recognised the limitations of the data which was due to the data collection methods used across Scotland which have a time lag before reporting, however, the report is also due to go before the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Leadbitter asked if it would be possible to make reference where this has already been reported to the service committees.

The Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance advised he would discuss the report content and format going forward with the Chief Executive.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to note the Council's performance in terms of a corporate overview of benchmarking results.

11. Question Time ***

Under reference to paragraph 18 of the minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 8 November 2022, Councillor Keith gave an update on the status of the applications to the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund. The Lossiemouth 2-3 Group was successful in their bid and were awarded £270,000.

Councillor Cowe stated the money would be used to extend the facility in Lossiemouth and that it was very well deserved.

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 8 November 2022, Councillor Fernandes sought an update on what work has been undertaken with regards to the Notice of Motion on call charges.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance advised that he did not have the information to hand but would update Councillor Fernandes and the Committee.

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: WARD BUDGETS

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To consider arrangements for agreeing expenditure of Ward budgets in 2023/24.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme section (III) (A) (2) relating to considering Capital and Revenue budgets and long term financial plans.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   It is recommended that the Committee considers its approach to spending ward budgets for 2023/24, the main options proposed for which are that:

(i)   Potential expenditure is identified by members based on their local knowledge and understanding of minor works/concerns in their ward;

(ii)   Authority is delegated to the Chief Financial Officer to authorise expenditure throughout the year until the budgets are exhausted if two thirds or more (3 in a 4 member ward) of local members are in agreement as to proposed expenditure;

(iii)   If the agreement of at least two thirds of local members cannot be reached then proposals will be brought to Corporate Committee for consideration.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council's revenue and capital budgets for 2023/24 were approved at a meeting of Moray Council on 1 March 2023 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers). As part of the revenue budget the Council agreed to allocate £15,000 one-off spend to each ward, "*to be spent by elected members for that ward in consultation with each other to address "minor works/concerns*".

3.2 Local priorities for spend on minor works/concerns can be surfaced by a number of routes, but it is anticipated that members will be familiar with potential spending options based on their local knowledge and understanding. For example, options may have been identified in locality planning exercises or other forms of community engagement, discussed in local community groups such as community councils, or have been directly raised with councillors. Given the one off nature of the funding, its relatively limited scope at only £15,000 per ward and officer capacity issues in managing any formal bidding process, it is proposed that potential expenditure options are identified by local members and considered as a collective at ward level.

4. APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE OF WARD BUDGETS

4.1 Council expenditure is governed by the Council's Financial Regulations – these are framed around the responsibilities of Council officers, specifically budget managers. There is therefore a need to set out a scheme for approving expenditure of Ward budgets, as these are clearly seen as sitting with local members.

4.2 An analogy could be drawn with Common Good funds, where decisions have been generally devolved to local members since May 1999. Moray Council on 13 March 2019 agreed that where two thirds or more of local members were in agreement on proposals for expenditure from Common Goods, then that was sufficient authority to proceed under the delegated authority of the Chief Financial Officer (paragraph 10 of the Minute refers). This arrangement also mirrors the arrangement for approval of expenditure of Developer Obligations for community facilities, playing fields, indoor / outdoor sports facilities and library facilities: Policy and Resources Committee on 25 October 2016 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers) gave delegated authority to the Head of Economic Growth and Development to spend such developer obligations in consultation with ward members, with a two thirds majority deemed sufficient to proceed.

4.3 It is proposed that the same requirement for agreement of two thirds of local members (three in a four member ward) is required before expenditure is approved and that in cases where this level of agreement cannot be reached that a report is brought to Corporate Committee to decide.

4.4   Given constraints around Financial Regulations and staffing resources to give effect to spending proposals, before any firm commitment is given by local members (following a 2/3 or greater majority) to a proposed item of expenditure, it should first be approved as ready for implementation by both the S95 officer in terms of financial regulations regarding procurement, VAT and any other relevant financial considerations and the relevant Head of Service in terms of the impact on staffing capacity and options to manage this if it cannot be absorbed. For expenditure which cannot be agreed at ward level, this information will be added to the Committee report.

5.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

    (a)   **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
    There is no direct link between Ward budgets and the Corporate Plan or LOIP.

    (b)   **Policy and Legal**
    Ward expenditure must be within the Council's statutory powers. Advice will be sought from Legal Services if any questions arises. The Council's standard prcedures e.g. procurement procedures must be adhered to.

    (c)   **Financial implications**
    There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Provision has been made in the budget for this one-off spend to be funded from Council reserves.

    (d)   **Risk Implications**
    There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

    (e)   **Staffing Implications**
    Actions for officers arising from this process should be carefully managed given other priorities and existing demands on limited capacity.

    (f)   **Property**
    There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

    (g)   **Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**
    There are no implications for equalities or the socio-economic duty arising directly from this report.

    (h)   **Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**
    There are no implications for biodiversity arising directly from this report.

    (i)   **Consultations**
    The Corporate Management Team, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Political Group Leaders have been consulted in the preparation of this report. No unanimous position on the approach to identifying spend emerged at Political Group Leaders.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 **Adopting the requirement for a two thirds agreement from local members on expenditure of the Ward budgets would be in line with the process for Common Good and Developer Obligation monies.**

6.2 **A suggested approach to identifying options for expenditure is set out in the report.**

Author of Report: Lorraine Paisey, Chief Financial Officer
Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-1293228629-855

REPORT TO: **CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023**

SUBJECT: **BEST VALUE PROGRESS REPORT ON MORAY COUNCIL**

BY: **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. **REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 To inform the Committee of the latest progress on the Best Value Assurance Review Strategic Action Plan.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section 103E of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 **The Committee is asked to consider and note progress made on the Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) Strategic Action Plan shown in Appendix 1.**

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Reference is made to the report to the Council on 29 June 2022 when the Council approved the updated Best Value Action Plan to continue progress in response to the Best Value Audit and the follow up report (para 25 of the minute refers).

3.2 The report in June 2022 set out the background that had led to the most recent iteration of the Improvement Plan and the positive progress that had been made in reaching that point, as summarised below:

   i) A Best Value Audit of the Council took place in September 2019, published in August 2020;

   ii) the Council agreed a plan of strategic actions in response in October 2020;

   iii) Further report by the Controller of Audit on the progress made by the Council published February 2022;

iv)   the outcome of the follow up report was recognised that good progress and that challenges remained in delivering the council's strategic priorities;

v)   Plan of action to address remaining areas agreed by Council in June 2022.

3.4   Since the Action Plan was agreed many of the actions have progressed well and a number have been concluded, albeit that in some cases timescales were more protracted than originally planned. Progress has been made in:

i)   IMP project monitoring to CMT/SMT established and showing progress across a number of projects and shifts from red/amber to amber/green evidencing progress in maintaining pace;

ii)   Work on financial planning: hierarchical approach agreed, assumptions revised and contributions to budget gap identified, although gap remains;

iii)   Remit of Audit and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Guide agreed;

iv)   Improve Education Attainment – range of work progressing, including finalisation of curriculum progressions (BGE), extension of qualifications and accreditation in line with SCQF ambassador programme (Senior Phase) and working in partnership with key partners (SDS, DYW, ES) to progress work on learner pathways and skills.

3.5   Although there has been good progress in most areas, some actions require attention, including the actions under the heading 'Need for Clear and Decisive Leadership' which has been delayed for a number of reasons, including the settling period needed following election of new Councillors and competing priorities. These actions include the definition of leadership roles and behaviours (councillors – agreed in September 2022), leadership development (officers) and improving the relationship of trust between members and members/officers. Progress on a number of workforce actions within this heading and the workforce heading have been delayed due to staff vacancies in the Organisational Development team but appointments have now been made and the work is progressing so it is anticipated that this will be completed with extended timescales as noted in the action plan updates.

4.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a)   **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
The Council is committed to delivering better public services year on year through Best Value and its key principle of continuous improvement.

(b)   **Policy and Legal**
The Council has a legal duty to deliver Best Value and to address any findings containing recommendations arising from any Best Value Assurance Reports.

(c)   **Financial Implications**
There are no financial implications arising directly from this monitoring report.

(d)   Risk Implications
There are risks associated with the council's ability to deliver the actions in the Best Value Action Plan alongside a challenging agenda including addressing the Council's significant budget gap. The challenge of prioritisation and resourcing was reported to the Council on 8 March 2023 in the Chief Executive's report Corporate Overview of Council Priorities. The balancing of operational priorities and planned development work and the potential stop/start impact on planned work has been recognised in the series of best value reviews the Council has experienced and is one of the biggest challenges in ensuring sustained progress.

In order to mitigate this, the Corporate and Senior Management team monitor progress on the Improvement and Modernisation Programme and the Best Value Action Plan and as noted in this report, progress is being made with many actions well advanced and the majority of the overall work arising from the Best Value Review completed (as reported to the Council in June 2022).

Prioritisation of resources and focusing of agendas and priorities will be ongoing to continue to deliver planned actions and maintain the pace established for improvement and modernisation.

The financial climate adds demands that will require considerable political and officer attention to be given to unprecedented levels of savings in a climate where the council has already delivered savings for many years. This may require further review and prioritisation of the remaining Best Value actions in the context of the priority required to be allocated to the delivery of savings to address financial sustainability.

(e)   Staffing Implications
There are no additional staffing implications arising directly from this report. Work is being accommodated within existing resources which increases the risks of delivery and risks to other work. As noted above, this is monitored through reporting at the Management team and Committee.

(f)   Property
None.

(g)   Equalities/Social Economic Impact
This is covered in terms of the inspection regime itself and the Council's duty to deliver Best Value.

(h)   Climate Change and Biodiversity Impact
There are no implications for climate change or biodiversity arising from this report.

(i)   **Consultations**

The progress reports that contribute to the **Appendix 1** have been provided by Heads of Service and considered by CMT/SMT. CMT have been consulted on the content of this report and any feedback incorporated.

5. **CONCLUSION**

5.1   **The Council continues to make progress on the Action Plan to address the recommendations of the Best Value Assurance Report and follow up report (Appendix 1). This is set in a continuing challenging environment where priorities must be carefully balanced to ensure ongoing progress. However, there has been progress across the majority of planned actions with a number now concluded and work progressing on the workforce actions that had been delayed due to vacancies. Attention will now focus on the actions to address the need for clear and decisive leadership moving forward.**

Best Value Action Plan: Progress Summary Report	
Committee Report Ref:	008
Report Date:	10/04/2023
Committee Date:	Corporate 25/04/2023

APPENDIX 1

Key	Not Started	Concern	Caution	On Target	Complete

RAG	% Completed	Target Date	Lead	Priority	Workstreams (BV Recommendations)	Status Update	Decisions Required/Made by cmt/smt
	65	June 2023	DCE/ECOD	1	**R1**: INCREASE THE PACE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE	Completed governance and project management planned actions and 6 monthly committee reporting established for IMP. Cmt/smt Improvement & Modernisation (IMP) monitoring report established ahead of 6 month committee reporting. Progress is now noted across a number of projects and shifts from red/amber to amber/green evidencing progress in maintaining pace Training has progressed for senior managers and facilitated events held. Next steps to build on this and consider ongoing transformation to prepare for MTLT financial planning and to build on the initial training and engagement work to pick up pace of progress. Action is amber as OD work is progressing behind target due to staffing issues. These have now been resolved and work is underway although timescales have had to be extended to later this year	Target date amended to June 2023 (Approved 13/02/2023)
	75	April 2023	H/ GPS & HR ICT OD	2	**R2**: IMPROVE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTING / IMPROVE THE QUALITY & CLARITY OF SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORTING	Effective scrutiny workshops ready when required.	Target date amended to April 2023 (Approved 13/02/2023)
	75	Sept 23	DCE/EEF & CFO	1	**R3**: FINANCIAL PLANNING	Planned work has been completed in agreeing the hierarchical approach to budget, reviewing planning assumptions and reviewing financial aspects of IMP work. The indicator is amber because although the work on identifying contributions to the budget gap is underway per timetable, solutions have not yet been identified and this is an incredibly difficult area of work with significant risk so has been highlighted for monitoring.	Target date amended to September 2023 (Approved 13/02/2023)
	80	Sept 23	H / GSP	4	**R5**: CONTINUE TO PROGRESS THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW	Work has been completed on primary governance review, including the review of the Audit and Scrutiny committee remit and the scrutiny guidebook. The review of secondary governance on role/responsibilities has been rescheduled for September 2023	Target date to be amended to September 2023 (TBD)
	75	Dec 23	H / Educ	2	**R6**: IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	Development of a range of learner pathways and the support for all learners strategy are both well advanced (SAL is complete and progressing through implementation) and on target. The continued delivery of the education plan to improve outcomes for learners is approximately 50% complete. The service participated in an ADES/Education Scotland collaborative improvement visit in February which provided us with a wealth of self-evaluation evidence to compliment our review of the service plan for 23/24. It is proposed to reduce the number of priorities to support the system and to empower managers and HTs to develop and grow leadership across their establishment.	
	75		CEx	1	**R AC**: ACCOUNTS COMMISSION FINDINGS: NEED FOR CLEAR COMMITTED AND DECISIVE LEADERSHIP	The investment in leadership development and leadership and management development actions have been impacted by resourcing in OD. This is now resolved and revised delivery dates of June 2023 are being worked to bring these areas back on track, however, the indicator is amber to take account of this. Council agreed role definitions for senior councillors in September 2022. The political group leader meetings well established. Budget protocol was activated for budget planning and experience has been reviewed with cmt/councillors to build upon learning for future years.	
	60	~~March~~ June 23	H/ HR ICT OD	1	**R WC**: Workforce and Capacity	The IMP programme has been reviewed for prioritisation and financial alignment in August 2022 and this element is complete. The review of recruitment is in the early stages but has been incorporated into the workforce plan moving forward and timescales for delivery are being reviewed. The action is amber while this reprofiling of recruitment work is pending.	Change request pending for extended timescale

Item 7.

Key	Issues (I)	Major Risks (R)	Change Request (C)

	Issues / Major Risks / Change Requests		Targets for Next Period
R1	**R:** Lack of capacity to progress transformation approach given other competing demands	R1	Analyse training feedback and consider next steps
R2		R2	Confirm date for IS workshop, confirm content with CMT oversight and promote to EMs.
R3	**I:** Programme of transformation spend to achieve financial stability not fully developed with refresh commenced January 2023.	R3	Prepare updated medium term forecast as part of budget report. Incorporate Admin Group proposals for 2024/25.
R5	**I:** 2nd tier Gov docs review timescales with need pushed back due to staff capacity	R5	
R AC		R AC	
R WC	**R:** Lack of capacity to focus on more substantial elements of the recruitment action plan due to other priorities	R WC	For recruitment action define progress and next steps on larger pieces of work where possible to consider resource required and assessment of competing priorities.

Programme Summary	
Report 007 Update:	Good to reasonable progress in all areas with four workstreams substantially complete and signed off by Full Council on 15 March 2022. Approach and requirements to be developed for those workstreams to be carried forward for reporting to Full Council following the LGE in May 2022.
Report 008 Update:	Progress continues across the range of action planned. Workforce issues have impacted on a number of OD related actions which accounts for a number of amber indicators but with resources in place, timescales have been reviewed and this work is expected to recover to green. The financial actions at R3 have been rated as amber due to the level of risk attached to this. However, overall it can be seen that actions are well progressed with many nearing completion

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT AND MODERNISATION PROGRAMME

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1. **REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1   To inform the Committee of the progress made in developing the projects set out in the Council's Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP).

1.2   This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (A) 2 of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to considering Capital and Revenue Budgets and long term financial plans.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1   **It is recommended that the Committee:**

   i) **reviews and notes progress on the projects set out in the Council's Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP);**

   ii) **recognises that the IMP is focussed on financial sustainability and to assist in managing risks associated with the ongoing budget position agrees to reduce the financial commitment to the poverty project and to take this work forward through a different use of resources.**

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1   The Council has established an Improvement and Modernisation Programme to deliver transformational change across the authority, which was first approved by the Council on 12 December 2018 with the most recent update being considered by the Corporate Committee on 30 August 2022 (para 6 of the minute refers).

3.2   Reports to the Council on 12 May 2021 and to the Corporate Committee on 15 March 2022 expanded and adjusted the IMP programme of work. A comprehensive statement of the total programme of work now comprised within the IMP is set out in **Appendix 1** with an update on the current position for each area of work.

3.3   Key points of progress to note from the update in **Appendix 1** are:

- Smarter Working Project is on target and is completing its full business case for delivery in June 2023;
- The Depot Review continues to develop the outline business case and is working towards an update with potential early savings reporting to committee in June;
- Customer Information Hubs introduced and now operational in libraries to provide for face to face customer enquiries which will broaden service access across Moray;
- Schools for the Future has prepared 2 bids for Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP)3 funding, Elgin High school extension is progressing, Inveravon closure is progressing and Crossroads is mothballed;
- School Business Support project has produced a change management plan to progress service review and generate savings;
- Raising Attainment - Well-being (ASN) has an improved focus on key priorities which are progressing on target;
- Raising Attainment – Digital is working on developing proposals to improve infrastructure with input from the national Digital Office;
- In Children's Services the commissioned service for Functional Family Therapy is recruiting with a view to begin in May. The second commissioned service (restorative practice model) is completing contract details and is also due to start in May. The Integration Scheme delegating Children's Services to the Moray IJB was approved by the Scottish Government.

3.4   As noted in the report to the Corporate Committee on 30 August 2022, progress has been made on a review of project governance arrangements. A Project Management Network has been established to support and improve consistency of project management and a checklist is in place as a management tool to monitor progress.

3.5   Transform Boards have been revised to focus on programme management functions and methodology and enhancements are being made to stakeholder engagement, including elected members with member briefings having taken place on Moray Growth Deal (MGD), ASN, smarter working and the overall IMP programme.

3.6   The Council has been challenged in the Best Value Audit feedback to ensure that the pace of change is secured and maintained. As a small local authority this is particularly challenging as finite resources are stretched across broad strategic and operational remits. However, as the update at **Appendix 1** shows, there has been steady progress maintained across the programme of improvement and modernisation work. A further 3 projects have been completed: Flexible working; Governance and Customer Service, which leaves 13 active project areas and two that are on hold or progressing as resources enable. The progress indicators shows 9 of the 13 projects (70%) as green indicating that projects are progressing to plan, which is an improvement from 45% in the last report in August 2022. It is also of note that reports are coming forward to committees to seek approval for progress at key

stages for a number of workstreams, for example learning estate, school business administration and smarter working showing progress across the spectrum of the IMP.

3.7   In the last update to Committee it was advised that the main area considered for development of the IMP to support the future financial sustainability of the council was a rolling process of service reviews by e.g. adding a local dimension to a quality system such as the Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF). Although this was considered less likely to drive a cash savings agenda, the reviews could contribute to the overall focus on sustainability of services and evidence best value approaches. Given pressure on resources, it has not been possible to take this forward through the Leadership Forum as intended, however, work is progressing on the use of a quality approach to support continuous improvement.

3.8   Work by CMT/SMT on creating a single Project Gateway Board has been delayed as senior managers have focussed on preparing financial plans for 2023/24 and moved on to prepare for extremely challenging years ahead in financial terms. However, Transform Boards are working effectively and firmer project and programme management arrangements are evident including reporting of business cases to committee, for example in relation to the learning estate projects and so this delay has not had a material impact.

3.9   Engagement was also highlighted as a key influencer of project success in the August update report. Actions to develop and enhance communication and information sharing on IMP work include team briefs on the smarter working project, stakeholder involvement in the business support review and the creation of a newsletter in the ASN review implementation work.

3.10   As part of the Council's leadership development programme, the Corporate and Senior Management Team have participated in project management training and project management training is offered as part of the council training programme.

3.12   In relation to specific project work, as noted in the August 2022 report, there is a need to ensure a clear focus of the IMP investment on supporting the council to become more financially sustainable. In the last report, it was noted that the Poverty project did not bring direct cash benefits to the Council and that this work would be focussed on essential developments taking account of that. The Council has considerable savings to identify in order to address its revenue budget gap and the importance of this focus is recognised. Therefore, consideration has been given to how the aims of the poverty project could be achieved with less call on funding from reserves.

3.13   A report to the Corporate Committee on 8 November 2022 noted the significant range of work that is already in place across council services and working with partners to address the poverty agenda in Moray (para 14 of the minute refers). This range of action is ongoing and is monitored and reported through, for example, the children's services plan and the Local Employability Delivery plan. Therefore, there can be assurance that this important work will continue. Taking this into account, it is considered that the objectives of the poverty project can be met without a dedicated full time post and that more

limited funding could instead be utilised to address particular short term projects or priority areas of work where it would be advantageous to increase pace or progress a specific task through allocation of time limited resources. Therefore, the temporary post currently in place can be brought to an early conclusion and specific lower cost proposals made as required with a reduced call on funding.

3.14   It is also recognised that the Education Well-being: Pastoral Care project falls into the same category of not having cashable financial benefits as a project outcome. Therefore, similar considerations are being applied to this project area and the ECLS Committee will be asked to consider any future investment in that context.

4.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
The Improvement and Modernisation Programme is the development of the commitment in the Corporate Plan to a programme of modernisation and improvement to contribute to a financially stable Council.

(b)   Policy and Legal
None.

(c)   Financial implications
This financial implications of the IMP have been approved in previous reports. The only change arising as a result of this report is the amendment to the Poverty project. It is proposed to retain a budget of £10,000 for specific short term work which will release up to £157k of the committed Transformation Reserves (£264k was original allocation for poverty).

(d)   Risk Implications
The risks associated with the IMP have been reported to Committee previously and are managed through the relevant programme boards and overseen by CMT/SMT. There are no changes to the current risk profile and it is noted that progress is being made in maintaining pace which was has previously been noted as a risk. However, the risks associated with change and the success of transformation remain and will continue to be monitored

In order to manage these risks, the council will:-

(i)   Ensure that all projects meet a given standard of governance that is proportionate to the change.
(ii)   Ensure there are adequate resources for the overall programme of work and for individual projects
(iii)   Manage the dependencies and interdependencies across the scope of the change and its implications for other areas of prioritised work.

(iv)   Appoint appropriate project resources and failing which, review whether objectives are deliverable and review planned work accordingly.

(e)   Staffing Implications
There continue to be challenges in securing time from stakeholders involved in a demanding workload. The post of Head of Transformation is currently vacant and there are currently no plans to activate recruitment, however, this will be reconsidered as work to develop a programme of further transformation to address the ongoing budget gap is developed.

Arrangements have been made to bring the temporary post of Senior Project Officer (Poverty) to a conclusion as of 30 April 2023, subject to Committee agreement to the revised approach.

(f)   Property
No direct implications from this report, although property is the subject of one of the workstreams and the issues arising from this will be reported in due course with activity on climate change being progressed as a stand-alone programme of activity.
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(g)   Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
For the purposes of this report an Equality and a Socio Impact Assessment are not required, however it is acknowledged that various workstreams will identify change that will have an impact on equalities and socio economic considerations and will be reported in due course.

(h)   Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts
There are no immediate climate change implications directly arising from this report. However, flexible working is one of the workstreams and the issues arising from this will be reported in due course.

(i)   Consultations
The Corporate and Senior Management team have been involved in the review work referred to in this report and have been consulted on the report. The comments received have been incorporated into the report and project updates.

5.   CONCLUSION

5.1   The Committee is invited to acknowledge the progress in the projects contained in the Improvement and Modernisation Programme and the improving picture of progress across the programme of work. IMP is focussed on council priorities, particularly financial sustainability and to manage risks associated with ongoing budget position it is proposed to reduce the financial commitment to the poverty project and take this forward in a different way.

APPENDIX 1

IMPROVEMENT AND MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: TRANSFORMATION TO ACHIEVE
Progress Update and Summary of IMP Projects

KEY

	BRAGG – Quality, Cost, Time	Project Stages – agile descriptions with traditional council project term in ()	Status
$ - service based project £- possible post-project revenue pressure	**Black** – complete or stopped **Red** – project on course to miss planned targets **Amber** – Likely imminent issues with delivery to plan **Green** – project progressing as planned **Grey -** project not active – not started or awaiting progress	**Discover** – identify evidence, issues, (Concept) **Define** – specify the issue to be addressed to provide focus (Definition – OBC: Outline Business Case) **Develop –** research and develop range of solutions and appraise (Definition – FBC – Full Business Case) **Deliver –** identify and design preferred solution(s) and deliver (Initiation and Planning)	**Not started** – project agreed but not yet active **Started** – in early stages of planning/definition **In progress** – project operational and working to plan **Completed** – project completed and project close work concluded **On Hold** – project not active but remains in programme **Stopped** – project removed from programme

Stream 1: Asset Management				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings £'000					
1.1	**PAMA – Office Review (incl Area Office Review) Now Smarter Working Project (Council 02/02/23)**	Align property assets and their long term management to the Council priorities to ensure affordable and sustainable asset base.	Fewer buildings. Reduced operating costs New income.	60		338 Subject to detailed business cases being developed: some savings dependent on Joint Boards financial arrangements	In Progress Planning for Delivery	The Smarter Working project has been set up to carry out the implementation of Flexible Working and the office review (see 4.1). The Project Board is established and work is progressing well. Update report to Council on 2/2/23, Completion of Full Business Case being carried out, development of management workshop content and supporting information, actions from communication plan has been the main focus.	🟢	16/02/23 Workshops to take place between 14 February and 28 March 2023. Full business case due June 2023	HoHPS/ HoHROD
1.2	**PAMA – Depot Review Corp Ctte 30/08/22**	As above	As above			86 Subject to business case being developed as there will be capital investment required	In Progress	Update reported to ED&I Committee of 6 September, Outline Business Case (OBC) in draft form. Early saving options to be progressed concurrent with further development of OBC	🟢	Information being prepared to inform the business case, including sustainability requirements, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and funding Staged approach - report to ED&I committee in June on immediate saving opportunities and realistic timescale for business case.	-HoHPS

Stream 1: Asset Management				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings £'000					
1.3	**Property Asset Mgmt. Stage 2 – Shared Community hubs for public/3rd sector**	Provide shared community hubs and services with CP partners with a view to securing reduced costs through economies of scale.	Greater efficiency in resources to deliver public services in Moray. Shared place based asset management plan. Fewer strategically located shared hubs/buildings. Maximise funding through strategic planning, etc.				<u>On Hold</u>	This is a second stage of the PAMA work that is yet to be scheduled. Relative priority to be reviewed following delivery of stage 1 above. The scope for potential work in this area will be re-visited taking account of current exploratory discussions with the Scottish Futures Trust and the work of the North Scotland Strategic Territory Partnering Board. Meantime officers are working with public sector partners to ensure any opportunity for shared occupation of property assets are considered in the normal course of business.	⬤(grey)	Where possible, shared use of buildings with partners will be incorporated into capital developments on an ongoing basis as opportunities arise	-
1.4	**Building Information Model (BIM)** **(MC 12/5/21 -** proceed with initial investment to demonstrate merits) **Corp Ctte 30/8/22 -** update	To introduce a Building Information Modelling system to enhance the use of digital data held on construction projects and buildings to optimise the efficiency of the asset during its life where the greatest costs are incurred. Put in place arrangement whereby all professions and trades involved in the construction process can share information on construction projects. Within the council it will require cross departmental co-operation and integration of systems and procedures. The appraisal tool (BIM) provides a consistent method of	Current digital data in the construction industry has shown savings of **15% to 20%** can be generated. Improve information sharing and reduce abortive time and costs on built assets. Improve capturing and measurement of intended outcomes to be set out and measured through procurement and operation for individual projects and programmes of work.	20			<u>Started</u> <u>In Progress</u>	Phase 1 – Awareness: Complete. All key council officers have been made aware of BIM policies, processes and technologies and the value of their application process across council activities and service through workshops and direct engagement. Phase 2 – Enablement: Complete. Current systems and processes that the council uses have been matched to the current progress being made in asset management strategies for schools, depots, offices and leisure buildings. Reports have been produced to support and detail findings. The overriding recommendation is for the Council to adopt digital information management enabled processes and procedures to drive efficiencies in our maintained	⬤(green)	A brief to the Corporate Management Team on proposed solution and resourcing is being prepared.	HoHPS

Stream 1: Asset Management				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings £'000					
		comparing and reporting whole life outcomes for new projects and buildings. It looks at the costs and outcomes during the design, construction, operation and disposal stages for a built asset and promotes the analysis of whole life outcomes across three assessment criteria: commercial; performance; and environmental.						estate and capital works programme. The strategy is broken down into nine workstreams and initial engagement has taken place with stakeholders on the development of SharePoint as a digital information resource for BIM as an approach to implementing these recommendations. Business case is being prepared and resourcing considered.			

Stream 2: Transforming Customer Service				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (March 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
2.1	**Customer Service Re-design** **MC 12/12/18** **Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update**	To deliver a culture change in customer service delivery towards an enabling approach for most customers with supported service delivery for those who need it. Encourage customers to choose alternative lower cost, more efficient digital means of accessing services where possible.	Single service for first point of contact. Efficiencies and savings through economies of scale, simplified and consistent processes and harnessing available technology.			~~250~~ Auchernack 40 (achieved) 20 (revenue saving from building disposal to come) Hubs Yr 1 50 Yr 2 50	In Progress	Customer Information Hubs introduced and now operational in libraries to provide for face to face customer enquiries which will broaden service access across Moray. Propose to close project as original planned work completed and further development now underway as noted in next steps. However, this may be an area for further development and if so a new project with specification would be created	●	**PROPOSE TO CLOSE** Customer charter being reviewed to reflect current provision. Report to Corporate Ctee on 25 April 23. Digital assistant proposal being promoted to reduce call traffic in the Contact Centre.	HoGSP

Stream 3: Alternative Service Delivery				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
		Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings				
3.1	**Museums Trust** **MC 12/12/18**	Explore all avenues to create a sustainable future for the Museums service.	Sustainable service Reduced ongoing cost to council.	n/a	n/a	n/a	On hold	Investigating options that may enable future progress as limited staffing resource Development of an alternative financially sustainable model of delivery was on hold due to the resource requirements of economic recovery in response to the pandemic. Capacity within the team remains limited but we are commencing the consideration of opportunities and models for the museum, this will not be a quick process as finding a financially sustainable model of service will be difficult but not impossible. The museum building and artefacts remain in good condition and are monitored and maintained. Heritage priority rather than efficiency or saving.		Continue to consider and seek opportunities, subject to available resources/workload Solution may incorporate external opportunities e.g. funding streams or private/third sector interest and therefore no timescale can currently be put on finding a solution.	HoEG&D

Stream 4: Internal Transformation				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
4.1	**Review and Expansion of Flexible Working** **MC 12/12/18** **Corp Ctte 30/08/22 – update** **MC 28/09/2022**	Reduce reliance on physical buildings and enable the property estate to be reduced in size and to reduce running costs by extending and expanding flexible working. Identify where "technical solutions" can be used in the field to drive efficiencies. Consolidate and develop flexible working that emerged during Covid pandemic. Review tools required including the core ICT infrastructure provision to enable staff to work flexibly.	Increased occupancy of offices = lower operating costs. Reduction in office moves. Improved service delivery and performance from scheduling solutions. General efficiencies from staff skilled in the use of technology with less reliance on individuals. Cashable savings arising from use of communications solutions avoiding travel and other related costs. More time available to staff by avoiding unnecessary travel both within Moray and out with. Potential savings against the number of pool cars required. Contribution to the climate change strategy through reduction in travel.	145	~~10~~		COMPLETED	Flexible working policy review completed and other actions now operational enabling this section of work to be closed and further development to be combined with the PAMA office review into the Smarter Working project	●		HoHR/HoHPS
4.3	**Organisational Design and Governance Review** **Corp Ctte 30/08/22 – update** **MC 07/12/22**	Review Moray Council Committee Structures, Scheme of Delegation and reports to committee with a view to faster, more focussed and efficient decision making and investigation of any cost savings.	Reduce Bureaucracy. Streamline decision making processes. Reduce material going to committee. Look at alternative governance structures.					• Remit of Audit and Scrutiny committee and Scrutiny Guide now agreed 07.12.22 (MC 07/12/2022)	●	CLOSE PROJECT	HoGSP

Stream 5: Income and Commercialisation				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
5.2	Sponsorship MC 12/12/18 MC 24.03.21 Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update	Generate income from advertising, sponsorship and other commercial opportunities.	Additional income Improved maintenance of facilities.				Started Planning – Define/ Develop	Project refocused to broader income generation: work on Buckie Harbour (Offshore and renewables) and other opportunities arising Although previously proposed to close this workstream, the area below is active and so the project has remained open. The timescales have altered in relation to Ocean Winds commercial activities (and the stated programme will be revised to reflect this once Ocean Winds have confirmed their revised forward plan), the legal agreements were all concluded in December 2022, and relocation of the harbours team to their temporary facility in Buckie Drifter took place at the beginning of January.		• Renewed consideration to be given to developing opportunities as part of financial planning	HoECS

Stream 6: Service Efficiency				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
6.1	Service Efficiency (MC 12/5/21) Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update	Undertake lean reviews of a further 30-40 processes using specialist software. Focus on high volume, common cross service or resource intensive processes particularly within Educational Services, Children's Social Work.	• Remove waste from processes leading to more efficient processes. • Benefit public through reduced lead times for services. • Deliver cashable savings. • Build back capacity within services.	121	0 10	250	Started Planning – Define/ Develop	Approach is being developed to prioritise work and assess deliverable cash benefits against the resources required for delivery. Project remains amber as progress is as and when resource can be released from the Project Manager (Education)	🟠	Planning – Define/Develop Outline plan of projects to be in scope. Definition of benefits that can be delivered	HoT (Vacancy) DCE (ECOD)

Stream 7: Transforming Education				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
7.1	**Schools for the Future** **MC 12/12/18** **Corp Ctte 30/08/22 – update** **Various reports to ECLS and MC (7/11/22) on relevant projects** **MC 28/09/22** **ECLS 07/11/22** **MC 07/11/22** **MC 07/12/22**	Provide the essential infrastructure for the delivery of education in Moray.	Curriculum offer. Staff recruitment, development and support. Short, medium and long term affordability. Environment of learning. Development of forward plan of schools estate to recognise changing demographic and needs.				<u>In Progress</u> <u>Develop</u>	This programme of work is progressing well and is also responding to unplanned work such as ventilation and CO2 monitors in schools and the roll out of free school meals. Learning estate strategy and delivery plan approved Buckie and Forres: Mandates approved/Strategic Outline Case completed/LEIP 3 submission 31 Oct 22. SG decision expected end Dec but delayed. EHS extension (temp and perm) progressing. Inveravon closure progressing and Crossroads mothballed. Findrassie project reviewed and on hold. Work on condition and suitability surveys underway ASG level consultation to start in April	🟢	Await outcome of SG decision on Leip 3 ASG assessments and planning Community engagement ECLS report on Inveravon	Ho ERC
7.2	**Business Support for Schools** **MC 12/12/18** **Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update** **ECLS 14/12/22** **ECLS 19/04/23**	Rationalise business support across council and schools. Digital implementation and service (payments, absence reporting, reporting generally).	As above			~~250~~ 150	<u>In Progress</u> <u>Develop</u>	Project is now progressing in two phases. Phase 1: focus on developing a change management plan for ELC and primary schools. Phase 2: will focus on developing proposals and change management plan for secondary schools. Project is on target to deliver outcomes but timescales are behind those originally planned and Board has agreed to adjust. Project plan will be revised with new delivery dates.	🟢	Draft Change Management Plan for Phase 1 (ELC and Primary Schools) prepared and consultation being planned	HoERC
7.3a & b	**(7.3a) Raising Attainment - Well-being** **MC 12/5/21 & 15/09/21** **Corp Ctte 30/8/22 - update**	Enhance support and resources for all learners and impact positively on the delivery of consistently high quality learning and teaching experiences. Focus on GIRFEC and wellbeing of every child to ensure they are safe, healthy, achieving,	All staff supporting children and young people in schools understand and engage with staged intervention and inclusive practice and are confident in relating to and working with all learners, whatever their needs. Where intervention/intensive support is required it can be	3200 (across 7.3 and 7.4)			<u>In Progress</u> <u>Preparing for Deliver</u>	Overarching plan is in place and projects are reported jointly. The programme of work has been reviewed to ensure focus on 6 priorities for the coming 12 months and report going to ECLS on 19/4/23. Priorities are: ASN budget allocation, policies and guidance, adapted timetables, roles and training, communication and central team structures.	🟢	Next steps for 6 Priorities will be • Enhanced provision work: • Forres Pilot and additional capacity • Policy development	HoERC

Stream 7: Transforming Education			Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings				
	(7.3b) ASN Review £ MC 12/12/18 ECOD 11/08/21 Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update ECLS 14/12/22 MC 02/02/2023	nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Provide support that is equitable, inclusive and timely to raise the attainment and achievements of all children and young people. Contribute to improvements in literacy, numeracy and behaviour through improved health and wellbeing. Support for targeted intervention. Enhancing and developing staff skills. Flexible Package to Support Unmet Need. Research Support for ASN Review. To support the effective delivery of the Moray ASN Strategy the ASN Review is ongoing and requires the development of a detailed business case by mid-2021, with the introduction/implementation of potentially new ways of working from August 2021. The proposed investment will also support the delivery of the 'Managing Challenging Behaviour Action Plan' developed by a corporate Health & Safety Working Group in response to increasing numbers of violent and aggressive incidents in schools (an outstanding action in the Health & Safety Annual Report).	offered in a timely manner using expert resources. All children and young people receive the support they need, when they need it, including pupils who cannot manage a full curriculum or class attendance. • Enhancing ASN Review resources. • An ASN review business case that is supported by robust evidence. • A clear structure/measurement plan for evaluating the impact of any changes. • Well trained staff teams able to respond to behaviours that relate to ASN and supported to better support children and young people. • The establishment of a Moray Standard for the delivery of ASN services in all settings through comprehensive ASN induction and training. • A reduction in the number of Violent and Aggressive Incidents in schools. • A reduction in school exclusions. • An increase in school inspection gradings of					The Forres pilot is being reconfigured to assess the impact of new staffing models and approaches that will enable the enhanced provision to have a clearer purpose around supporting children and young people with severe and complex needs. The Enhanced Provision guidance documents will be updated alongside this piece of work A monthly newsletter has been established to ensure awareness of progress			

Stream 7: Transforming Education				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
			'very good' and above for HGIOS 4 QI 3.1. • Better targeting of ASN budgets to achieve the best possible outcomes.								
7.3c	Raising Attainment: Well-being Pastoral Care in Primary: Improving Outcomes for Learners and Early Years Intervention (All Groups) £ Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update	Promote and safeguard the health and wellbeing and safety of pupils in partnership with parents, support staff and partners to ensure all children, young people and their families receive the right support at the right time no matter the level of need. Key contribution to closing the attainment gap by monitoring attainment, attendance, inclusion, participation and engagement. Release school leadership time for strategic planning, school improvement, attainment and other outcomes.	Links to ASN and Raising Attainment for All projects. Links to new Locality Management operating model. • Increased attendance at school for some children. • Reduction in exclusions. • Reduction in violence and aggressive incidents. • Increased attainment and achievement.				Started Planning – Define/ Develop	This project remains outstanding for decision on whether to invest in this area and this will be the subject of a future report to Committee by June 2023 Outline Business Case submitted to ECLS 14 December 22. Committee agreed to defer the report to 'get more information on the scope of child planning workload within the primary schools and whether partners have the capacity/resources to support the collaboration work to support the child's plan'. This work is underway.	🟡	Gather information on child planning and review options. Update report to clarify points to ECLS June 2023.	
7.4	Education Project B: Raising Attainment - Curriculum breadth Moray (Virtual Innovation Academy and Schools Digital Devices) £ MC 12/05/21 MC 23/02/22 Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update	Create a Virtual Innovation Academy aimed at raising attainment, strengthening learning and teaching and expanding curriculum offer to meet the needs of all learners in the senior phase to enable positive sustained and quality destinations based upon labour market intelligence. Invest in devices and technology to support and embed digital innovation and strengthen digital literacy for all. Increase the number of subjects available across Moray as well as increasing attainment.	• Raise attainment across BGE and Senior Phase. • Broaden an accessible curriculum offer. • Improve the quality of learning and teaching, integrating digital technologies to enhance and support pedagogy. • Provide opportunities for school leavers to gain employment in a growing sector. • Workforce development and career progression and additional capacity for digital use. • Equitable digital access for learning. • Increase skills of staff. • Increase the use of digital learning and innovation.				Started Planning – Discovery	Digital Inclusion Outline Business Case submitted to ECLS 14 December 22. Agreed immediate focus should be enhancing the current education ICT infrastructure and aiming to ensure that it can support the future provision of 1:1 devices if funding is made available in the future. The ICT Strategy and Digital Innovation will also be developed The ICT Strategy and Curriculum Breadth and Digital Delivery Workstreams are now closely aligned; Planned workshop supported by Digital Office will also inform the Council's Schools ICT Strategy.	🟢	Full Business Case on the development of the education ICT infrastructure to be submitted to ECLS June 2023 (deferred from April).	DCE (ECOD)

Stream 7: Transforming Education				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
		Investment in Digital Devices to establish a pro-active programme to allocate pupils and teachers with an appropriate device to enable remote and distance learning. Roll out of devices to staff and pupils P6+ over 2 year roll out (2100 devices per year).	• Maximise use of technology in the classrooms. • Increase opportunities for collaboration, extending access to learning and breadth of subject choices. • A consistent experience for learners' use of technology in Moray schools.								

Stream 8: Transforming Children's Services				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
8.1	Service Review **MC 12/12/18** **MC 23/02/22** **Corp Ctte** **30/08/22 - update**	Most effective and efficient service delivery of a quality service that effects real change and measurable outcomes. Establish new approach, culture and ways of working in social work services.	Better outcomes for young people and families. Reduced costs across all areas. Improved partnership working. More efficient use of resources in delivering outcomes. More children in kinship care. Reduced • complaints from families; • number of formal proceedings; • unallocated child care cases; • number on child protection register.			854 taken further 245 pa projected for 2023/24 to 2025/26 Future savings previously reported as 358 pa included avoided spend 113	In progress Deliver	Report to ECLS on 26//1/22 approved structure and approach for children's services and reported reduced costs from out of area placements. Further report to come forward on transfer of service to Moray Integrated Joint Board (MIJB). The commissioned service for Functional Family Therapy is recruiting with a view to begin in May. The second commissioned service (restorative practice model) is completing contract details and is also due to start in May. Children's service continues in the latter stages of its delegation year into the IJB.	🟢	Consultation / change management on workforce changes. Recruitment to vacancies.	HoCS
8.2	Commissioning **MC 12/12/18** **Corp Ctte** **30/08/22 - update**	Review commissioning of services to align with the new ethos and provide different options for older young people and shift in resources to community based care as the core.	Vibrant blended economy of service provision. More accessible services that can respond to need and provide sustainable services.				In progress	Significant developments in this area, with an improvement to contracts and monitoring. All vacant posts for service now filled. Working closely with The Promise team and involving young people in the commissioning of contracts. This will provide evidence of improved outcomes for children and young people, achieving quality assurance.	🟢	Outcome based commissioning model being developed by the Commissioning Support Officer, who is now in post.	?

*STREAM 9: Corporate Plan - Strategic Priority				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
9.2	**Poverty: Reducing Inequalities £** **(MC 12/5/21) Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update**	Establish a resource to develop the Council's strategic response to reducing poverty in Moray by defining the issues and priorities and developing a cross service whole Council Poverty Action Plan. Develop proposals to meet gaps in activity to meet agreed council priorities and co-ordinate activity and reporting across the plan. Establish 24 month Poverty Action Team	Reduction of poverty in Moray by addressing causes and mitigating impacts in shorter term, through co-ordination of council poverty work for greatest impact. Identification of and leadership for council priorities in addressing poverty. Action plan to pull work together and address any gaps.	264			In progress Develop	Council position statement and approach on period poverty approved and published. Recruitment for permanent post to support work underway. Review of community planning partnership poverty governance completed. Reporting templates established and preparation underway to implement. Assessment of poverty data profile in Moray completed and Moray approach being used as good practice model nationally. Data shared with partner groups. Summary of current council actions and gaps completed and reported to Committee. Work underway to prepare compilation of council activity into poverty action plan. Project is amber as progress was slower than planned but project recovery now underway and can turn green once poverty plan in place.	🟡	Poverty plan to be reported to Corporate committee June 2023 Review utilisation of IMP resources to advance specific areas of work Support work to support review of CPP poverty plan	HoT (vacancy) – DCE (ECOD)
9.3	**Mainstreaming Participatory Budgeting in Moray £** **MC 12/5/21 Corp Ctte 30/08/22 - update**	Identify a standard suite of tools to ensure all forms of public consultation can continue in an online/virtual environment and in a consistent manner regardless of what service is undertaking the consultation. Develop the online platform CONSUL and the current use of the council website, eForms, Survey Monkey and eForms to provide additional tools and functionality for public engagement and consultation including participatory budgeting.	A minimum of 1% of budget is delivered using Participatory Budgeting (circa £1.8m based on 2020/21 budgets). • Effective consistent platform in place to gather ideas, consultation, debates and voting. • Communities will have an increased understanding of Council budgets and how they are allocated. • Communities will be empowered to participate in decisions that affect their lives and their communities. • a greater reach into the community using effective suite of consultation tools. • Addresses potential equality issues to ensure more can contribute.	107 (recurring annual)			In Progress	Work is underway in relation to PB for play parks in various locations in Moray. In Rothes the budget of £50k has been enhanced to £120k through fund raising from the community. A number of other avenues have been explored. PB has been used in 3 schools, 2 for some of PEF funding allocation. 2 youth work projects – in Forres and Buckie – are being progressed. Work has commenced on 2 Active Travel projects. Allocation of developer obligations for community facilities in Forres is being supported.	🟡	PB plan to be developed following PB Strategy Group review published March 2023	Ho FS

		Review the appropriate level of resources, expertise and tools required to meet 1% of council budget via PB as part of PB plan									

COMPLETE/CLOSED PROJECTS:

Stream X1: Asset Management				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings £'000					
X1.	**PAMA (MC 12/12/18 MC 30-06-21)**	Align property assets and their long term management to the Council priorities to ensure affordable and sustainable asset base.	Fewer buildings. Reduced operating costs New income.			Now shown as separate components below	Completed	The original asset wide review was completed and the Council report 30/6/21 set out actions to progress the remaining elements of the review taking account of the impact of Covid on the original recommendations. An update on progress on outstanding items being reported on 30.8.22. Subject to consideration of the PAMA report on 30.8, this wider heading will be removed from future reports as the remaining material elements are captured elsewhere in IMP. Or will be reported as business as usual for Property Services	●	Report to Committee in August 22	HoHPS

Stream X4: Internal Transformation				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
X4.2	**Organisational Design and Mgmt. Structure**	Ensure the organisation is designed and structured to meet the challenges of the future as efficiently and effectively as possible and that it is flexible enough to adjust to meet future requirements.					<u>Completed</u>	The Management Review was undertaken by a third party consultant and implemented in October 2019. The subsequent review of 3rd and 4th tier management structures was to follow. Many services have reviewed their management structures and so this work is substantially completed. No specific requirement for further review is currently identified. Therefore, any further reviews of management structures will be included in relevant services reviews	●	Project Closed	CEx

Stream X5: Income and Commercialisation				Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings					
X5.1	**Sports & Leisure: Les Mills** **(MC 12/5/21)**	Improving the diversity of our exercise programme by expanding the popular Les Mills offer across all Council sites. Provide staff training to ensure a consistent approach across all sites and to deliver a comparable service to Moray Leisure Centre as part of the Fit Life Scheme. .	• Expansion and development of sustainable services. • Create an environment where health and wellbeing is at the core of our service. • Optimising income and growth. • Develop facilities to align with customer service needs. • Successful partnership. • A professional, informed and empowered workforce. • **More people participating in physical activity.**	4 23 (recurring)	50	24	<u>Completed</u>	Implementation is now completed and classes being offered. Progress monitoring as part of Sport & Leisure Business Plan as business as usual	●	End of project report to ensure lessons learned taken forward.	Ho ERC

Stream X5: Income and Commercialisation			Budget			Status	Progress to Date (February 2023)	Progress RAG	Next Steps	Lead
	Project	Purpose	Impact/Outcomes	Revenue	Capital	Cashable savings				
			• **Equality of access to programmes offered by MLC and MC for all Fit Life members.** • **Improved range of services and activities appropriate to the market and community needs.** • **Increased use of leisure services.**							

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK REVIEW 2022 - 23

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 The Committee is invited to consider and approve the update on the employment policy framework for 2022- 23.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section B (24) Section (a) to (c) and Section B (25) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the formulation, implementation and review of policies and practices for Council employees.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider and approve the update on the employment policy framework for 2022- 23 as follows:

i) Menopause Policy –This is a new policy which outlines the council's position with regards to our approach in recognising the impact of this transition on the workforce and our response to this.

ii) Safe Driving Policy –The policy has been updated following amendments to the Highway Code and streamlined to concisely set out the council's requirements for the workforce.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council's employment policy framework is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up-to-date in terms of legislative requirements, good practice and operational relevance.

3.2 This year continued the previously agreed approach that due to continuing service pressures policy work would be taken forward on a minimal basis with only essential amendments or developments being undertaken. Policies are reviewed initially through a desk-top exercise to establish the level of review required: minimal for essential updates, mid-level for more in-depth amendments or full where a change of approach is being considered.

3.3 The policies referred to in this report have been reviewed as set out below and summary reviews are also attached for reference **(Appendices 1 – 2)**. The revised policies with tracked changes are available on the elected members' portal.

3.4 Based on the desk top reviews referred to above, work required on policies for review was categorised as noted below:

New: Menopause Policy
Mid review: Safe Driving Policy

3.5 Table 1 sets out the main amendments for the policies under review.

Policy Name	Description
Menopause Policy	The Menopause Policy is a new policy which has been identified as required to support our workforce. This policy aims to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of the workforce is maintained.
Safe Driving Policy	As a result of amendments to the Highway Code the policy has been updated with the main changes as follows: • Stronger focus on the Council's legal and moral obligations • Clearly defines the main regulations that relate to the policy • Inclusion of the Chief Executive's overall responsibility for health and safety • Reference to the requirements for completion of D906 form • A significant amount of content previously held in the original policy has been removed from the policy document and moved to a guidance document resulting in a more concise and clearer position.

3.6 Policies scheduled for review in 2023-24

With a return to business as normal, the number of policies being reviewed will increase in line with increased capacity. Policy reviews will return to a 5 year rolling review programme which allows for the current 51 employment policies to be subject to a regular and timely review. However, it should be noted that where impending legislation or operational demands require earlier reviews, these will be scheduled accordingly to ensure compliance and service delivery is maintained.

The following policies have been scheduled for review in 2023 -24:

- Recruitment and Selection;
- Equality and Diversity;
- Politically Restricted Posts;
- Computer Use Policy;
- Pregnancy Loss – Special Leave addendum;
- Social Media Policy;
- Fire Safety;
- Health and Safety Policy; and
- Health checks will be undertaken on the Disciplinary, Grievance, Harassment at Work and Appeals Policies. This may result in a fuller policy review being scheduled.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
The work noted in this report supports the Council in achieving the objectives and priorities in the Corporate and 10 Year Plan, and sets out how the Council will meet the challenges in making best use of our workforce and resources. In particular, the actions will ensure continued progress towards the Council's commitment to be a good employer.

(b) Policy and Legal
There are no policy and legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Financial implications
There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(d) Risk Implications
There are no risk implications arising from this report other than those set out within the body of the report.

(e) Staffing Implications
There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property
There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
There are no equalities/socio economic implications arising from this report.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts
There are no climate change or biodiversity impacts arising from this report.

(i) **Consultations**

Consultation has taken place with the Personnel Forum and the views of managers have been incorporated. The policies have been developed and discussed with the Policy Forum with Trades Union representatives for Scottish Joint Council employees, Craft Operatives and Teachers. Following the meeting of the Committee, items will be submitted for ratification to the relevant Trade Union / Officer groups.

5. **CONCLUSION**

5.1 **Each year the Council's employment policy framework is reviewed to ensure that the policies remain up to date and relevant based on the priorities within the Corporate Workforce Plan and the strategic direction of the Council. The policies referred to in this report ensure that the 2022-23 review has been undertaken in accordance with these priorities.**

Author of Report: Anne Smith, Senior OD Adviser
Background Papers: Appendix 1 (a) Menopause Policy 2022
                               Appendix 1 (b) Menopause Policy Review Record
                               Appendix 2 (a) Safe Driving Policy
                               Appendix 2 (b) Safe Driving Policy Review Record

Ref: SPMAN-1656699058-117 / SPMAN-1656699058-122 /
                               SPMAN-1656699058-121 / SPMAN-1656699058-120 /
                               SPMAN-1656699058-119 / SPMAN-1656699058-118

The Moray Council

MENOPAUSE POLICY

1.   Introduction

Moray Council recognises that menopause is a natural stage of life and it is acknowledged that for some people the symptoms of menopause can have a big impact on their daily lives.   This in turn can have an impact on an employee's ability to perform and maintain attendance at work.

Moray Council understand that people experiencing menopausal symptoms have a recognised health condition and require the same support and understanding from their employer as anyone experiencing any ongoing health conditions.

Moray Council is committed to work towards removing any stigma and taboo surrounding menopause at work and support an inclusive working culture where employees feel enabled to talk about their health and practical needs through this transition period to ensure as far as possible individuals can maintain their full engagement at work.

This policy aims to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of the workforce is maintained in line with the council's Employee Charter and Code of Conduct.

2.   Scope

This policy applies to all employees. It is recognised that the menopause is a very individual experience and that people can be affected in different ways and to different degrees.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- raise awareness across the workforce and provide clarity and direction on how the council will support menopause related issues. It provides information on the council's approach along with support and guidance for the workforce to ensure that managers and employees feel comfortable talking about menopause regardless of their age or gender.

- encourage open and honest discussion about menopause and the effect it may have on the individual(s) experiencing this, including teams and colleagues.

- ensure compliance with equalities responsibilities and obligations. Under the Equality Act 2010, employers have a duty not to discriminate on grounds of sex, age and disability, and employees should be treated with respect in terms of their age and gender. As the menopause is a predominantly female condition, any detrimental treatment of a woman related to the menopause could represent direct or indirect sex discrimination.

3.2 Whilst there is no direct legislation addressing the impact of the menopause in the workplace, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to protect the health, safety and welfare of all employees. As part of this Moray Council have a duty to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the workplace risks to the health and safety of their employees. This includes identifying groups of workers who might be particularly at risk and this may be extended to those assessing any specific risk that some people may experience during menopause. This would involve carrying out risk assessments for those employees experiencing issues in line with the regulations. As an employer the council should ensure that the hazards are removed or proper control measures are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practical.

3.3 Employees will have differing experiences of menopause and for some this may cause particular difficulties both in and out of work which may impact on their ability to perform at work. Moray Council recognise this can be a challenging time of life and can be compounded by other issues such as increasing caring responsibilities and perhaps the onset of age related health conditions. This policy aims to support employees manage this period of life and ensure they are provided with the support they need to be healthy and safe at work.

4. What is menopause?

4.1 Menopause is a natural stage of life when an employee's oestrogen levels decline and they stop having periods. As menopausal symptoms are typically experienced for several years, it is best described as a 'transition' rather than a one-off event.

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4.2 When does it happen?

The menopause typically happens between age 45 and 55, but for some employees it can be much earlier or later. The 'perimenopause' is the phase leading up to the menopause, when an employee's hormone balance starts to change. During this time an employee may start to suffer with menopause symptoms but is still having periods. They are said to have reached the menopause when they have not had a period for a year. The symptoms last on average for four years, but for some can last much longer.

The average age for an employee to undergo the menopause in the UK is 51, but around 1 in 100 experience it before the age of 40. This is known as premature ovarian insufficiency (POI), premature ovarian failure or 'premature menopause'. It is called 'early menopause' if it occurs between the ages of 40 and 45. Often, there is no clear cause for the early onset of menopause, but it can be as a result of surgery (for example oophorectomy which is removal of one or both ovaries), illness or treatment (such as chemotherapy or radiotherapy).

4.3 What are the symptoms?

The menopause can cause a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms that can last for several years. The majority of menopausal employees experience symptoms, but everyone is different.

Symptoms can fluctuate and be felt to varying degrees. Experiencing any of the typical symptoms can pose a challenge for employees as they go about their daily lives including work.

Some of the most typical symptoms of the menopause include:

- psychological issues such as mood disturbances, anxiety and/or depression, memory loss, panic attacks, loss of confidence and reduced concentration
- hot flushes (brief and sudden surges of heat usually felt in the face, neck and chest and often require fresh air to relieve)
- sleep disturbance that can make people feel tired and irritable
- night sweats (hot flushes that happen during the night)
- irregular periods and/or periods can become light or heavy
- muscle and joint stiffness, aches and pains
- recurrent urinary tract infections (UTIs) including cystitis
- headaches
- weight gain
- palpitations (heartbeats that become more noticeable)
- skin changes (dryness, acne, general itchiness)
- reduced sex drive
- hair thinning/loss

Everyone is different, not everyone will notice symptoms or need help and/or support.

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5   Responsibilities

5.1   Moray Council will:

- ensure that line managers are aware and sufficiently informed to enable them to support employees experiencing menopause
- encourage management and trade unions to work in partnership to assist in raising awareness and understanding of menopause and how it can affect people in the workplace
- ensure that managers adopt a fair and consistent approach and create an open and honest culture to aid management of the impact of menopause in the workplace
- ensure all parties fulfil their obligations in line with the Equalities Act 2010 and Health and Safety requirements
- ensure that employees are made aware of the support mechanisms available within the council and signpost to further resources externally
- encourage employees to seek help and support with problems relating to the menopause in order to manage their working environment.

5.2   Line managers are responsible for:

- ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities within the Menopause Policy and Guidance
- promoting and ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of all employees, including the use of risk assessments to identify and manage hazards impacting on both physical and mental health in the workplace
- being aware of and encouraging the use of all Council support mechanisms including Occupational Health and signposting as appropriate to other external resources
- support open discussion and communication on the menopause regardless of work location
- maintaining a positive and proactive approach and culture to supporting understanding of the menopause
- being sensitive and supportive to those experiencing the effects of the menopause
- fairly, consistently, and timeously applying procedures to support employees and manage employee absence via application of the Health and Work policy where applicable

5.3   Employees are responsible for:

- understanding their responsibilities within the policy and guidance
- looking after their general health and wellbeing and seeking medical or other support where necessary
- communicating with their line manager about their experience of the menopause where support is required
- where they feel not able to speak to their line manager, seeking assistance and advice from another line manager, HR Advice Line, Health & Safety team or a trade union representative

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- advising their line manager of any symptom which may or does affect their ability to attend work or to undertake the duties of their post, particularly with regards to health and safety implications
- working proactively to find mutually acceptable adjustments
- raising concerns at an early stage with their line manager
- attending any appointments and co-operating fully with the Occupational Health (OH) Service and other organisations that provide support to the Council and its employees
- ensuring that any medical advice and treatment received is followed

6. Support

6.1 Working Environment

It is important to remember that the menopause is a natural and temporary stage in an employee's life and that not all employees experience significant symptoms. However, for those experiencing the impact of menopausal symptoms the council want to ensure that these individuals feel properly supported and included in their working environments. This will be assisted by:

- line managers being aware of the symptoms of the menopause and of the support that can be put in place
- recognise that every employee is different and a 'one size fits all' approach is not appropriate
- employees will have access to services which can assist with managing their transition through menopause including Occupational Health and signposting to external support services. These will be promoted to the workforce over different communication platforms.
- where demand is identified peer support groups will be considered to allow a safe environment for employees to gather support and guidance from their peers whilst providing an opportunity to share their experiences
- monitoring of facilities to ensure access to toilet facilities, cold drinking water, appropriate working temperatures are achieved where reasonably practical dependant on the nature of the job/service i.e. extreme weather is outwith the council's control for those not working in an office environment, availability of access to toilets for a frontline worker working in a client's home is outwith the councils control so consideration of alternative facilities needs to be taken etc

6.2 Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments should be considered where it has been identified that there is a requirement for additional support. The purpose of considering reasonable adjustments is to enable an employee experiencing menopausal symptoms to continue to undertake their job as comfortably as possible. Any adjustments should consider both the employee's needs and service requirements. The aim is to understand the barriers the employee is experiencing and put adjustments in place to resolve them. It's very important, therefore, that a manager involves the employee in discussions about the potential adjustments that could help to mitigate the impact of any menopausal symptoms at work. Each experience of menopausal transition is different and

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so there is no uniform set of adjustments that can be put in place. These adjustments should be considered for employees regardless of their work location e.g. for those working in a hybrid or remote location.

The following provides options of adjustments that may be considered however this is not exhaustive:

- **Flexible Working:**

This may include:

- flexible working hours or practices
- temporary changes in work patterns
- review of absence triggers to assist in managing attendance at work via the application of the Health and Work policy
- additional breaks including being able to briefly access fresh air and return without having to explain
- part time working or reduced hours in line with the Flexible Working policy
- shift changes
- support to leave work if they are feeling unwell or experience heavy bleeding or flooding
- time off for medical appointments in line with the Special Leave policy provisions

- **Facilities**

Whilst it is acknowledged that the council offers a diversity of roles to employees across the workplace and working environments differ depending on the role being undertaken, discussion around individual needs may result in consideration of providing additional facilities which may include:

- provision of an additional or alternative uniform or PPE
- adjustments to uniform or PPE to support managing symptoms subject to risk assessment (e.g. use of natural fibre garments)
- provision of a space or area for employees to use to make a telephone call for professional support or take medication
- provision of time to walk around to ease joint pain
- facility to store sanitary products, etc

7. **What can employees who experience menopausal symptoms do to help themselves?**

For employees experiencing menopausal symptoms which are affecting their wellbeing and/or their capacity to work, there are a number of actions that should be considered by the individual.

- seek advice and/or support from a GP or medical professional
- discuss individual practical needs with the line manager, HR or another manager that they are comfortable talking to

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- where appropriate to the employee's job, use technology to support the management of some symptoms, e.g. set reminders, notes, etc
- discuss with the line manager a referral to Occupational Health for help and guidance
- consider any other changes which the individual can make to maintain and manage ongoing good health. This may include support from other organisations or sources as detailed in section 8.

8. Further sources of information to support women and raise awareness:

NHS information
www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause
www.nhs.uk/conditions/early-menopause

NICE guidelines on 'Menopause: diagnosis and treatment'
NICE guidelines provide advice on the care and support that should be offered to people who use health and care services.
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/ About-this-information

Menopause Matters
An award-winning, independent website providing up-to-date, accurate information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options.
www.menopausematters.co.uk

Women's Health Concern
A charitable organisation – the patient arm of the British Menopause Society – that aims to help educate and support women with their healthcare by providing unbiased, accurate information.
www.womens-health-concern.org

Daisy Network
Daisy Network is dedicated to providing information and support to women diagnosed with Premature Ovarian Insufficiency, also known as Premature Menopause.
www.daisynetwork.org

The Menopause Exchange
The Menopause Exchange gives independent advice about the menopause, midlife and post-menopausal health. They send out a free quarterly newsletter with useful impartial help and support.
www.menopause-exchange.co.uk

Menopause Cafés
At a menopause café people, often strangers, gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss menopause. The website includes guidance on how to set up your own menopause café.
www.menopausecafe.net

Manage my Menopause
Website for tailored menopausal advice for individuals provided by experts.
www.managemymenopause.co.uk

My Menopause Doctor

A website that aims to help empower women with necessary information to make informed decisions regarding any treatment they may take to help turn the menopause into a positive experience that does not negatively impact their lives.

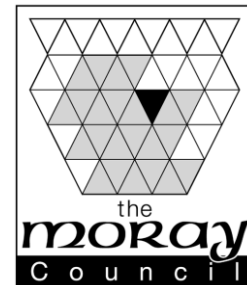www.menopausedoctor.co.uk

Trade Unions

Direct support is available from Trade Union representatives and their related websites

Date of creation:	January 2023
Policy Approved:	April 2023
Version Effective From:	May 2023
Next review Date:	2028

MENOPAUSE POLICY	
Background	The Menopause Policy is a new policy which has been identified as required to support the council's workforce. This policy aims to raise awareness of the impact of the menopause and ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of the workforce is maintained. There is no legislation that directly relates to menopause, however if an employee is put at a disadvantage and treated less favourably because of the impact of menopause symptoms on their capacity to work then this could be regarded as discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. Additionally the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to protect the health, safety and welfare of all employees. Research and benchmarking has been carried out against other Local Authorities, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), local partnership organisations such as NHS Grampian and Trades Union organisations.
Findings	The suggested format for the policy includes • Introduction – the purpose and rationale for the policy • Scope – in terms of who this is applicable. • Purpose which covers raising awareness, providing clarity and direction, encouraging open discussion and compliance with our equalities responsibilities and obligations. • What is menopause – an overview of menopause and associated symptoms and impact on individual transitioning through this stage in life. • Responsibilities of both employer and employee • Support which covers working environment, reasonable adjustments, flexible working and facilities • Self Help – Guidance and information on how to manage this stage of life • Useful Contacts.- signposting information for professional and specialist help A manager's guide and an e-learning module will be developed to support delivery of the policy along with a communication and awareness raising plan of activity.
Implications	To provide clarity and support to managers and the workforce generally in managing and supporting this stage of an employee's life whilst at work.
Summary	Committee are asked to consider and note the proposed policy.

M O R A Y   C O U N C I L
Safety Management System

Section: 5.6
Title: **SAFE DRIVING POLICY**
Date: *25 April 2023*
Revision: 2

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Road traffic legislation imposes specific requirements on Moray Council in respect of vehicle use and maintenance.

1.2   As an employer, Moray Council also has a responsibility under Health and Safety legislation to ensure so far as reasonably practicable the health and safety of it's employees and others who may be affected by their work activities. This includes the activity of driving on public roads.

1.3   There is also a strong operational and moral case for managing work-related road safety. Minimising road incidents will invariably mean a safer workforce, fewer days lost to injury, fewer repairs to vehicles and reduced running costs.

1.4   Moray Council aims to effectively manage the risks posed to employees from driving for work while working together with its employees.

1.5   Moray Council is legally obliged to comply with the conditions of it's operator's ("O") license. Failure to comply with these conditions could lead to the full or partial removal of the "O" license and therefore the Council's authority to operate vehicles.

2.   PURPOSE and SCOPE

This document is intended to define Moray Council policy on driving for work, and to promote a safe driving culture by ensuring that all employees or any other person or persons driving on behalf of Moray Council do so in a safe, reliable and responsible manner. It applies to operations that involve Moray Council vehicles, the employee's personal vehicle, hired or contracted vehicles when driving for works purposes.

3.   LEGISLATION

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated Regulations
- Road Traffic Act, 1961 and subsequent amendments
- Goods Vehicles (licensing of operators) Act 1995

4.   ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1   The Chief Executive has overall responsibility to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees and others affected by the activities of Moray Council.

4.2   Heads of Service and Individual service managers have responsibility for ensuring that there are adequate and appropriate arrangements in place for the successful implementation, monitoring, evaluation, audit and review of this Policy throughout their respective areas.

They will also -
- Ensure the necessary resources are allocated and are available for the implementation of this Policy.

- Ensure that all hazards and the risks associated with driving for work are identified and assessed, and appropriate measures put in place to eliminate, control or minimise the risk.
- Ensure this Policy is brought to the attention of, and implemented by all employees and others as appropriate.
- Seek occupational health assistance where there are legitimate reasons for concern on occupational health grounds.
- Monitor and review the risk assessment and safe systems of work following an incident while driving at work.
- Ensure procedures are in place in the event of an accident or incident and these are brought to the attention of all drivers.
- Ensure all accidents, incidents and near misses are reported and managed in accordance with the Council's reporting procedures.
- Refer any medical concerns about drivers to the Council's occupational health provider.
- Ensure that systems are in place to ensure that their drivers' licence details are checked, recorded and monitored. This will include the completion of a D906 form by ALL staff driving for work. Staff who do not drive for works purposes do not need to fill out a D906 form.

4.3 The Fleet Services Manager is responsible for-
- Ensuring that Moray Council's Goods Vehicle Operators (O) licence is maintained and that relevant advice and training is available and followed on all vehicle operation and driving matters.
- Ensuring that all vehicles owned or leased by Moray Council are maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and legal requirements.

4.4 The Corporate Health and Safety Team will provide advice on, and support with, health and safety matters and their associated training implications.

4.5 All persons driving as part of their Moray Council duties are responsible for ensuring that they take reasonable care of their own safety, health and welfare and that of others.

They will also –
- Adhere to this policy and any associated risk assessments and guidance.
- Not engage in improper conduct or behaviour or place anyone at risk whilst driving.
- Attend training as required by their particular service.
- Use safety equipment or PPE provided, or other items provided for their safety, health and welfare at work.
- Adhere to the rules of the road and the guidance contained within the Highway Code.
- Ensure they are fit to drive at all times and aware of the implications which alcohol / illegal substances, medication and fatigue could have for driving safely.
- Adhere to prescribed medical treatment. Monitor and manage their conditions with on-going consideration of their fitness to drive.
- Reply honestly and truthfully to questions regarding their health history and status and the likely impact on their driving ability, including disclosure of drug or alcohol dependence.
- Inform their line manager of any change in their medical status that may impact their ability to drive.
- Comply with the requirements of their licence as appropriate including periodic medical reviews.
- Adhere to the Council's accident or incident procedures. These can be found here:
  http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/int_standard/Page_118688.html

Mobile Phone Use

It is an offence to use a hand held mobile phone whilst driving, and it is widely recognised that using a "hands free" mobile phone can be the cause of distractions that lead to accidents. Therefore, the Moray Council prohibits its drivers from using a mobile phone, whether hand-held or hands-free, whilst driving at work. It requires drivers who receive a call when driving **not** to answer the call until parked in a safe place, such as a lay-by, with the hand brake applied and a neutral gear selected. It is also an offence to cause or permit a driver to use a hand held mobile phone while driving. Therefore, voice mail should be used to contact a person who may be driving.

Two Way Radio Use

Whilst the use of two-way radios is exempted from the mobile phone legislation, using a 2-way radio whilst driving can be hazardous. The inappropriate use of a two-way radio whilst driving could lead to a prosecution for failing to have proper control of the vehicle. Therefore, if there are other employees present in the cab they should operate the radio and make transmissions. Drivers may in the event of an emergency or an operational necessity use the radio, if this can be carried out without undue risk to safety.

Seatbelt Use

Seat belts are to be correctly worn in all vehicles used on Moray Council business where seatbelts are fitted. This applies to both drivers and passengers. Only those persons with a valid medical exemption certificate are allowed to opt out of this requirement.

4.6 Drivers driving a Council vehicle must:
- Hold a valid driving licence which is appropriate for the class of vehicle they are required to drive, and ensure this is carried at all times while driving.
- Receive management approval and authorisation to drive a council vehicle.
- Ensure that the vehicle being driven and vehicle equipment provided is fit for use by carrying out pre use checks.
- Report to their Line Manager any Council vehicle defects.
- Report to their Line Manager if driving licence has been suspended, cancelled or has penalty points, or limitations placed upon it.

4.7 Drivers driving their own vehicle (Grey Fleet) must:
- Hold a valid driving licence and business insurance specifying indemnification (specifying the carrying of passengers and / or goods as necessary)
- While driving, ensure driving licence is carried with them at all times.
- Ensure vehicles are roadworthy, fully taxed and have a valid MOT.
- Receive management approval and authorisation to drive.
- Report to their Line Manager if driving licence has been suspended, cancelled or has penalty points, or limitations placed upon it.

Employees must not:
- Interfere with, misuse or damage anything provided for securing the safety, health and welfare of those at work.

5   Ability to Drive Safely

Moray Council reserves the right to withdraw permission for an employee to drive on Council business, if it is considered that the individual's ability to drive safely may be impaired.

6   Risk Assessment

Managers who are responsible for employees who are required to drive as part of their Moray Council duties, are to ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out on all significant hazards that are identified as part of these duties. These must focus on the hazards and identified risk factors associated with the **Driver**, the **Vehicle**, and the **Journey**.

The following risk factors may result in harm while driving on a public road and should be considered when conducting the risk assessment.

- Speeding
- Alcohol and drugs
- Effects of adverse weather conditions
- Lone working
- Night driving
- Driver fatigue
- Vehicle operation

As per council policy, alternative means of transport including buses, trains, etc. should be considered as an alternative to driving.

6.   ASSOCIATED GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

6.1   Moray Council Drivers' Handbook
6.2   Moray Council Operators Licence Guidance Document
6.3   Goods Vehicle (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995
6.4   Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
6.5   Road Vehicle (Construction and Use)(Amendment)(No4) Regulations 2003
6.6   DVSA; Driving the Essential Skills
6.7   FTA, Drivers' Handbook

Safe Driving POLICY	
Background	The safe driving policy was last reviewed in 2007, amendments to the Highway Code in 2022 highlighted the need to update both the safe driving policy and the accompanying guidance.

Findings	Suggested amendments/additions to the Safe Driving Policy include:
	
	1. Introduction – Changes to this section to place a stronger focus on the Council's legal and moral obligations to its employees.
	2. Purpose and Scope - 2 paragraphs pulled together from the original to make them more concise. Wording changed slightly to help facilitate this.
	3. Legislation – This section was added to define the main regulations by which this policy relates. Placing these at the start of a document helps the reader focus on the legalities underpinning the document.
	4. Roles and Responsibilities – Slight change to section title, adding Roles.
	    4.1 – Addition of the chief executives overall responsibility for health and safety including driving safety within the council. This helps to highlight the commitment to the policy from the top of the organisation.
	    4.2 to 4.7 – A considerable expansion of these sections with detailed highlighting and focus on specific points for consideration. A particular addition to section 4.2, final bullet point, is the added requirement for all staff to complete a D906 form, the present situation only requires those driving council vehicles to complete the form.
	5. Ability to Drive Safely – Section 5.6 in original document
	6. Risk assessment – Some small amendments and additions to the text
	7. Associated guidance documents – List amended and updated
	
	A significant amount of content (mainly held in Annexes to the Policy document) has been removed from the original document as it would be considered Guidance. It was felt that its inclusion made the policy much larger than it needed to be and drew attention away from the actual Policy.
	
	It is considered that it will be beneficial to have the guidance as supporting documentation to the Policy and any required changes in the future can be made and highlighted to managers and employees accordingly.
	
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Implications	A stronger and more robust policy with improvements that will hopefully aid the reader to better understand its contents and requirements, therefore allowing them to execute their responsibilities more effectively.
Summary	In order to move forward with reviewing the Safe Driving Policy, Committee are asked to note the amendments/additions above.

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: 2021-2023 WORKFORCE PLANNING REPORT

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   **REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1   To inform the Committee of the progress made against the interim workforce strategy and plan for the period 2020-2022 and to consider the proposed workforce and organisational development (OD) strategy for the period 2023-2026.

1.2   This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (24) (c) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the recruitment, training and development, health, safety and welfare policies and practices of the Council.

2.   **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1   **It is recommended that the Committee:**

      (i)   Consider and note the progress made against the 2020-2022 Interim Workforce Plan;
      (ii)   Approve the proposed Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy for 2023-26 as set out in Appendix A and Workforce & OD Plan for 2023/4 as set out in Appendix B;
      (iii) Agree that the culture work is progressing as a core part of business as usual; and
      (iv)   Agree the Culture Working Group is brought to a close.

3.   **BACKGROUND**

3.1   The Council's Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy and plan respond to the agreed Council priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan and set out the work required to support and achieve those priorities.

3.2   The underpinning principle is that people are the key to delivering high quality and improving council services. The workforce planning process helps ensure the workforce is skilled and equipped, managed and deployed effectively. This helps the council ensure it can meet both the current and future demands on services.

4.   CURRENT ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

4.1   Moray Council operates within an environment of significant challenge and change. Increasing demands and reducing budgets mean the Council has to find new ways to meet current and future need, prioritising which services are delivered and how. The changes to ways of working that are being experienced as well as the need to accelerate the pace and depth of transformational change as the Council reshapes into the council of the future mean the Workforce Strategy requires to focus on key themes that support these demands.

4.2   The Chief Executive's report to Moray Council on 8 March 2023 (paragraph 10 of the minute refers) set out the extensive pressures, demands and priorities the Council is responding to including the bleak financial outlook requiring considerable prioritisation of resources and focusing of agendas and priorities. The requirement for committed and decisive leadership was reported in the most recent Best Value Follow Up Report, as was the pace of transformational change whilst monitoring staff capacity and wellbeing. There are ongoing demands as part of the recovery and renewal journey from the pandemic and the uncertain strategic context, longer term financial pressures, lack of certainty and flexibility over long term funding and the possibility of major service reform make operating business as usual difficult.

4.3   Supporting the workforce through change and transformation will remain a key priority, however with leaner structures and reduced capacity, empowerment of the workforce to help create a culture of innovation and initiative that enables the development of flexibility and adaptability within teams will also be important. Developing leadership skills and capacity that encourages transformation, effective communication and engagement and improved performance through collaboration and partnership working will underpin the organisational development required.

4.4   Recruitment challenges have also played a prominent role in recent years. While there are known issues in particular service areas, these have become more widespread during and since the pandemic. Work to enhance the Council's approach to developing talent to meet future demand will be required and this should link with the Moray Economic Partnership Talent Attraction and Retention plans.

4.5   In planning for future sustainability, potential areas and opportunities for savings, efficiencies and service rationalisation will require extensive redesign in terms of what the council of the future looks like. There is a need therefore within the Workforce Strategy and Plan to focus on leadership capacity, preparing for and implementing transformational change, while ensuring a resilient workforce within a culture that promotes wellbeing.

5.   PROGRESS ON 2020-2022 INTERIM WORKFORCE PLAN

5.1   The last Workforce Strategy and Plan reported to Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee on 18 November 2020 (para 29 of the minute refers), noted that the anticipated scale of the pandemic was such that an interim workforce and organisational development strategy and plan were proposed and agreed. Since then, there continued to be a residual impact on progress of planned work, largely due to demands of the longer term response to the pandemic as the Council moved out of the emergency response phase and into recovery.

5.2   Nevertheless, there has been progress in most areas of the plan. This is summarised below.

5.3   Workforce Transformation and Change

        (i)   Workforce implications of service redesign and change have been managed through agreed procedures across services.
        (ii)   Support to Health and Social Care Moray continues.

5.4   Employee Engagement and Culture

        (i)   Employee engagement and culture activity gradually increased over the period and a fuller programme is planned for 2023-24.
        (ii)   The Culture Working Group met virtually and agreed actions have been progressed, namely the workload management toolkit pilots and mental health pulse survey. Given that the original work of the Culture Working Group has now all been absorbed into the business as usual work of the OD teams and progresses effectively in partnership with the trade unions, there is no longer an agenda for the Culture Working Group to discharge and it is proposed to bring the Group to a conclusion. Should any requirement emerge from future workforce surveys, a similar joint approach could be considered as a short term measure to effectively tackle relevant issues.

5.5   Developing Leadership Capacity

        (i)   The blended approach of development activity has continued and work on the future leadership requirements is referred to in the workforce plan for 2023-24.
        (ii)   The strategy for the development of Elected Members was agreed and implemented.
        (iii)   Comprehensive induction programme completed for newly elected councillors.

5.6   Workforce/Employee Development

        (i)   Identified training needs have been met through the centralised training function.
        (ii)   The number of ERDPs is now included in all Service Plans.
        (iii)   Review of the Senior Manager Performance Framework - on hold.

5.7 Health and Wellbeing

(i) The national absence figures for 2020-21 indicated improved sickness absence rates ranking 24 out of 32 for sickness absence days per teacher and 10 out of 32 for local government employees. Management of absence cases continues to be supported on a targeted basis.

(ii) A separate report to this Committee contains a more detailed analysis of the work of the team during 2022.

5.8 Workforce and Succession Planning

(i) There has been limited work in this area, other than support to services on specific challenges where requested.

5.9 Recruitment and Retention

(i) The scale of recruitment challenges being experienced across the organisation sparked the need for focused work and an action plan was developed based on research and emerging operational issues with progress being made on some items to date.

5.10 Reward and Recognition

(i) Since the last workforce planning report the Living Wage has been fully consolidated into the Council's pay and grading structure.

(ii) Living Wage Accreditation has been achieved.

5.11 Other Actions

(i) Employment Policy Framework – policies reviewed: Secondment Policy, Flexible and Early Retirement, Lone Working, Flexible Working.

6. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
The work noted in this report supports the Council in achieving the objectives and priorities in the Corporate and 10 Year Plan, and sets out how the Council will meet the challenges in making best use of our workforce and resources. The actions will also ensure continued progress towards the aims of ensuring an engaged workforce with a positive workforce culture.

(b) **Policy and Legal**
There are no legal implications arising directly from this report although it remains possible that bullying and harassment could lead to legal challenges against the council.

The work that is ongoing and planned in relation to employee engagement and workforce culture continues to provide a solid foundation from which to develop further work to address any workforce related and cultural issues that may arise.

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

The workforce Strategy and Plan are based on assessment of the issues and risks anticipated in relation to the Council's workforce and identified actions to address these. Previous reductions in size mean that the HR and OD teams are already stretched. With the workforce changes anticipated the focus will be on legal requirements first and foremost. The actions in the workforce plan have been prioritised and if necessary activity will be reduced or ceased on those actions ranked lowest.

The risks associated with workforce culture are around the consequences of leaving the culture issues unaddressed and the complexity and challenge of dealing with behavioural issues. The developmental nature of the work combined with the long term nature of establishing a cultural shift in behaviours means there are long term maintenance requirements to be accommodated before a permanent step change in culture can be achieved.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. However, it will be challenging for the HR service to deliver the actions in the workforce plan and this will be monitored carefully.

As the Council seeks to transform and modernise and prepares its financial plans, it is likely that specific workforce issues will emerge. Work will be undertaken as proposals are developed to identify the specific workforce issues and these will be managed through the well-established change management and Transform processes. Account will also be taken of the whole council strategic management of these workforce issues as they emerge by involving the HR team in the planning of the required changes.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities or socio-economic impacts arising from this report.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

No climate change or biodiversity implications have been determined as a result of the content of this report.

(i) Consultations

The content of this report has been considered by the central management team, senior management team and will be considered for discussion and consultation at the next scheduled Trade Union / Officer Group and Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers meetings.

A copy of this report will also be provided to the managers of the Personnel Forum.

8. **CONCLUSION**

8.1 **Workforce planning is a key responsibility for the Council in supporting the delivery of services. The Workforce Strategy and plan set out how this will be managed. Progress against the actions since October 2020 has been positive with work undertaken against the majority of work streams despite a residual impact from the pandemic during this period.**

8.2 **The next stages of the workforce planning activity as set out in the Workforce Strategy for 2023-26 are focused on managing the workforce implications of transformation, modernisation and improvement, alignment with the shape of the council of the future, responding to the requirements of the financial and budgetary constraints, ensuring leadership capacity and addressing recruitment and retention challenges.**

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MORAY COUNCIL

WORKFORCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

(2023-2026)

CONTENTS

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MORAY COUNCIL

WORKFORCE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

(2023-2026)

1   Introduction

This workforce and organisational development strategy is designed to help the council develop and maintain a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce and to adapt as an organisation in order to be able to deliver sustainable services to the community that make a difference, address inequality and are fit for purpose.

2   Corporate Vision

The council's vision is to make life better for everyone in Moray, where there is a positive future for all, within a vibrant economy, with empowered and connected communities.

Moray is an area of diverse natural beauty where people choose to live, learn, work and enjoy. To deliver this, the council's priorities are:

- **Our People** : Provide opportunities for people to achieve their potential and be the best they can be throughout their lives
- **Our Community**: Empower and support communities to build capacity
- **Our Future**: Drive economic development to create a vibrant economy for the future

While delivering these priorities the Council will also work towards creating a sustainable council that provides valued services to our communities underpinned by our values of ambitious, fair, responsive and improving, working together for a better Moray.

The Council's Corporate Plan is currently under review. While this may bring changes to priorities and values, this strategy is designed to develop a flexible workforce of the future that is empowered and enabled to adapt to future priorities and demands.

Moray has a unique demographic profile that when considered in conjunction with external and internal challenges combine to influence the Council's workforce planning approach. The main challenges to be addressed are transforming how the Council operates to reduce costs, delivering services as efficiently as possible and meeting increasing demands on services.   Continuing to deliver services while the Council adapts to meet these challenges and transforms the way it operates requires the workforce to embrace change and improvement and be enabled and empowered to do so and this is the main focus of this strategy.

Moray Council believes that its workforce, their skills, capacity and commitment are the key to delivering, improving and transforming council services and that it is essential that the workforce is developed, deployed and managed effectively to be able to do their best at work.   This includes having strong leadership to provide vision, direction and support, that employees are enabled and empowered to embrace change, are skilled to respond and make a positive difference to identified need through professional competence, excellent

customer service and technological skills and competence as the pace of digital solutions for service delivery are increased.

3   Priorities for 2023-2026

Pressures and priorities for services such as increased demand, reducing budgets and having to find new ways to meet current and new areas of need mean having to prioritise what and how services are delivered. At an organisational level, this requires increased pace and depth of transformational change, reshaping to the council of the future, changes to ways of working and finding ways to become more sustainable.   This means there is a requirement for strong leadership to provide vision and direction, workforce development to prepare for and deliver transformation and change and ensuring the council can recruit and retain the right people to take this work forward.

As a consequence of the very difficult financial circumstances within which the Council is operating, because much of the budget is employment costs, there could be significant change ahead for the Council's employees, ranging from different ways of working to workforce reductions. Supporting people to achieve transformation and change will be a key priority.

With sometimes less tangible outputs, transformational change, strong leadership and workforce development take time to deliver.   Leaner structures and reduced capacity suggest an effective approach is to empower people within and across services.   This will require a clear purpose and direction, set through strong visible leadership with supporting systems and infrastructure that provide a framework of guidance and support to help foster a culture of initiative and innovation which ultimately will enable the development of flexibility and adaptability within teams.

Leaders play a critical role in supporting the transformation of council services and achieving corporate priorities and outcomes.   Developing leadership skills and capacity is therefore a key priority to ensure a strategic approach to creating an environment that encourages transformation, effective communication and engagement and improved performance across services and encouraging collaboration and partnership working.

Ensuring workforce flexibility and adaptability to be able to meet the council's future requirements will remain a major theme for the foreseeable future. This is likely to also be tailored to service specific requirements such as having a needs led and people focused approach in health and social care, or a customer focus for front line operational teams.

Recruitment challenges include increased turnover, fewer suitably qualified and experienced applicants for council jobs, issues recruiting in specific areas such as craft and fleet services, social work and social care and some teaching posts and demand anticipated to increase in particular sectors such as social care and social work, specialist and senior posts. In addition to this, the increased flexible and remote working opportunities available generally has had an impact on recruitment to posts for which job holders previously would have had to be located in Moray, further depleting the pool of potential candidates. There is the capacity to mitigate this impact in terms of attracting people living elsewhere to work remotely for the Council, however there are specific consequences to this which would have to be carefully balanced and considered. While this is a pattern that is evident nationally and at least in part relates to a shortage of supply the

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situation is exacerbated by Moray's remote geography and the size and scale of some of our services. The Council will continue to identify ways to nurture and develop talent to meet future demand including encouraging the use of traineeships and apprenticeships where sustainable and will meet a recruitment gap.

Underpinning all of the above is the requirement to ensure staff health, safety and wellbeing for a safe, healthy and resilient workforce.

The main workforce priorities for this plan therefore are:

- Leadership Capacity and Development
- Workforce Planning and Change
- Organisational Development
- Future Proof Employer of Choice
- Health and Wellbeing

Leadership Capacity and Development: prepare and develop strong and visible current and future leaders to provide the strategic and organisational capacity to develop the agenda for and direction of the organisation.

Long term constraints on public spending continue to require innovative approaches to services with a focus on preventative spending through early proactive interventions. Partnership and joint working is increasingly important as part of this agenda to ensure that services respond to local needs in a cohesive manner. Project management and the development of the 'soft skills' required to create an environment of change and transformation are also key.

Leadership and management skills and capacity are a key priority to enable the culture of the organisation to adapt and change to meet the challenges of changing service delivery particularly within the context of reduced budgets. Developing our leaders to have the skills, influence and impact to lead the organisation through the next phase of transformation and change will require new approaches, skills and strengths.

To address these issues we will:

- Review the external landscape for alternative approaches to leadership
- Develop the corporate approach to capture the skills and strengths required for leadership through transformation
- Implement a programme of leadership development activity that enables and empowers strong visible leadership

Workforce Planning and Change: manage the contraction and re-shaping of the Council workforce to achieve a sustainable skilled and motivated workforce for the future aligned to the Council's priorities.

As the cumulative effect of annual savings builds, and taking into account the significant change required to support future sustainability, a more fundamental review of what and how activities are undertaken is necessary in order to continue to reduce costs. Funding arrangements mean that this is likely to impact on particular services more than others. The Council will review the Transform approach to managing change to reshape the

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workforce. The intention is to achieve a reduction in the pay bill and number of people employed and to minimise compulsory redundancies, providing security of employment as far as possible.

To address these issues we will:
♦ Review the Transform approach (and relevant change management procedures for teaching staff) to manage workforce changes
♦ Manage employee relations and consultation comprehensively and sensitively in relation to workforce change

Organisational Development: ensure that employees are empowered and enabled to embrace and be prepared for change through encouraging flexibility and adaptability as new ways of working are brought in and roles develop and change as a result of service delivery changes.

To address these issues we will:
♦ Develop, implement and review initiatives to create a culture where employees are prepared for and embrace change
♦ Support employees to adapt to new ways of working that will make the council more efficient and provide improved levels of service to customers including improving and embedding digital skills and competence
♦ Review the employee review experience, while ensuring that all employees have the opportunity to participate in a review process on at least an annual basis
♦ Review Management Appraisal Framework

Future Proof Employer of Choice: ensure that Council services are well-resourced by making the Moray employment package as attractive as possible and deploying recruitment strategies tailored to local requirements.

Analysis of recruitment difficulties being experienced by the Council indicates that the underlying reasons can generally be grouped as follows:

- Qualifications - insufficient or no qualified candidates (for professional posts)
- Experience - qualified candidates but no experience (for professional senior or management posts)
- Market Forces - candidate pool available but turning down jobs as able to earn more working in other local sectors e.g. retail, construction, oil and gas
- Visibility – lack of visibility of council jobs if not looking on My Job Scotland

In addition to this the expansion of remote / flexible working has opened up opportunities for jobs further afield which has increased the competition for high calibre candidates locally.

The situation in some areas e.g. the Care At Home service continues to be challenging and focused work with the service is ongoing.

There also remain residual issues in relation to some secondary teaching and promoted posts. While this is in part due to a national supply shortage, there is added complexity from the rural nature of Moray and our small schools, which attract lower salaries for promoted posts.

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To address these issues we will:

- ♦ Consider recruitment and retention activities to promote employment opportunities and profile of Moray Council as part of a planned programme of work, linking with local economic partnership initiatives where possible
- ♦ Establish clear pathways for support, training and experience for professional development for professional and specialist posts (grow your own)
- ♦ Develop trainee and apprenticeship programmes where these are considered a viable solution to areas with recruitment challenges
- ♦ Develop an approach to succession planning that builds internal capacity whilst ensuring equal opportunity

Health and Well-being: pro-actively support the health and well-being of employees.

It is important that employees are supported to attend work and managers supported to proactively manage sickness absence. The main causes of absence in the Council are mental health and musculo-skeletal disorders. Targeted action is taken in areas where absence is highest with specific attention paid to services with a direct replacement cost (i.e. Teachers, Social Care).

The Annual Health and Safety report identifies an issue with increasing numbers of incidents of violence and aggression within schools.   Work to address this is underway as part of the Additional Support Needs Review.

To address these issues we will:

- ♦ Increase awareness of mental health and the number of mental health first aiders
- ♦ Review proactive measures that may reduce sickness absence rates
- ♦ Provide support for reducing incidents of violence and aggression in schools as set out in the agreed ASN action plan

9   Plans

The delivery of this strategy is set out in more detail in the Corporate Workforce Plan.

As circumstances develop throughout the period of the strategy, the management of the workforce will adapt to address issues as they emerge. Workforce planning requires a long-term approach and so in a number of areas work will build from research and projects carried out under previous workforce plans.

10   Resources

Resources continue to be stretched within the HR and OD services and while this strategy recognises the workforce issues and sets direction, a degree of prioritisation is required as it is not possible to take all of the actions forward.

11   Review

Monitoring and review will take place through the Personnel Forum and CMT with 6 monthly updates which will highlight any workforce plan adjustments required related to the budget and corporate financial planning. The workforce plan will be an evolving document

that is modified to respond to issues as they arise specifically including continuous improvement in key areas and ensuring there is a focus on delivery of priority outcomes. There will be a formal annual review of the plan and strategy.

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THE MORAY COUNCIL
CORPORATE WORKFORCE PLAN 2023-24

Priority Rating:
1 – critical in terms of scale of impact and/or to success of other actions
2 – wide scale impact and/or supports achievement of other outcomes
3 – clear benefits but importance may be outweighed by other actions
4 – ongoing area of work where further development is not required at this stage

ACTION REQUIRED	PLANNED OUTCOME	Completion TIME-SCALE	Lead Officer	Priority Rating
Developing Leadership Capacity: *prepare and develop strong and visible current and future leaders to provide the strategic and organisational capacity to develop the agenda for and direction of the organisation*				
1. Develop and implement redesigned leadership development to ensure it develops the skills and behaviours necessary for leadership of the corporate and strategic direction required for transformation	Leaders are developed to lead the response to the challenging agenda, the Council is prepared for the future and makes sustained progress in its improvement and transformation work Develop a revised programme to meet organisational requirements Measures: Revised programme developed to meet organisational requirements Leadership development courses in place, leaders developed to lead challenging agenda and feedback positive 1/2/3 tier managers have attended training and show improvements in awareness of key learning points Evaluation programme of impact on practice is developed and implemented	Mar 2024	H/HR, ICT & OD, ODM	1
2. Provide targeted management and supervisory development that is responsive, empowers employees and addresses pressures in the system	Managers and supervisors are developed to lead challenging agenda, empower and enable teams and individuals to foster innovation and create flexibility and adaptability to embrace change and transformation. 1. Targeted interventions and approaches designed to address areas of pressure 2. Responsive and empowered managers developed to cascade responsive and empowered approach to teams 3. Culture of innovation fostered across services Measures: success in instilling changes that move the council to a more sustainable position Increase in positive responses to people management questions in employee survey	Mar 2024	ODM	2
Workforce Planning and Change: *manage the contraction and re-shaping of the Council workforce to achieve a sustainable skilled and motivated workforce for the future aligned to the Council's priorities*				
1. Review *Transform* approach to align with workforce implications of change with relevant solutions deployed Continue to actively manage vacancies to prepare for future changes	Workforce reductions dealt with in a timely and managed way to minimise the need for compulsory changes Measures: Reduction in headcount Number of compulsory redundancies Number of departures under voluntary schemes balancing cost and organisational requirements Number of redeployments	As required	HRM / ODM	1

ACTION REQUIRED	PLANNED OUTCOME	Completion TIME-SCALE	Lead Officer	Priority Rating
2. Transformation and change: Manage employee relations and consultation comprehensively and sensitively in relation to workforce changes	Employee relations aspects of managing change at service and corporate level undertaken effectively and in good time Measures: Workforce changes completed in accordance with agreed policy and procedure Satisfaction with change management from employees and trade unions for each change taking account of time constraints given extent of budget gap and time available to address it	As required	H/HR&ICT/HRM	4
Organisational Development: *ensure that employees are empowered and enabled to embrace and be prepared for change through encouraging flexibility and adaptability as new ways of working are brought in and roles develop and change as a result of service delivery changes*				
1. Ensure workforce is empowered and enabled to embrace and be prepared for change	Workforce is prepared for and embraces change, with flexibility to adapt and develop to future requirements Measures: Range and scale of changes demonstrate increased flexibility and adaptability of workforce Improved employee survey results on workforce development questions Positive feedback from change exercises	Mar 2024	ODM	1
1. Review ERDP approach to reflect best practice	Employee review and development approach is refreshed and rolled out across workforce with increased engagement and participation rates Measure: Revised ERDP approach agreed and implemented	Mar 2024	ODM	2
2. Review Management Appraisal Framework	Management Appraisal Framework to be reviewed to reflect current and future requirements of managers and ensure optimum performance management and ongoing development Measure: Above produced, implemented and positive feedback received	Mar 2024	ODM	3
Future Proof Employer of Choice: *ensure that Council services are well-resourced by making the Moray employment package as attractive as possible and deploying recruitment strategies tailored to local requirements*				
1. Review and refresh recruitment and retention activities to deploy appropriate recruitment strategies that promote employment opportunities and raise the profile of Moray Council as an employer of choice including pathways for development for internal candidates	Recruitment attracts high calibre candidates and council services are well-resourced Measures: Increased number of high calibre candidates for council vacancies in hard to fill posts – to be developed further per service requirements Attrition rates improved (lowered) for areas with high turnover – to be developed further per service requirements Reduced number of repeat adverts Feedback of positive impact from managers through Personnel Forum Career progression opportunities are enhanced	Oct 2023	HRM	1
2. Establish trainee and apprentice programmes where viable solution	Increased number of younger employees in services where there are gaps or difficulties recruiting. Measures: Increased number of trainees/apprentices	Mar 2024	ODM	2

ACTION REQUIRED	PLANNED OUTCOME	Completion TIME-SCALE	Lead Officer	Priority Rating
3. Succession Planning	An approach is developed that builds internal capacity whilst ensuring equal opportunity so that internal candidates are enabled to put themselves forwards for development opportunities that provide the required experience and skill set to apply for promoted positions. Measures: Increased number of internal applicants are confident in applying for promoted posts	Mar 2024	ODM	3
Health and Well-being: *pro-actively support the health and well-being of employees*				
1. Support the implementation of the Council's Health and Work policy in order to deliver ongoing improvements in absence levels with focus on proactive support for attendance and wellbeing	To achieve a sustained reduction in absence levels as measured through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework PIs. To improve the awareness of and management of mental health (as a main cause of absence) within the workforce. To instigate proactive measures to promote health and well-being as preventative measures Measures: Increased number of managers and employees trained in Mental Health Awareness and First Aid 0.5 day per fte reduction in sickness absence levels per annum 0.25 day per fte reduction in absence due to mental health and wellbeing reasons per annum Improved survey results on relevant questions Positive anecdotal feedback from trade unions, managers and workforce	Mar 2024	H/HR, HRM, ODM	2

Item 11.

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2022

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   **REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1   To ask the Committee to consider the annual Health and Safety report and approve the progress noted and proposed future actions.

1.2   This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (24) (c) and (25) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to formulating, supervising the implementation of and review as necessary the policy and practices of the council for all employees in relation to the recruitment, training and development, health, safety and welfare and practices of the Council.

2.   **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1   **It is recommended that the Committee:**
        i)   Considers the content of the annual health and safety report, as set out in Appendix 1, and the progress towards the outcomes established in the last report;
        ii)   Approve the proposed future actions for 2023.

3.   **BACKGROUND**

3.1   The Health and Safety at Work Act requires that organisations ensure the safety of employees and others who may be affected by their actions.

        The main elements needed to provide protection are:

        • Making plain the organisation's commitment to have good standards of health and safety management;
        • Defining the roles that people at all levels play in ensuring the good standards are maintained;
        • Having systems in place to ensure awareness of hazards and assessment of risks to employees, customers, partners and others who may be affected by our activities;
        • Having in place effective arrangements to eliminate or control those risks;

- Monitoring the system in place and reviewing it on an ongoing basis;
- Providing access to health and safety advice and support;
- Engagement with employees at all stages of the process to ensure adequacy.

3.2 As part of this process, a report is provided every year on the Health and Safety provision within the Council.

3.3 The Annual Health and Safety Report for 2022 is set out in **Appendix 1**. It summarises the Council's health and safety performance corporately and is based on statistics for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022. The report highlights the Council's safety performance and provides information on the types of accidents reported.

3.4 This report relates to the calendar year January to December 2022. During the early part of this period, the organisation as a whole and the services within it continued to be affected to some degree by the response and recovery to the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in response to the emergence of the Omicron variant. This impacted on health and safety at both a corporate level and within services to varying degrees. The organisation continued to operate in accordance with national guidance issued by the Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland and the HSE throughout. From May 2022, the messaging shifted to "Living with Covid-19" and whilst the guidance for workplaces did not change, there was a slightly different focus with some restrictions that had been in place being phased out or removed on a risk assessed basis. Those services for which working from home continues to be possible have begun moving towards this being a permanent feature as hybrid working is embedded in the organisation in accordance with the agreed policy and procedures on flexible working, with appropriate advice and guidance provided. More of a business as usual approach was evident, particularly during the latter part of 2022.

3.5 The report highlights that the number of accidents and dangerous occurrences reported in 2022 has increased slightly compared to the numbers reported in the previous three reports. Overall, incidents were up by 5% compared to 2021 but are still well below that reported in pre-pandemic years, which in light of the return of many services to a fully operational basis show that the accident figures have improved in comparison with similar years with similar service provision. It has been noted that restrictions imposed by the pandemic resulted in reduced service activity and provision in some areas in 2020 and 2021, likely to have led to a lower incident rate than might have ordinarily been expected when compared to previous pre pandemic annual reporting figures.

Education have the most reported incidents, followed by Environmental and Commercial Services, then Housing and Property followed by Health & Social Care. The overwhelming majority of incidents resulted in minor injuries with slips, trips and falls the main cause. Violence and Aggression continues to be an area of concern, particularly in Education and Supported Accommodation Facility. Of note is the reduction of incidents within Waste Services by 15% compared to 2021. The increase reported in 2021 in Environmental Services was identified as requiring a particular focus with more detailed work with the Waste Service being required. Whilst further analysis is ongoing, it would appear that this targeted approach has been successful. A similar approach will be taken in Building Services where an increase in vehicle related incidents has been reported.

3.6   Progress has been made on the issues reported on last year with services and the health and safety team working well together on priority areas. Due to changes in personnel following retirement, the Health and Safety team has been operating on a reduced basis for the period April to November 2022. Following the appointment of the Senior Health and Safety Adviser in April 2022, recruitment to the post of Health and Safety Adviser was undertaken (started July 2022) and thereafter, recruitment to the post of Workplace Assessor (started November 2022). The latter required a second recruitment process following the successful candidate withdrawing from the initial process. Despite this, good progress has been made, with a particular focus on fire risk assessment, with a risk based, planned programme of work providing an important framework. Other key areas of work have been progressed including the development and agreement of a Joint Inspection Programme with the Trades Unions, implementation of a revised Lone Working Policy along with supporting guidance and provision of advice to services; revision and adoption of guidance on risk assessment with the development of training to support implementation. There has been a particular focus in Education given the reported figures on Violence and Aggression but also more generally across the organisation. Work has been undertaken on Driving Safely in response to the vehicle incidents reported in previous reports, with the development of a revised Driving Safely Policy supported with relevant guidance documents. Work around the health and safety culture agenda has progressed with regular communications in place, revised and updated training offers, working closely with services on the key areas identified. Work will continue on these areas in accordance with the plans in place which will be the subject of continual review, taking account of any competing priorities and demands. In addition, work has continued in accordance with the rolling programmes in place for fire risk assessments, audits and inspections using the agreed risk based, priority approach.

3.7   Main themes arising from the report are the requirement to continue to target support in high risk/priority areas, to continue to focus on improving the health and safety culture across the council, to review the SMS and continue to identify priority areas, continue to support the work on challenging behaviour, to support the implementation of the Smarter Working Project and the move to embed hybrid working as a permanent feature and reducing the number of incidents based on human error.

3.8   The Annual Health and Safety Report for 2022 identifies the main areas for development and planned work over the next year as continuing to audit high risk services or issues and in particular work with services to ensure that appropriate winter maintenance plans are in place and to monitor the implementation of the Driving Safely Policy and guidance within targeted services; continuing progress with actions to improve the behaviour challenges in schools and supported accommodation and continue to deliver on the rolling programme of fire risk assessments.

Work will also continue to build on the foundations of developing the health and safety culture of the organisation including a particular focus on behavioural safety approaches and work with the OD team to support managers in targeted areas to monitor and raise awareness amongst their teams. This will also include ensuring review and implementation of changes to key areas of the SMS including the Fire Safety Policy and the Health and Safety Policy. Also continuing to provide advice and guidance on the implementation of recently revised and agreed policies on Lone Working and DSE, including arrangements to support the Smarter Working Project with the embedding of hybrid working, as well as monitoring progress with the joint inspections programme agreed in 2022.

3.9   Finally, further measures of improvement and progress will be developed over the course of 2023 with a focus on outcome based performance measurement.

4.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a)   **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
This report provides information relating to Health and Safety activities within the Council to enable this learning and to ensure that the Council continues to provide a safe and healthy workplace for employees to deliver services.

(b)   **Policy and Legal**
Ensuring the health and safety of staff and service users is a statutory duty on the Council. An annual report is an effective method of recognising achievement and highlighting opportunities for further improvement.

(c)   **Financial implications**
There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Accidents can have implications for Council resources and may result in losses that are difficult to quantify.

(d)   **Risk Implications**
Health and safety is included within all levels of the Council's risk register.

(e)   **Staffing Implications**
Staff time will be required to implement the actions set out in the report. This will be accommodated within existing resources by adjusting the priorities to be worked on.

(f) Property
None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
None.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts
None

(i) Consultations
CMT and the Central Health and Safety Committee have been consulted about the report at **Appendix 1**.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The 2022 annual health and safety report shows that the Council continues to provide a healthy and safe environment for its employees and service users. Whilst a slight increase in incidents has been reported, this is most likely as a result of a return to a more business as usual approach following the pandemic with services operating more on a pre pandemic basis, however, the figures reported are still well below those reported pre-pandemic. Good progress has been made on the key areas identified in the 2021 report and there is a continuing need to build on this work and drive forward with the development of the key areas identified in this 2022 report. In particular, it is planned to focus on the Council's health and safety culture, supporting managers and employees to take responsibility for and give priority to the health and safety of themselves and others as well as ensuring that changes that have been made over recent times are following through and becoming embedded into safe working behaviour and practices across the organisation.

Author of Report: Katrina McGillivray, Organisational Development Manager
Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-1656699058-114 / SPMAN-1656699058-116
                      SPMAN-1656699058-115

APPENDIX 1
MORAY COUNCIL
HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT
(January 2022 to December 2022)

1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the performance of the Council in ensuring the health and safety of the workforce and service users. This is done through the utilisation of monitoring data and includes recommendations for improvements required to procedures and/or systems.

1.2 The national context for similar organisations on incidents and enforcement action is also considered for the purposes of shared learning.

2 Summary of Key Themes

2.1 Restrictions imposed by the pandemic resulted in reduced service activity and provision in some areas in 2020 and 2021, leading to a lower incident rate than might have ordinarily been expected when compared to previous pre pandemic annual reporting figures. A slight increase in incidents reported for 2022 (5% - 8 incidents) was recorded which in light of the return of many services to a fully operational basis show that the accident figures have improved in comparison with similar years with similar service provision.

2.2 Good progress on the priorities identified in the 2021 report has been made, despite the Health and Safety Team operating at 67% capacity for 75% of the year as a result of staffing changes following a retirement. There has been a focus on fire risk assessment, with a risk based, planned programme of work providing an important framework, particularly in ensuring that the backlog of overdue fire risk assessments were scheduled and completed.

2.3 Systems, process and format improvement has been a key focus of work in 2022 with considerable work undertaken on lone working and a number of guidance documents have been reviewed and updated. This is a key area of focus to support the organisation in improving health and safety performance. Work is continuing on an electronic reporting system for incidents and Violence & Aggression at a corporate level. In addition, a joint inspections programme has been developed and agreed with the Trades Unions and is being rolled out through Departmental Health and Safety Committees.

2.4 Health and Safety Culture is a continuing key theme where detailed actions and interventions have been planned and are beginning to be implemented. It is important that there continues to be a focus on this area of work which will be an ongoing project given the long term nature of implementing and sustaining culture change. Relevant articles are being submitted for each Connect magazine edition and issues of importance are also being communicated via various service bulletins to aid the visibility of the Health & Safety team and ensuring that Health and Safety is an integral part of everyone's time at work.

2.5 Incidents based on human error continue to occur, particularly in some safety critical services and work is ongoing to understand the underlying causes. This will enable the targeting of resources to service areas with the highest rates of relevant incidents. With organisational development support, improvements in embedding health and safety awareness into the workforce is being progressed.

 2.6 Violence and Aggression in schools has been a major theme for a number of years but improvements in terms of staff and service user health and safety are anticipated from the

ongoing implementation of the Action Plan being led by the Head of Education, Resources and Communities.

3 Review and Monitoring of Council Performance

3.1 Statistical Review

3.1.1 **Appendix A** sets out the analysis of health and safety incidents that were reported during the year January – December 2022, with comparison to previous years' performance.

3.1.2 The main points to note are:

a) The number of incidents reported in 2022 was 182, up by 5% when compared to 2021, but this is down 38% (116 incidents less) when compared with 2019. This small increase was most likely due to the impact of the return of services following Covid-19 restrictions being removed. In Waste Services, in particular, the increase noted in 2021 has reduced by 15% in 2022, with figures returning to pre-pandemic levels. Incident trends within services will continue to be monitored to ensure targeted support is provided where required

b) Education have the most reported incidents, followed by Environmental and Commercial Services, then Housing and Property, followed by Health & Social Care.

c) The majority of incidents resulted in minor injuries, with these accounting for 94% of the incidents in Education, 96% in Housing & Property and 86% in Health & Social Care. They also accounted for 64% of incidents in Environmental and Commercial Services, up 3% from 2021. Dangerous Occurrences accounted for 32% of incidents in Environmental and Commercial Services, which is the same as the 32% recorded the previous year. However, within the Building Services Section of Housing and Property Services, Dangerous Occurrences increased from 29% to 68% compared to 2021 figures. This increase in Dangerous Occurrences is due to all vehicle accidents now being reported as Dangerous Occurrences when in previous years many Vehicle incidents which resulted in vehicle damage only were only reported to Fleet Services rather than Health & Safety.

d) Slips, Trips and Falls continue to be the top cause of accidents, accounting for 35% of minor injuries. It was the largest cause of incidents in all services apart from Economic Development; however that was due to only one incident being reported in Economic Development.

e) Violence and aggression involving staff continues to be an area of concern. There were 1909 incidents in 2022, which is an increase of 45% on the 2021 figure. When compared to the 2019 figure, which is the last year that schools were fully functioning prior to the pandemic, the increase is 34%. The large majority of these incidents were recorded in Education, referred to in more detail in paragraph 3.3.6. The number of incidents within a Primary or Secondary school setting in 2021/22 (academic year) was 1255, an increase of 48% compared to 2020/21. 89% of Education incidents occurred in primary schools. The most common incident type was Physical Assault with No Weapon at 58%, while Physical Assault with a Weapon increased from 13% in 2020/21 to 21% in 2021/22.

f) During 2022, a Supported Accommodation Facility reported 355 Violence & Aggression incidents, up from 202 in 2021 (up 76%). 18% of these incidents resulted in staff injury with scratching, biting and kicking accounting for nearly 90% of injuries. It is of note that during the first few months of 2022, where the largest increase in incidents is recorded,

significant staff absences due to Covid were reported. Some restrictions also remained in place that limited activities and increased anxiety levels amongst those supported. Careful monitoring of these issues and the interventions required will continue in 2023.

It is also important to note that in 2018, the first full year following the move to a purpose built facility, a reduction of over 70% in violence and aggression incidents was reported.

Elsewhere in the Council, very low figures (only 8) were reported, too low for any meaningful analysis. This could possibly be attributable to some under reporting of incidents however from the numbers of Violence & Aggression reports being received in 2023 the issue of underreporting seems to be addressed.

g) Work on the incident reporting processes for both workplace incidents and incidents involving violence and aggression have been and are continuing to be reviewed and the changes made will improve the reporting of data and it's analysis in future years.

3.2 Summary of issues arising from Incidents/Accidents/Interventions

3.2.1 The following summarises some of the main issues arising from incidents and accidents to illustrate the nature and range of risks the council has faced and to inform decisions on improvements for the future with appropriate remedial actions.

a) The number of slip, trip and falls incidents has increased over the last year, many of which relate to inclement weather. The increase highlights the need for services to have suitable winter maintenance plans in place.

b) Wilful fire raising has been an issue in schools during 2022. Two wilful fire raising incidents occurred at two Secondary Schools with significant water damage to both buildings caused by the activation of the fire suppression system. The two incidents were very similar in nature and cost effective control measures have been put in place to reduce the effect of any similar reoccurrence.

c) Covid-19 had a significant effect on the way that many staff have had to work and this is likely to continue as hybrid working becomes a permanent feature. The Health & Safety team continues to get calls for assistance with workstation and display screen equipment (DSE) issues but most of these tend to be related to ongoing health matters rather than problems transitioning to working from home. This does serve as a reminder though that all employees working from home should carry out a self-assessment of their workstation to ensure any problems can be identified, discussed with their line manager and resolved. This will be re-emphasised during the manager and service engagement workshops as part of the Smarter Working project.

d) Violence and Aggression continues to feature heavily and appropriate actions and interventions are being addressed through the measures outlined at para 3.3.6

3.3 Review of Progress

3.3.1 Health and Safety activity is set out in the annual action plan and then monitored through the council's performance management framework via the service plan and a more detailed workforce plan.

3.3.2 The following outlines the progress that has been made in addressing action areas established in the 2021 Health and Safety Annual report.

3.3.3 Accident/Incident: Implement measures required to ensure improvements in vehicle incidents/driver behaviour, including actions arising from the conclusions of the reversing incidents trial.

Vehicle damage incident statistics compiled by Fleet Services over the last two years (2020 and 2021) recorded 162 incidents, which is down from 202 incidents reported during 2019 and 2020.   However, serious incidents continue to occur so data monitoring will continue, as will investigation of specific incident trends and events with appropriate interventions based on the findings. In addition, the section of the Safety Management System covering Driving Safely has been reviewed as referred to in para 3.3.5 below.

3.3.4 Implement changes to the Incident Reporting System including launch and communications across the organisation.

Good progress has been made with a review of the incident reporting process, including the development of an electronic form. Work is also progressing with the review of the Violence and Aggression Incident reporting process. It is anticipated that the work will be finalised and the revised processes launched, with appropriate communications, by the end of June 2023. The new electronic recording system for Violence & Aggression in Education has now gone live and any feedback on this system will be taken into consideration when finalising the corporate systems.

3.3.5 Implement changes to Safety Management System: Driving Safely Policy and supporting information and guidance.

The Driving Safely Policy and supporting documentation have been reviewed and revised. They are progressing through the Policy Framework process and following formal approval, implementation of the changes will take place during 2023.

3.3.6 Violence and Aggression – continue to support the work identified through the review of ASN services and roll out of identified training as appropriate.

Work is continuing to implement the requirements identified through the review of ASN services led by the Head of Education, Resources and Communities and supported as appropriate by the Health and Safety Team and Social Work Training Team (SWTT), particularly around improved staff training. As referred to above, work is also progressing to improve the incident reporting process, which will assist in data collection and improve the identification of incident trends. There is now an ASN Management Group in place where V&A incidents are reviewed and resources directed to provide support in schools where there is a developing trend that causes concern. The ASN Management Group includes officers from across Education and Education Resources & Communities.

3.3.7 Fire Risk Assessments: Continue to implement the fire risk assessment rolling programme.

The rolling programme, which uses a risk based priority approach for fire risk assessment has been refreshed. Progress has been good and more Fire Risk Assessments have been carried out than originally planned for. With a full complement of staffing now in place, the Health and Safety Team will continue to undertake the required assessments according to the priority attributed to them.

3.3.8 Risk Assessment: Develop audit of risk assessment; training and guidance for managers on Risk Assessment.

Significant work has been carried out with Education Services and new risk assessment guidance for Head Teachers has been produced as well as updated first aid guidance for schools. The revised guidance is due to be approved through the Departmental Health and Safety Committee, following which arrangements will be made to cascade and communicate this to schools. Work is continuing on developing an appropriate training package, including a blended learning approach as appropriate to the target audiences.

3.3.9 Covid-19 Risk Assessment:

Work was undertaken in the early part of the year to ensure that services were supported to continually review and revise as necessary and appropriate, the risk assessments for buildings, activities and individuals. Communications on the implications of the reduction of implemented control measures continued in 2022 with advice, guidance and support provided to services as required in order to mitigate the risk.

3.3.10 Inspection: Develop joint inspection programme with Trades Unions in accordance with the agreed Partnership Agreement. Improve accountability by carrying out more inspections within services.

A joint inspection programme has been developed and implemented in accordance with the Partnership agreement with the trades unions. Guidance and recording forms have been issued to services and this programme of inspections will be monitored at Departmental Health and Safety meetings.

3.3.11 Risk Management: work with Organisational Development colleagues to implement measures in targeted areas with high or increasing incident reports.

Close links have been established with OD colleagues, with the work on health and safety culture focussing primarily on increased and improved communications and support with audit activity across the organisation, e.g. information on the changes in legislation around driving safely, lone working audit.

Further work on behavioural safety and links with other work outlined in the plan for 2023, such as better incident reporting, incident investigation training package, risk assessment online training package, lone working workshops, vehicle safety handbooks, are being developed.

3.3.12 Revised Working Arrangements post Covid-19: The Lone Working Policy has been reviewed and updated with an action plan agreed with service representatives to take forward service specific protocols and operating procedures aligned with the refreshed Policy. The DSE Policy and supporting guidance and arrangements have been reviewed and a training module placed on Learn Pro for remote learning. There has also been continual input to the revised working arrangements for the longer term implementation of hybrid working.   Further development of the approach and guidance on warning markers will be progressed in 2023.

3.3.13 High level review of Safety Management System and identification of priorities for the revision of policies, ensuring availability of up to date resources for managers.

Priority areas have been identified and for 2023, this includes the Fire Safety Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

4 Benchmarking and National Developments

4.1 The incident rate for 2022 is up in comparison with previous years, again, most likely due to a resumption in activity and service provision, i.e. more people were in some workplaces so more accidents occurred. Figures available from the HSE for 2022 show a similar trend, though comparing the Council with HSE data is difficult as the HSE figures are generally sector based, whereas the Council is a multi-sector organisation.

4.2 Annual Incident Rate (AIR) figures based on RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) incidents for 2022 is 1.12 for Moray Council based on the number of Full Time Equivalent employee numbers. In comparison, the AIR figures for 2020 were 1.42 and 2019 3.17. There has been a reduction in the AIR over the past three years but consideration should be given to the impact of Covid and the reduction and/or cessation of some operations over the reporting period. Benchmarking with other local Councils indicates that, the AIR for Moray Council is slightly lower than the returned rate from members of the North of Scotland Health & Safety Liaison Group: Moray 1.12, Highland 1.25, Shetland 1.3, Aberdeen City 2.12, Orkney 2.96.

4.3 A list of the top 10 prosecutions for health and safety breaches in 2022 has been provided by Safety and Health Practitioner Magazine. These show a resumption of the trend for very high fines for poor health and safety, ranging from £1m for a serious burns to an electrician caused by an electrical explosion in a warehouse to £5 M for a gas explosion caused by a failure to maintain adequate records as required. This failure of having adequate records led to a section of supply pipeline being omitted from a maintenance program which in turn led to the death of a member of the public in an explosion. The highest fine for H&S breaches in 2022 is £1 million higher than the highest fine in 2021 and all fines in the top ten are over £1 Million for the first time. Apart from the devastating outcome of these incidents to those involved, the punishments applied highlight the importance of getting things right.

5 Conclusions and Proposed Developments

5.1 As the organisation has moved on from the Covid-19 pandemic and services have resumed pre pandemic operating levels, a slight increase in reported incidents can be seen. However, the figures remain well below those reported in pre-pandemic years.

5.2 Overall, whilst there are a number of areas identified as requiring targeted attention and further work, in general terms, there are no significant concerns highlighted as regards the Council's Health and Safety performance. The risks that have been identified are being appropriately managed with plans in place to progress with addressing the concerns.

5.2 Good progress has been made on the issues reported on last year, including, joint inspections, lone working, risk assessment, driving safely, health and safety culture. Work will continue on these areas in accordance with the plans in place which will be the subject of continual review, taking account of any competing priorities and demands.

5.3 Continuing monitoring and audit work is required particularly in relation to driving safely. The relationship between the implementation of the revised Driving Safely Policy and the associated supporting documentation with the statistics on vehicle incidents will be explored.

5.3 Continuing concerns regarding Violence and Aggression are being managed and addressed through a planned approach within the services where these type of incidents are most prevalent, supported by the Health and Safety Team as appropriate.

5.4 Important progress on revising guidance, systems and processes has been made with changes being implemented as required. The review and updating of the incident reporting system in particular is a key piece of work which will be implemented in 2023.

5.4 Work will also continue with the OD team in terms of utilising the range of tools and techniques available and the framework for communications to support managers in targeted areas to monitor and raise awareness amongst their teams.

5.5. With the agreement of the revised Flexible Working Policy and the implementation of the Smarter Working Project, including the embedding of hybrid working, continued support, advice and guidance will be required, over the next 6 months in particular.

6 Action Plan.

Actions	Target for Completion
Accident/Incident: Audit high risk services or issues	Continue with programme of audits in accordance with the timescales for completion according to prioritisation in order of importance. Quarterly review.
Work with services to ensure that appropriate winter maintenance plans are in place.	August 2023
Monitor the implementation of Driving Safely Policy and guidance within targeted services.	October 2023
Implement changes to the Incident Reporting System including launch and communications across the organisation.	June 2023
Accident/Incident: Produce updated Accident / Incident investigation guidance	October 2023
Identify changes to Safety Management System: Review of Fire Safety Policy Review of Health & Safety Policy Final approval	July 2023 December 2023 March 2024
Fire Risk Assessments: Continue to implement the fire risk assessment rolling programme.	Adhere to identified timescales for completion according to prioritisation in order of importance. Quarterly review.
Violence and Aggression – continue to support the work required in accordance with the priorities in the plan led by the Head of Education, Resources and Communities.	In accordance with timescales outlined in the ASN Action Plan 23/24, led by the Head of Education, Resources and Communities.

Risk Assessment: Develop online training package	July 2023.
Inspection: Monitor Joint Inspection programme introduced late 2022	Ongoing
Risk Management: work with OD colleagues to implement measures in targeted areas with high or increasing incident reports.	Planned work to be implemented in order of priority over the course of 2023.
Lone Working: Warning Markers – development of approach	March 2024
High level review of Safety Management System and identification of priorities for the revision of policies, ensuring availability of up to date resources for managers.	Ongoing

Health & Safety Annual Report

2022

Contents

Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work Act requires organisations ensure the safety of both their employees and others who may be affected by their actions. This Appendix summarises Moray Council's Corporate Health & Safety performance for 2022 using data extracted from the Health & Safety database. Please note, percentages noted in the following graphs may not equal 100% due to rounding to the nearest whole number.

Health & Safety Incidents – Moray Council

During 2022, 182 Health & Safety incidents were recorded by Moray Council; up 5% (8 incidents) from 2021 but still well below that reported pre pandemic. This slight increase may be due to increased operations in some services as they returned from Covid related restrictions (Figure 1).

After a decline in 2021, Education again reported the highest proportion of incidents at 46% (83 incidents) while Environmental & Commercial Services fell to 36% (66 incidents). For the first time in five years, Housing & Property were third highest at 14% (25 incidents). No incidents took place in Finance, Education Resources & Communities or Governance, Strategy & Performance (Figure 2).
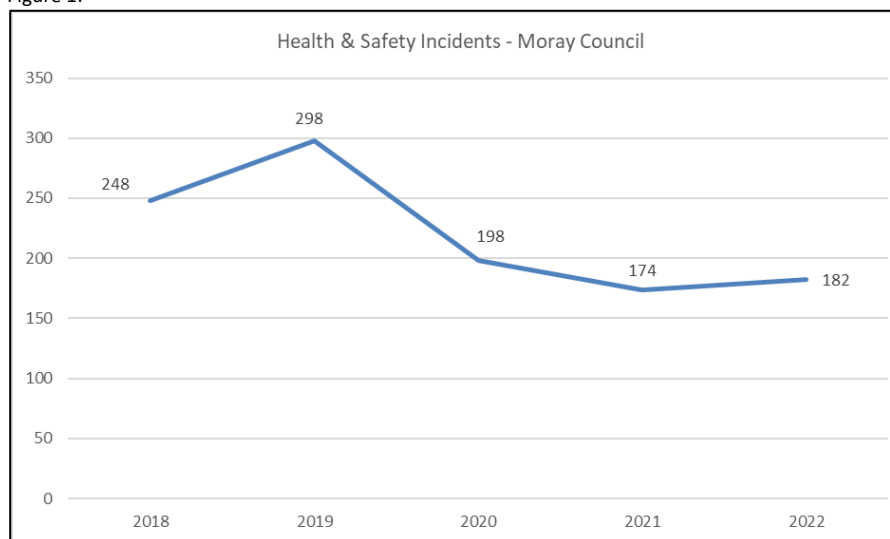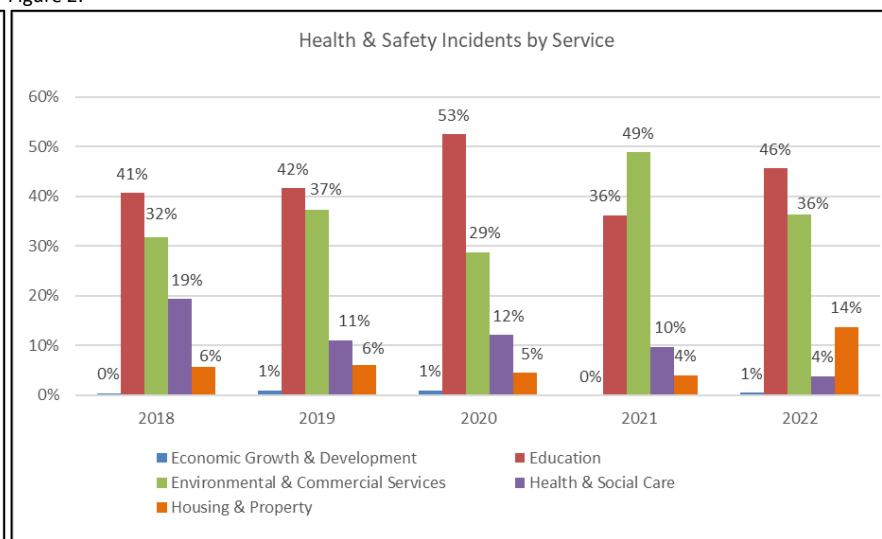
Figure 1:

Figure 2:

3

Health & Safety Incidents by Service – Education

Of the 83 incidents recorded by Education in 2022, most took place within a Secondary school setting (Figure 3). 94% (78 incidents) were recorded as Minor Injury, the same proportion as recorded in 2021. Only 4% (3 incidents) were classed as a Dangerous Occurrence (Figure 4).
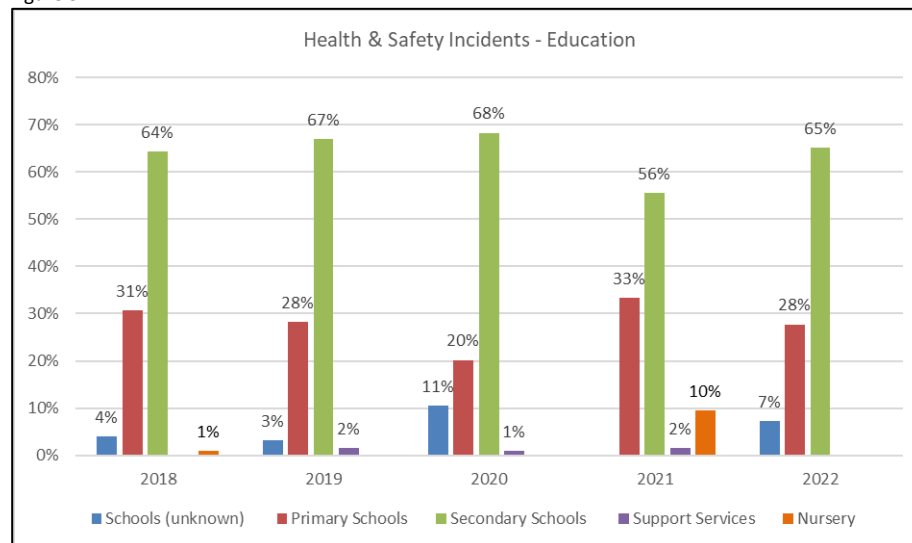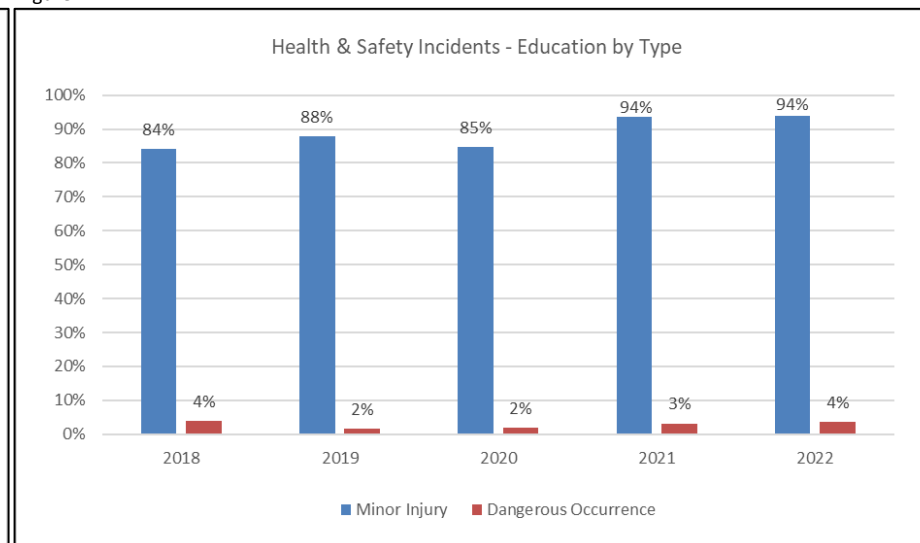
Figure 3:

Figure 4:

4

In 2022, the most common cause of a Minor Injury incident within Education remained 'Slip, trip or fall on the same level' at 49% (38 incidents) (Figure 5). 15% of all Minor Injuries in 2022 (12 incidents) were categorised as 'Other' with common causes including cuts and stings (Table 1).

Nearly two thirds of 'Slip, trip or fall on the same level' incidents took place within a Secondary School setting. Incidents involving a 'Fall from height' were more likely to take place within a Primary School (Figure 6).
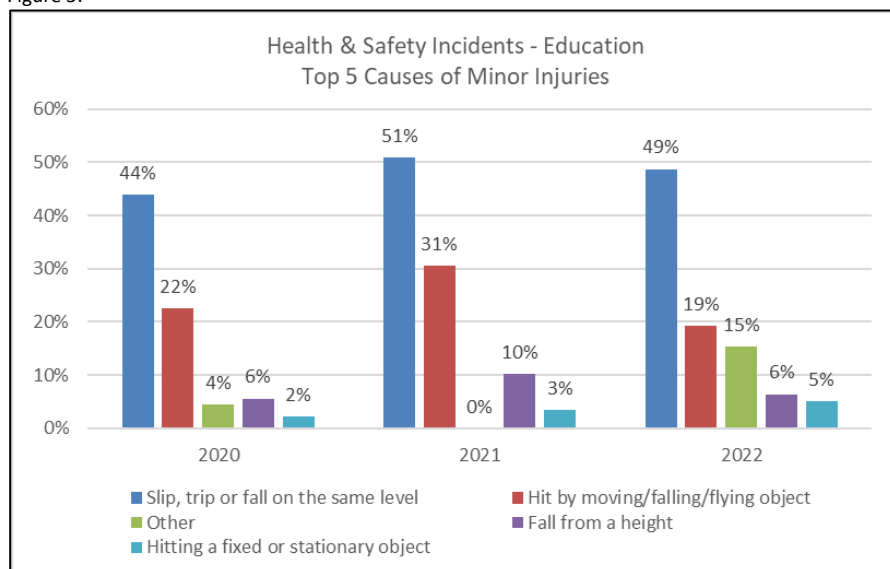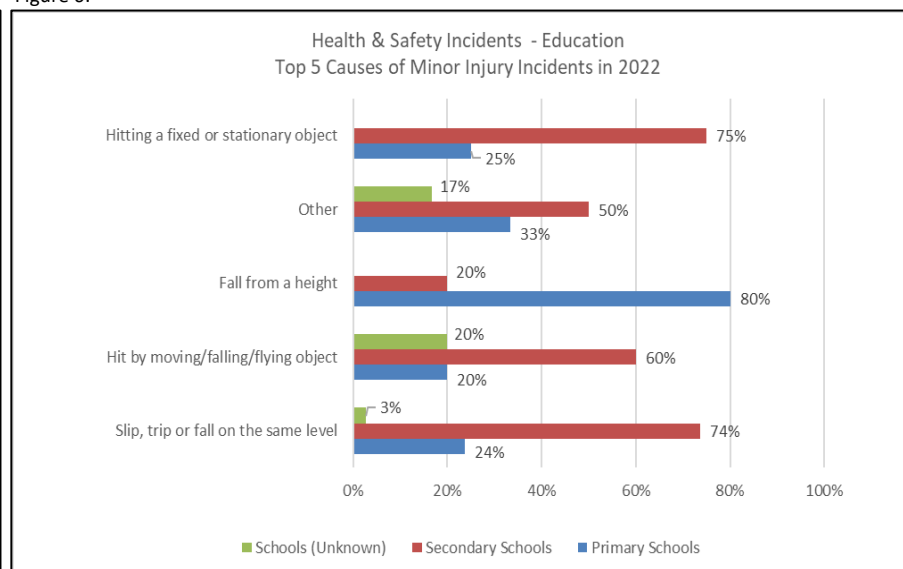
Figure 5:

Health & Safety Incidents - Education
Top 5 Causes of Minor Injuries

Figure 6:

Health & Safety Incidents - Education
Top 5 Causes of Minor Injury Incidents in 2022

Table 1:

2022 Minor Injury - Other	No of Incidents
Finger Injury (cut/sting)	4
Hurt back/shoulder	3
Kicked	3
Scratched	1
Hand Injury	1
Total	12

5

A total of 59% of all Minor Injury incidents required medical or first aid treatment (Figure 7). 29% resulted in a minor wound such as a cut or graze while 27% of injuries were a fracture or bone break (Figure 8).
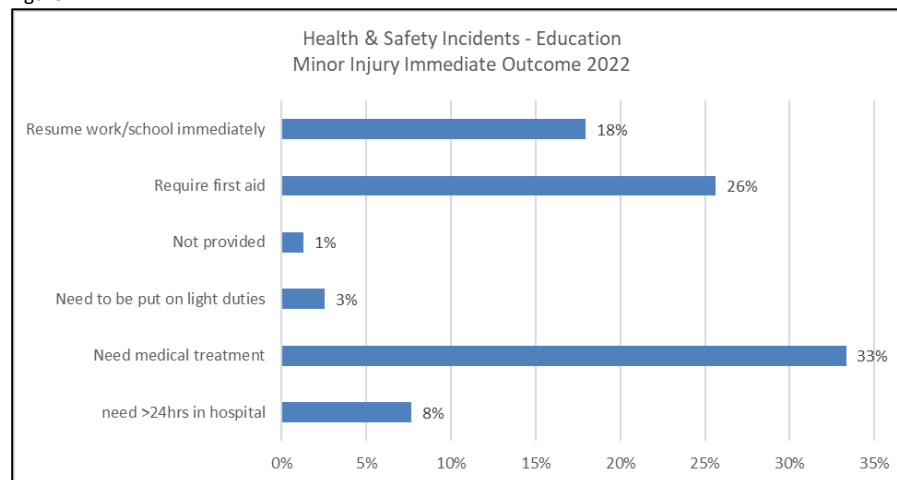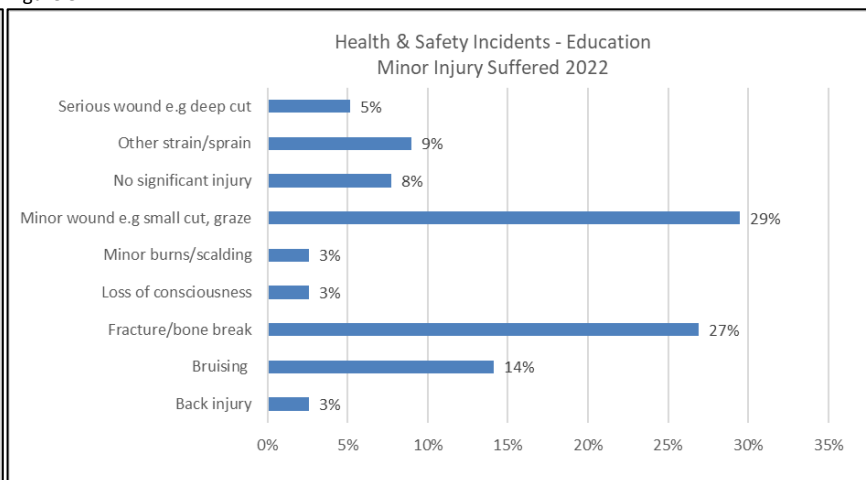
Figure 7:

Health & Safety Incidents - Education
Minor Injury Immediate Outcome 2022

Outcome	%
Resume work/school immediately	18%
Require first aid	26%
Not provided	1%
Need to be put on light duties	3%
Need medical treatment	33%
need >24hrs in hospital	8%

Figure 8:

Health & Safety Incidents - Education
Minor Injury Suffered 2022

Injury	%
Serious wound e.g deep cut	5%
Other strain/sprain	9%
No significant injury	8%
Minor wound e.g small cut, graze	29%
Minor burns/scalding	3%
Loss of consciousness	3%
Fracture/bone break	27%
Bruising	14%
Back injury	3%

6

Of the 83 incidents recorded by Education in 2022, 3 (4%) were categorised as Dangerous Occurrences. 2 (within Secondary Schools) were caused by 'Exposure to fire or explosion' and 'Behaviour of pupil' while 1 (within a Primary School) was caused by 'Contact with electricity'. Only the 'Contact with electricity' incident resulted in the need for medical treatment however no significant injury was noted.

The final two incidents recorded by Education were an Over 7 day injury (RIDDOR) caused by a 'Fall from height 'and a Specified Injury due to 'Hit by moving/falling/flying object'. Both resulted in a fracture/break injury that required first aid or medical treatment.

The Health & Safety team, with the co-operation of Education Resources, are currently auditing all Primary Schools for Health, Safety and Security. New Risk Assessment guidance for Head Teachers has been produced as well as updated First Aid guidance for schools. A joint inspection programme has been agreed and inspections will be being carried out within schools during 2023.

Health & Safety Incidents by Service – Environmental & Commercial Services

The 66 incidents within Environmental & Commercial Services took place across 5 areas. Compared to 2021, the proportion of incidents recorded by Waste Services decreased by 15%, falling back to a similar proportion seen pre-COVID in 2019 (Figure 9). For the second year, the majority of incidents were classed as Minor Injury (42 incidents, 64%). The overall proportion of Dangerous Occurrences remained the same at 32% (21 incidents) (Figure 10).
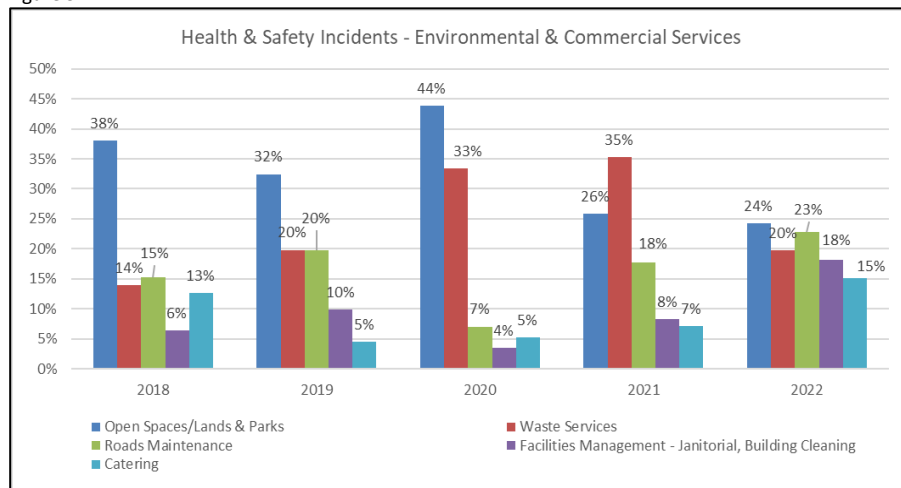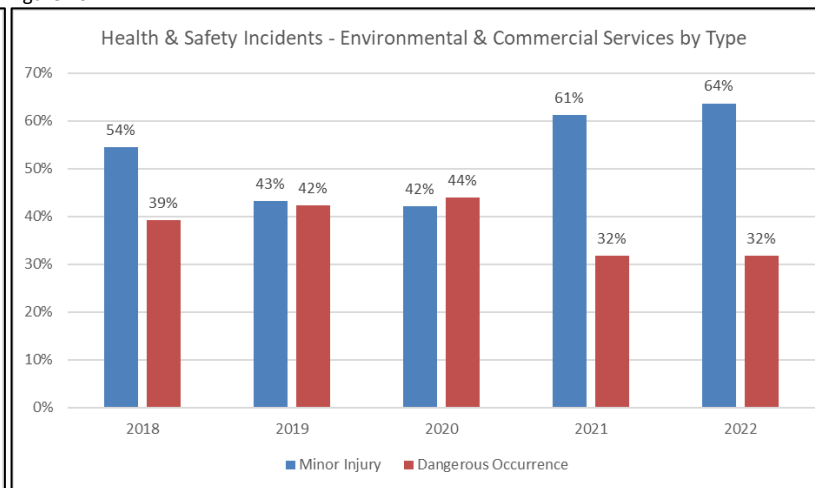
Figure 9:

Figure 10:

For the first time in the last three years, the most common cause of a Minor Injury was 'Slip, trip or fall on the same level' (12 incidents, 29%) (Figure 11). 7% of all Minor Injuries (3 incidents) were categorised as 'Other' with causes including cut fingers due to broken glass or food preparation (Table 2). 50% of all 'Slip, trip or fall on the same level' incidents occurred within Facilities Management – Janitorial, Building Cleaning. Out of 6 Manual Handling incidents, 5 (83%) were recorded by Roads Maintenance (Figure 12).
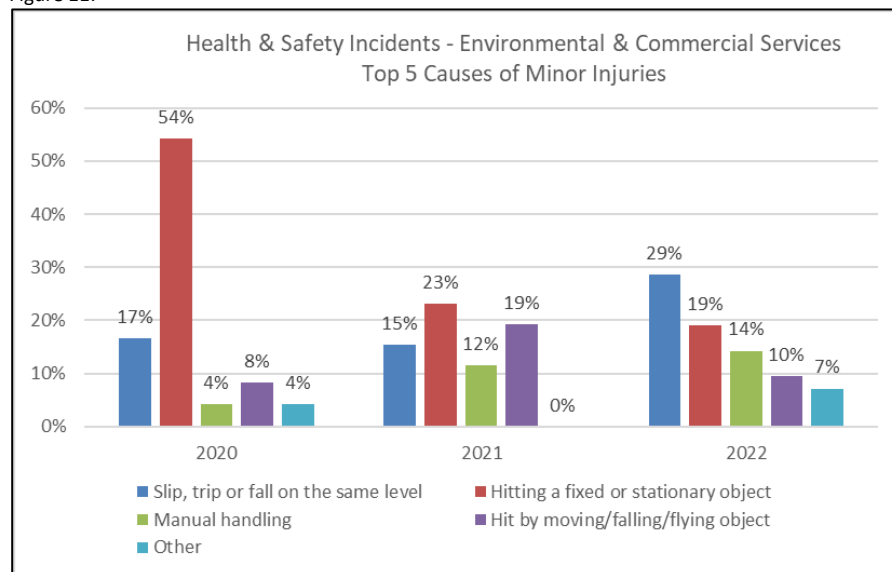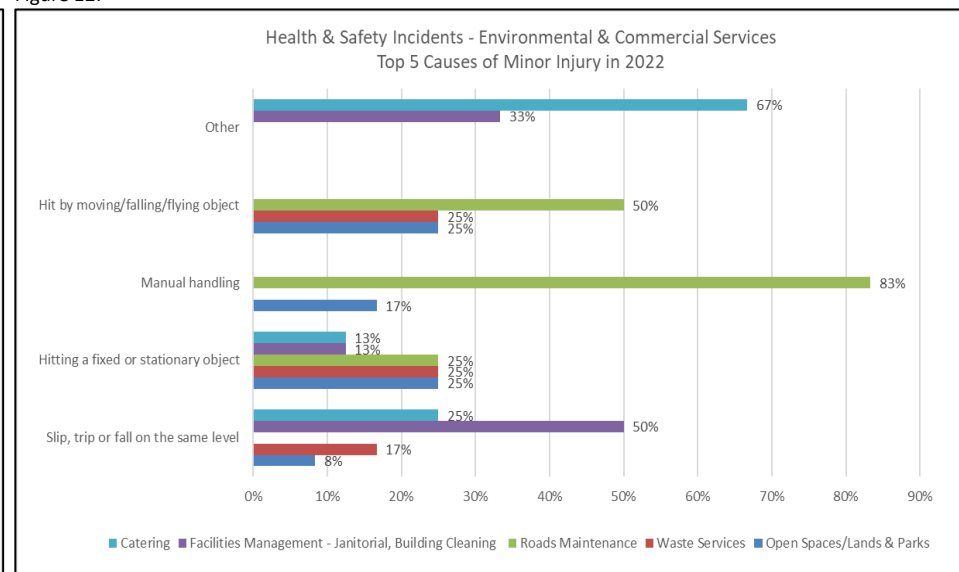
Figure 11:

Figure 12:

Table 2:

2022 Minor Injury - Other	No of Incidents
Passed out (medical issue)	1
Cut Finger (food preparation	1
Cut Finger (broken glass)	1
Total	3

9

With 36% of all Minor Injury incidents, those involved were able to resume work immediately. 40% required first aid or medical treatment (Figure 13). The most common injuries were strain/sprain or a minor wound such as a small cut or graze at 21% each (Figure 14).
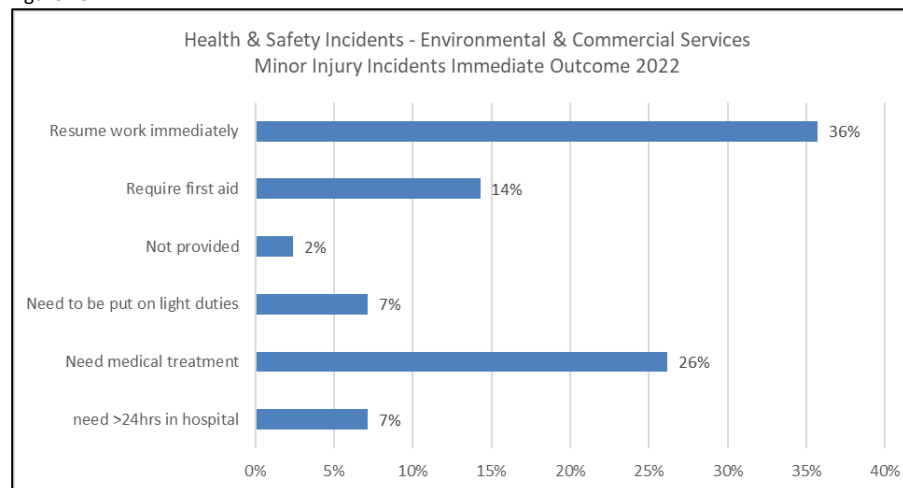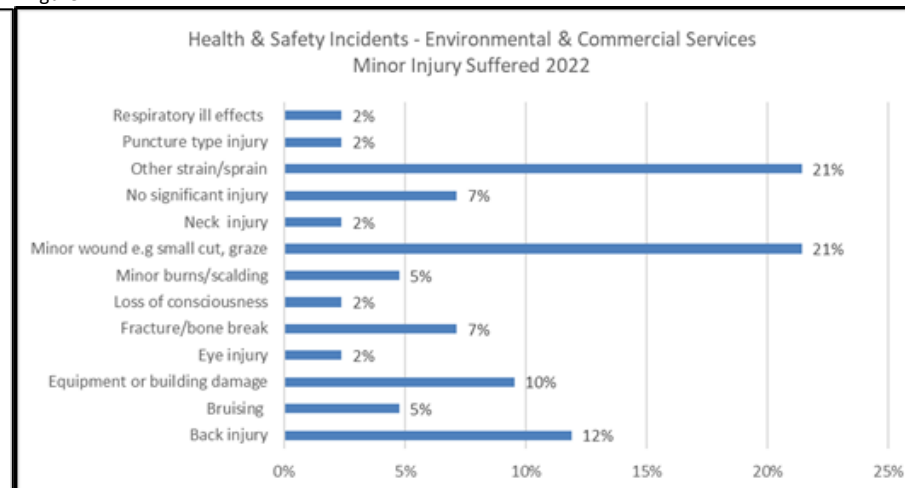
Figure 13:

Figure 14:

Health & Safety Incidents - Environmental & Commercial Services
Minor Injury Incidents Immediate Outcome 2022

Outcome	%
Resume work immediately	36%
Require first aid	14%
Not provided	2%
Need to be put on light duties	7%
Need medical treatment	26%
need >24hrs in hospital	7%

Health & Safety Incidents - Environmental & Commercial Services
Minor Injury Suffered 2022

Injury	%
Respiratory ill effects	2%
Puncture type injury	2%
Other strain/sprain	21%
No significant injury	7%
Neck injury	2%
Minor wound e.g small cut, graze	21%
Minor burns/scalding	5%
Loss of consciousness	2%
Fracture/bone break	7%
Eye injury	2%
Equipment or building damage	10%
Bruising	5%
Back injury	12%

Of the 21 Dangerous Occurrences recorded by Environmental & Commercial Services, 11 incidents involved a vehicle with 10 (48%) caused by 'Hitting a fixed or stationary object' (Figure 15). Most Dangerous Occurrences were recorded by Open Spaces/Lands & Parks). No Dangerous Occurrences occurred within Catering. (Figure 16)

15 Dangerous Occurrences (71%) resulted in equipment or building damage while 4 (19%) noted no significant injury or outcome.
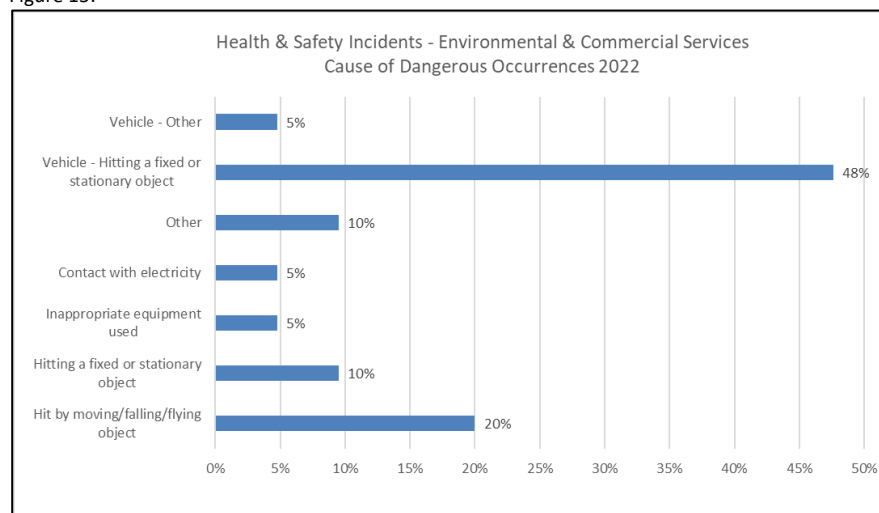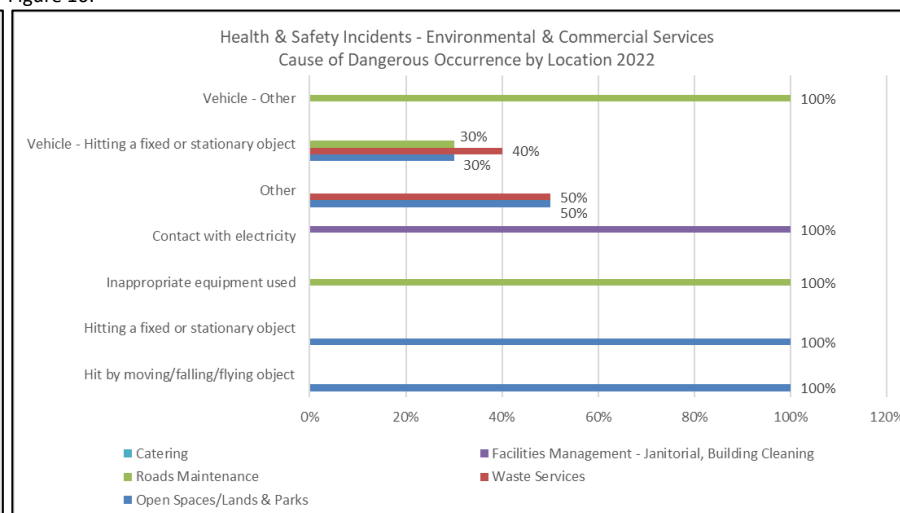
Figure 15:

Figure 16:

Health & Safety Incidents - Environmental & Commercial Services
Cause of Dangerous Occurrences 2022

Health & Safety Incidents - Environmental & Commercial Services
Cause of Dangerous Occurrence by Location 2022

The remaining 3 Health & Safety incidents recorded by Environmental & Commercial Services were; an Over 7 day injury (RIDDOR) due to a 'Slip, trip or fall on the same level' that resulted in a fracture; 2 Specified Injuries due to 'Exposure to temperature extremes' that led to minor burns; and a 'Needlestick contact' that left a member of staff with a puncture type injury. All required medical treatment.

A number of workplace inspections have taken place in conjunction with the first stage of the joint inspection programme. Several improvements to Health & Safety conditions have been introduced as a result within Environmental & Commercial depots and premises. Work is ongoing on an enhanced procedure for the reporting of reversing incidents within Environmental & Commercial Services.

11

Health & Safety Incidents by Service   Housing & Property

Of the 25 incidents recorded by Housing & Property, Building Services accounted for 96% (24 incidents), the highest proportion in the last five years (Figure 17). Compared to 2021, Dangerous Occurrences were the most common incident type increasing from 29% to 68% (17 incidents). In contrast Minor Injuries fell from 71% to 28% (7 incidents) (Figure 18).
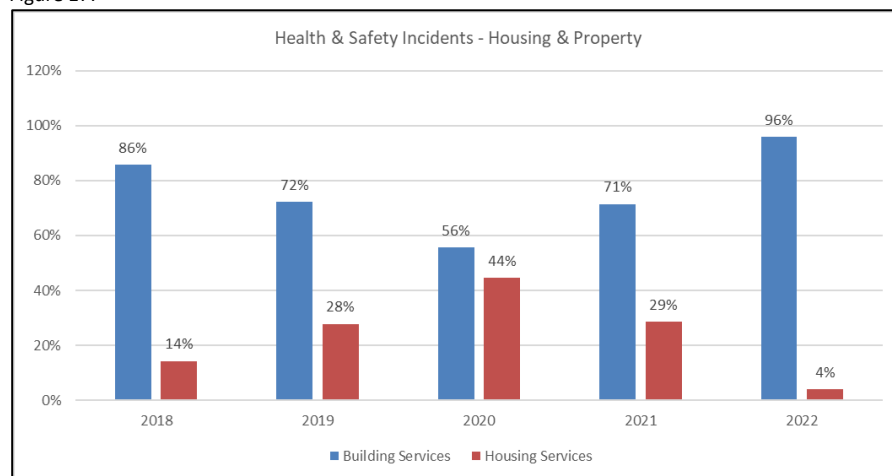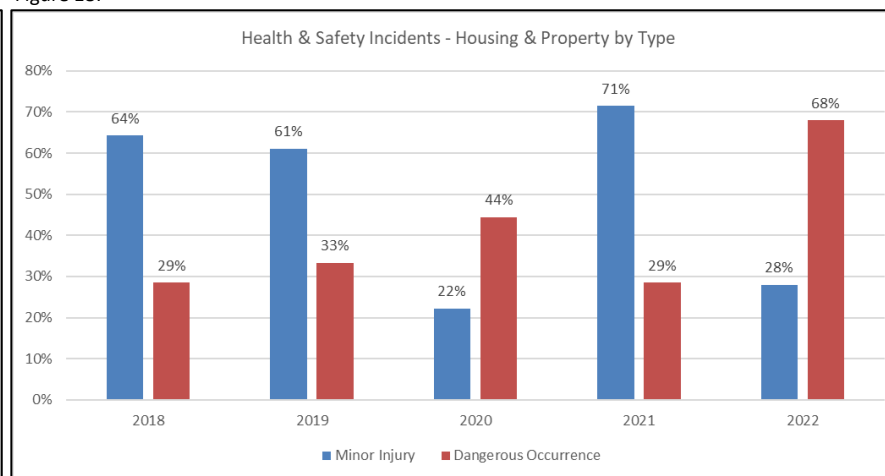
Figure 17:

Figure 18:

Health & Safety Incidents - Housing & Property

Health & Safety Incidents - Housing & Property by Type

As with Education and Environmental & Commercial Services, the most common cause of a Minor Injury within Housing & Property in 2022 was 'Slip, trip or fall on the same level' (3 incidents, 43%) (Figure 19). These incidents took place in both Housing Services and Building Services. (Figure 20).
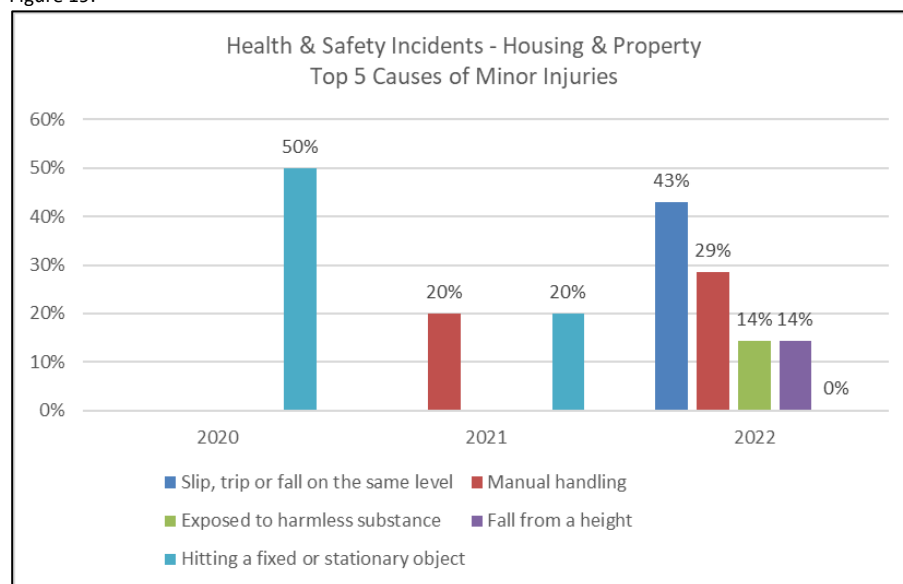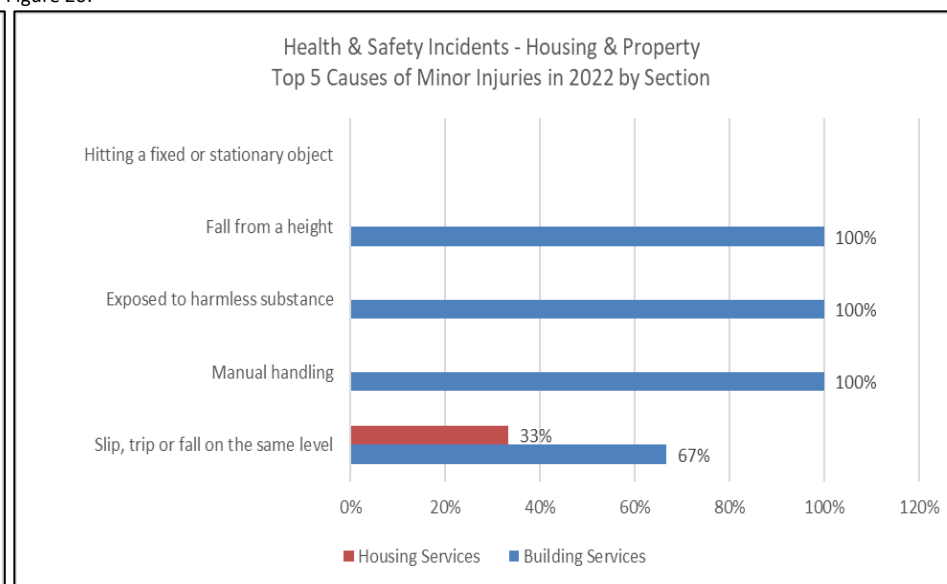
Figure 19:

Health & Safety Incidents - Housing & Property
Top 5 Causes of Minor Injuries

Legend:
- Slip, trip or fall on the same level
- Manual handling
- Exposed to harmless substance
- Fall from a height
- Hitting a fixed or stationary object

Figure 20:

Health & Safety Incidents - Housing & Property
Top 5 Causes of Minor Injuries in 2022 by Section

Legend:
- Housing Services
- Building Services

13

43% of all Minor Injury incidents resulted in work immediately being resumed. In total the same proportion required first aid or medical treatment. (Figure 21). The most common injury was a fracture/bone break again at 43%. (Figure 22).
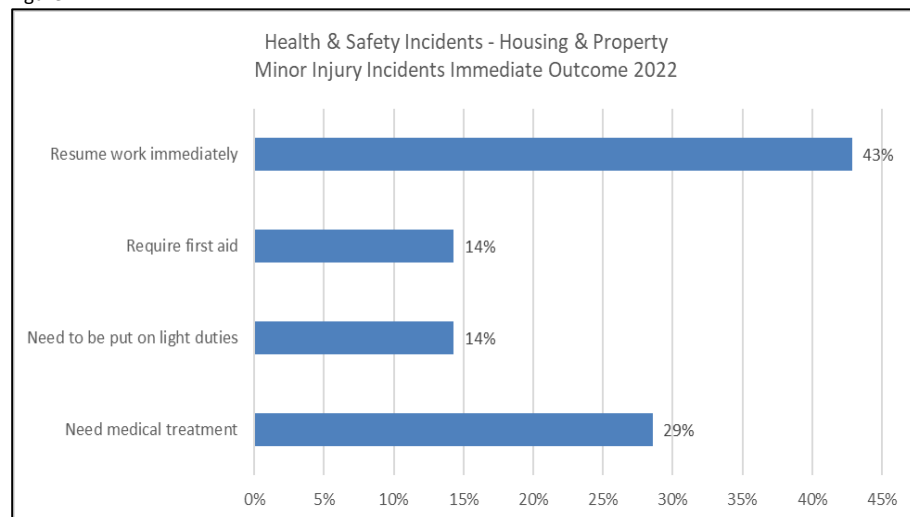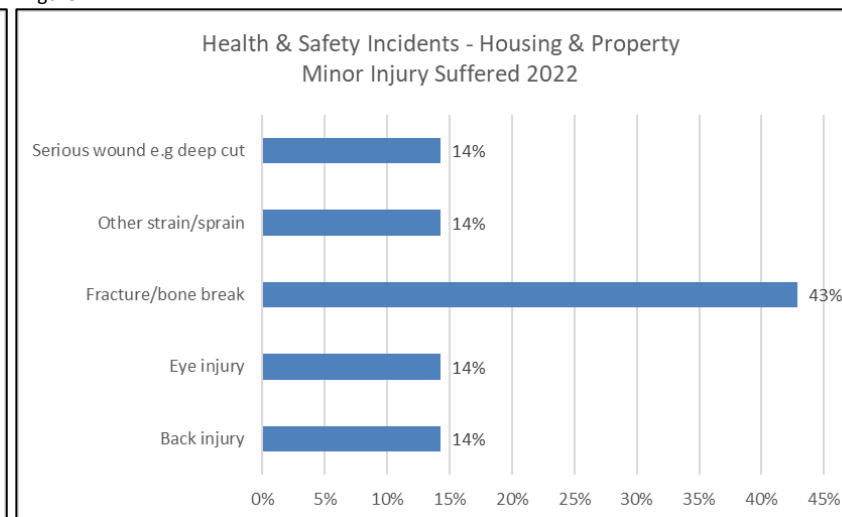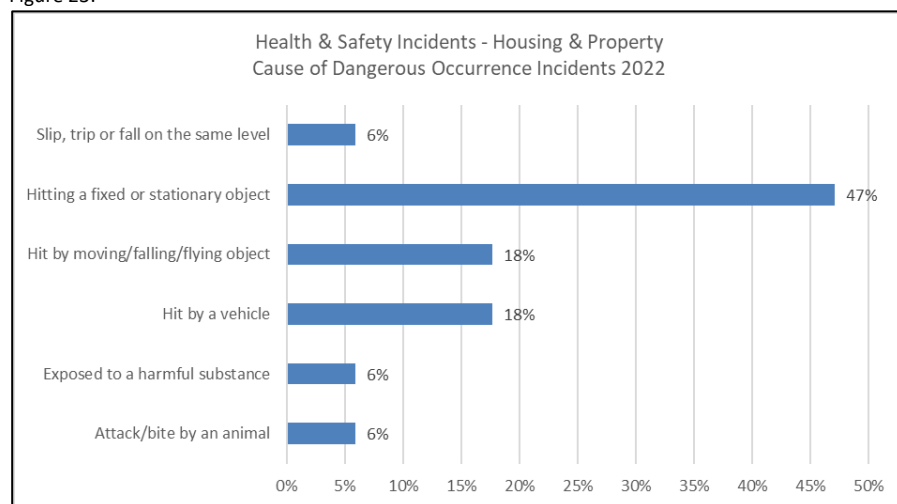
Figure 21:

Health & Safety Incidents - Housing & Property
Minor Injury Incidents Immediate Outcome 2022

Figure 22:

Health & Safety Incidents - Housing & Property
Minor Injury Suffered 2022

14

All 17 Dangerous Occurrences were recorded by Building Services with 14 linked to incidents while driving.   Nearly half were due to 'Hitting a fixed or stationary object' (Figure 23). 10 occurrences (59%) resulted in equipment or building damage while 7 (41%) had no significant injury or outcome.

Figure 23:

Health & Safety Incidents - Housing & Property
Cause of Dangerous Occurrence Incidents 2022

Cause	Percentage
Slip, trip or fall on the same level	6%
Hitting a fixed or stationary object	47%
Hit by moving/falling/flying object	18%
Hit by a vehicle	18%
Exposed to a harmful substance	6%
Attack/bite by an animal	6%

The remaining Health & Safety incident recorded by Housing & Property was an Over 7 day injury (RIDDOR) due to being 'Hit by moving/falling/flying object'. This resulted in an eye injury that required medical treatment.

An updated Safer Driving handbook has been produced and the Safe Driving policy is currently being revised. This will be used by Building Services as a basis for driver training to reduce the numbers of vehicle incidents.

15

Health & Safety Incidents by Service - Health & Social Care

For Health & Social Care, 7 Health & Safety incidents were recorded in 2022; 6 (86%) were Minor Injury. For the first time in five years, there were no recorded Dangerous Occurrences (Figure 24). 'Slip, trip and fall on the same level' was the most common Minor Injury. All Minor Injuries occurred within Community Care with the exception of the 'Exposure to temperature extremes' which relates to Children & Families (Figure 25). Only 1 Minor Injury (due to an Attack/Bite by an animal) required medical treatment and time away from work.
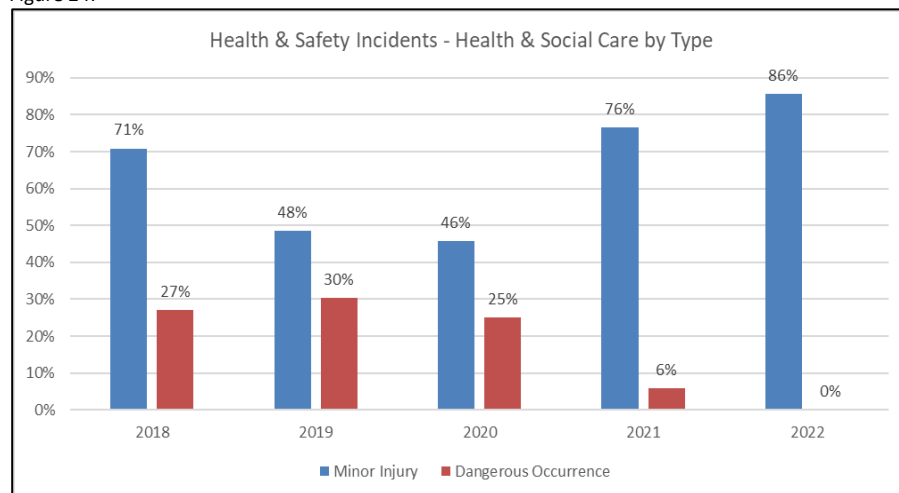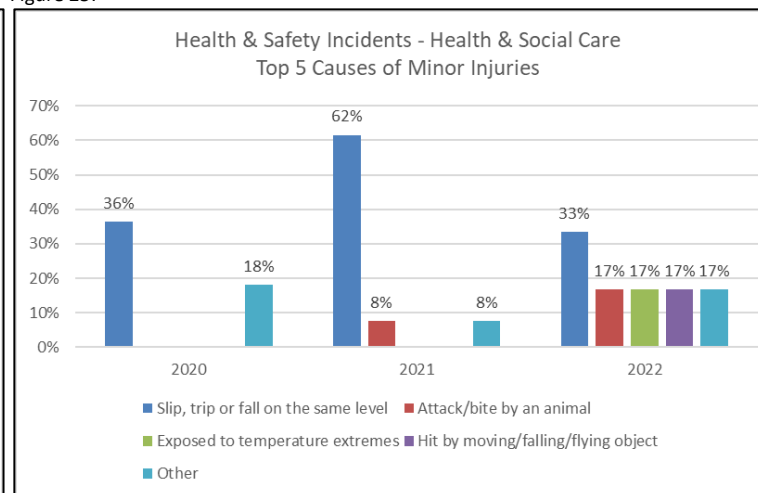
Figure 24:

Figure 25:

The final incident recorded by Health & Social Care in 2022 was an Over 7 day injury (RIDDOR) incident due to 'Slip, trip or fall on the same level', medical treatment and time away from work were required.

Health & Safety Incidents by Service –Economic Growth & Development

Economic Growth & Development recorded just 1 incident in 2022; a Minor Injury due to an Attack/Bite by an animal that resulted in a puncture wound. Although medical treatment was required, no time away from work is noted.

16

Violence & Aggression Incidents – Moray Council

In 2022, a total of 1,909 Violence & Aggression incidents were recorded by Moray Council; 45% more than reported in 2021 and 34% higher than pre-pandemic incidents in 2019 (Figure 26). In Education, incidents have increased 40% (439 incidents) compared to 2021. At the Supported Accommodation a 76% increase has been recorded (153 incidents) (Figure 27).
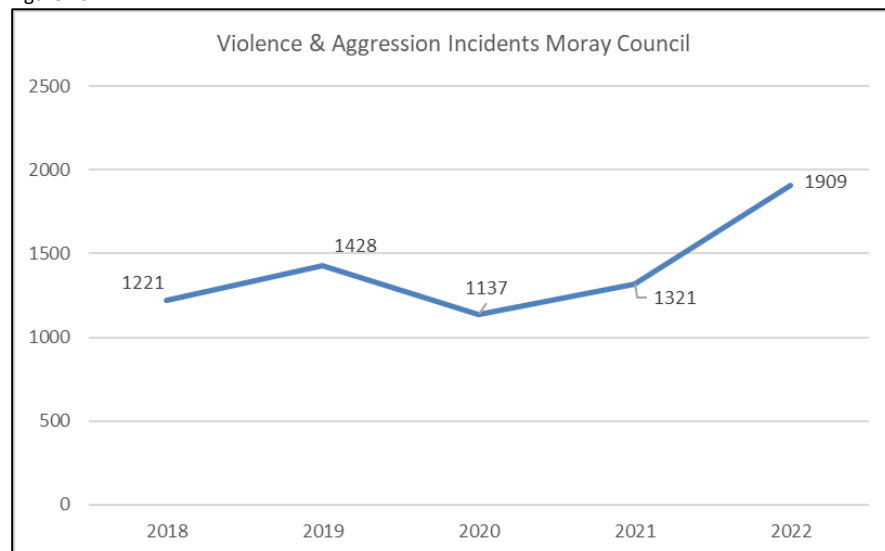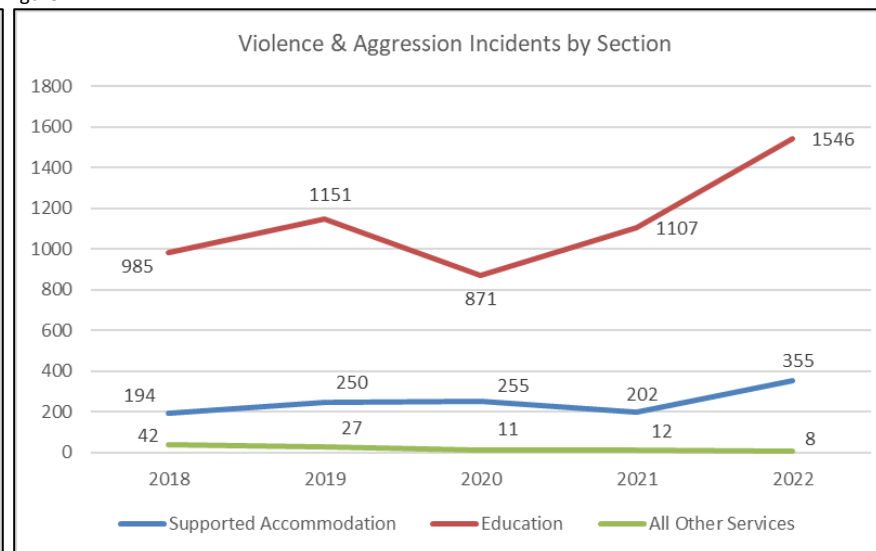
Figure 26:

Figure 27:

Figure 26: Violence & Aggression Incidents Moray Council

Figure 27: Violence & Aggression Incidents by Section

17

Violence & Aggression Incidents – Education

Although Violence and Aggression incidents reported by Education are included in the council wide data for the calendar year 2022, Education report and analyse this information by academic year. The latest available relates to 2021/22.

During this period, incidents of Violence & Aggression are reported for the first time within a nursery setting. Compared to 2020/21, incidents within a Primary or Secondary school increased by 48% to 1,255 (Figure 28).

Each incident is categorised by type. 'Physical Assaults not involving a weapon' fell to 58% however those involving a weapon have increased; 'Physical Assaults involving a weapon' rose from 13% to 21% while 'Threats of Physical Assault involving a weapon' increased from 4% to 5% (Figure 29).
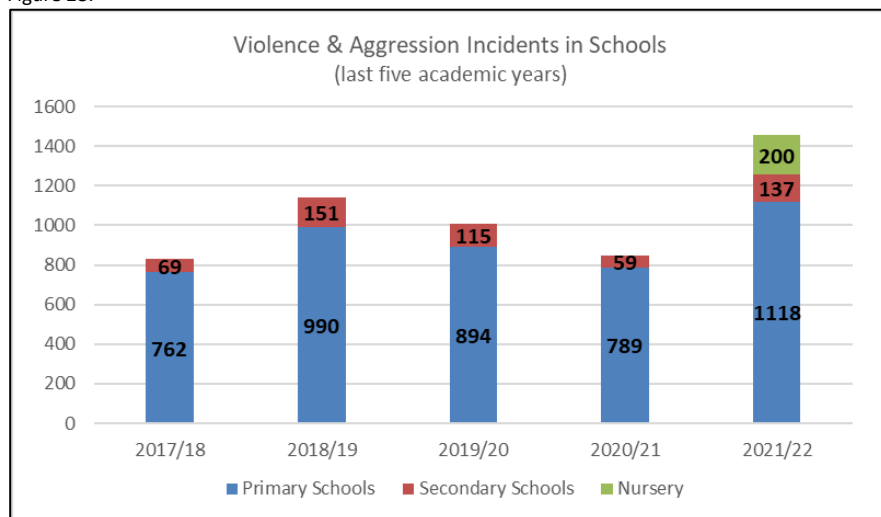
Figure 28:

Violence & Aggression Incidents in Schools
(last five academic years)

Figure 29:

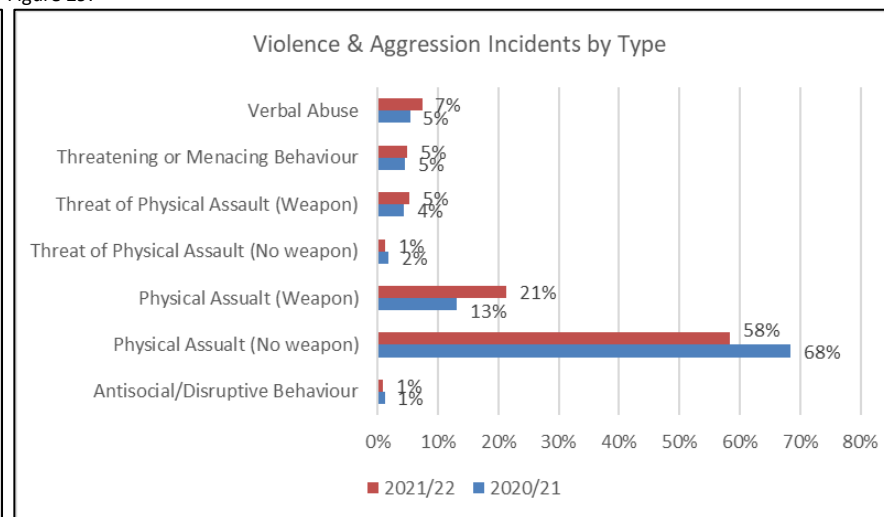

Violence & Aggression Incidents by Type

A total of 224 individuals (including parents and unknown persons) were reported for Violent & Aggressive behaviour during 2021-22, a 37% increase on the previous year. Of the pupils reported during 2021-22 - 92 had been reported once, 60 reported between 2-4 times, 27 reported 5-9 times, 25 reported 10-19 times and 17 pupils reported 20 or more times.

Work is continuing to support the plan, led by the Head of Education, Resources and Communities as part of the ASN Review process. The Social Work Training Team are currently working with Education to provide guidance and training on intervention techniques that will help schools deal with incidents of Violence & Aggression. After a successful trial period, a new electronic Violence & Aggression recording system is also being rolled out across all schools. This new system will ensure the incident reporting process is easier while the level of detail gathered will allow work to address any issues to be more efficiently targeted.

Violence & Aggression Incidents – Supported Accommodation

During 2022, 355 Violence & Aggression incidents were recorded at the Supported Accommodation Facility; up 76% (153 incidents) compared to 2021. The largest notable increase occurred between January and March with incidents up 114% (64 incidents) on the year before (Figure 30).

64 injuries to staff were recorded during 2022, up 64% from the year before with the most common injury noted as scratching (Figure 31).
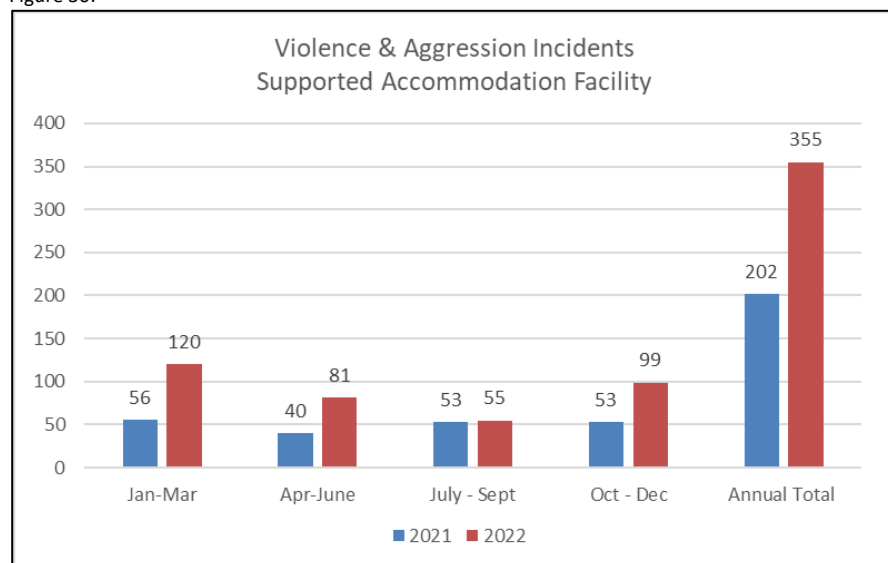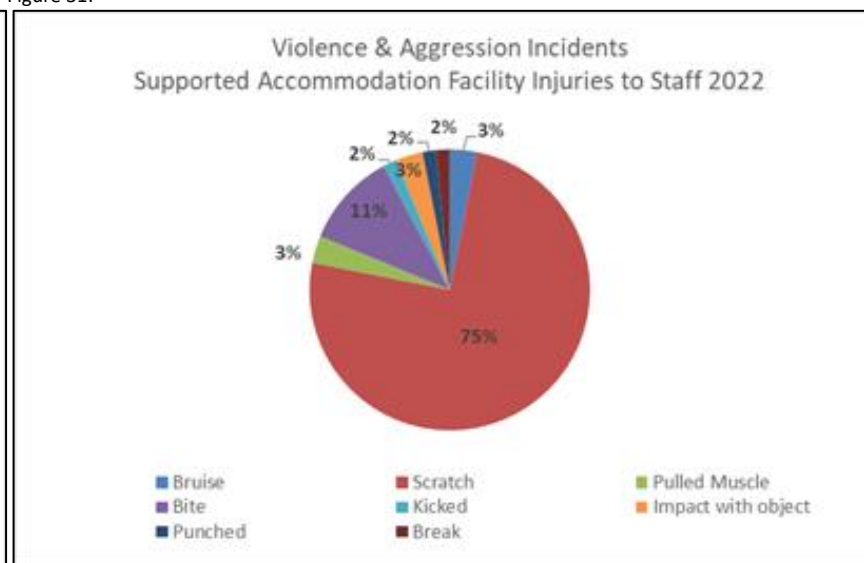
Figure 30:

Figure 31:

During the first few months of 2022, significant staff absences due to Covid were reported. Some restrictions also remained in place that limited activities and increased anxiety levels amongst those supported. Issues around staff absence have continued throughout the year leading to concerns some residents may be receiving inconsistent support. Careful monitoring of these issues and the interventions required will continue in 2023.

Violence & Aggression Incidents – Other Services

Over the past five years, Violence & Aggression incidents reported by Other Services has steadily declined. In 2022, just 8 incidents was recorded across the Council; down 82% from 2018 (Figure 32). Housing & Property recorded the highest proportion with 4 incidents (Figure 33).

Figure 32:
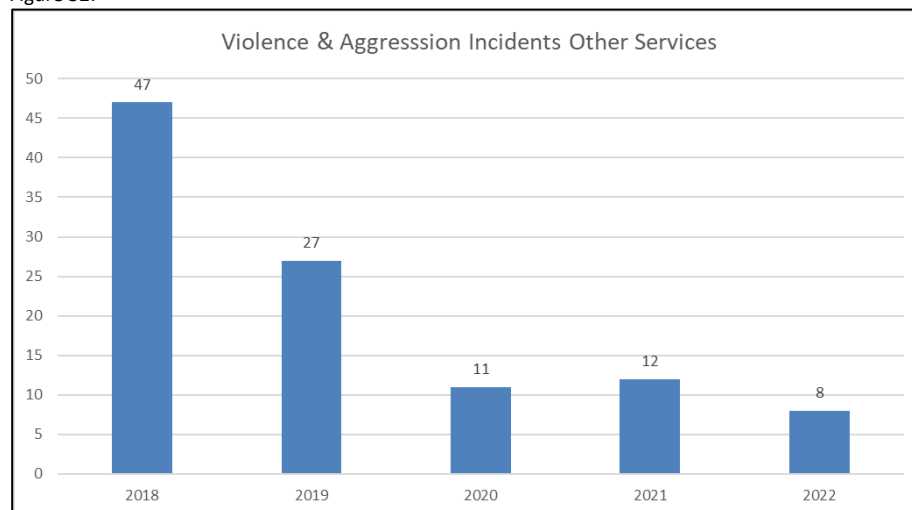
Figure 33:
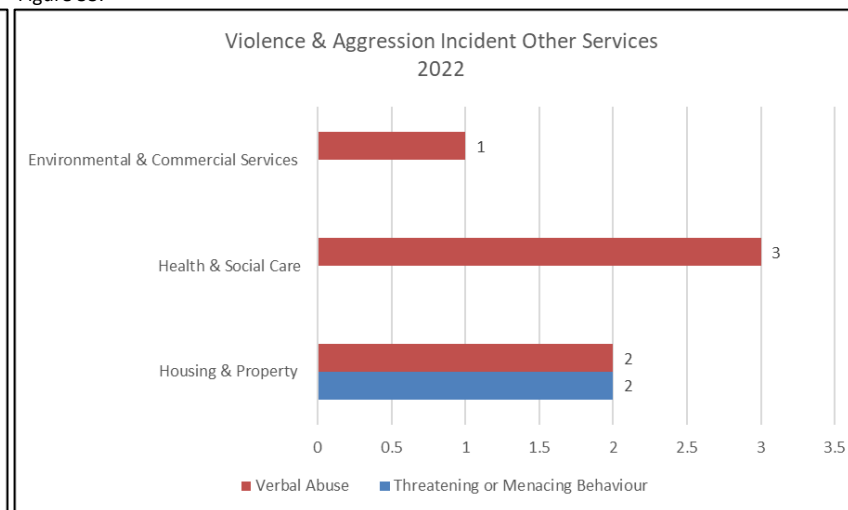
Although a decreasing trend in incidents is to be welcomed, concerns have been raised that this could be due to under reporting. To target this issue, work was undertaken during 2022 to highlight Violent & Aggressive behaviour is not acceptable and to promote the importance of reporting any incident. Following this work, an increase in recorded incidents has been noted during the start of 2023; this will continue to be monitored with action taken accordingly.

20

Working days lost to industrial injury/accidents

The number of working days lost due to industrial injury or accident can fluctuate considerably from quarter-to-quarter however with the exception of the last three months of 2022, days lost have remained well below target. Whilst the number of cases have remained relatively constant over the year, during the last quarter, there is one particular case that has resulted in a significantly higher number of days lost when compared to other cases (Figure 34).

Figure 34:

21
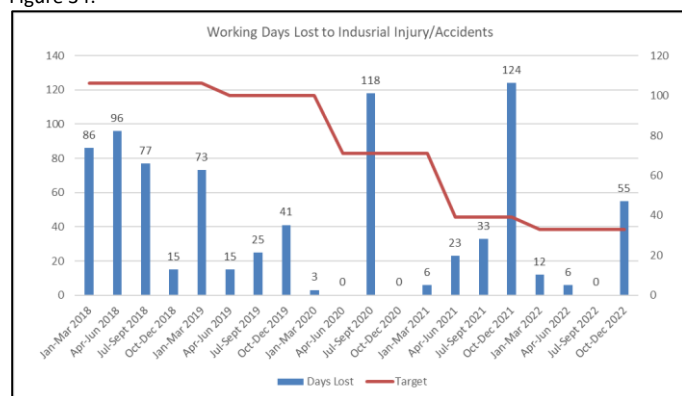
REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021-22

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   The Committee is asked to consider the Public Performance Report 2021-22 in its reporting of actions and performances of council services against Corporate Plan priorities.

1.2   This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (A) (4) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to contributing to public performance reporting.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   The Committee is asked to consider and approve the Public Performance Report 2021-22 in its reporting of council performance and progress against Corporate Plan priorities.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Corporate Plan 2019-2024 was approved by the Council on 3 March 2020 (para 6 of the Minute refers). The Plan provides clarity and direction on the council's priorities, values and plans for the future.

3.2   The Plan sets out priorities of Our Place, Our Future and Our People, with continued focus on financial sustainability.

3.3. Corporate Plan priorities are incorporated within Service Plans which are subject to reporting, as defined in the Council's Performance Management Framework. An annual progress update 2021-22 was submitted to Moray Council on 28 September 2022 (item 12 of the Minute refers).

3.4   The Annual Public Performance Report 2021-22 provides an overall appraisal of performance of council services, and details what actions have been taken to progress corporate plan priorities, with a focus on outcomes. **(Appendix 1)**.

3.5   This PPR report follows the format and timing that the council has had in place for some time. It is planned to review this for future reporting of the PPR to ensure that the content, format, style and timing are appropriate moving forward. This was not possible this year due to limitations on resources.

4   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
The Corporate Plan sets out the council contribution towards the 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan).

(b)   Policy and Legal
The council publishes an annual Public Performance Report to stakeholders.

"Public Performance Reporting should give stakeholders information that allows them to make informed judgements about public services, to contribute to decisions about what standards of service should be pursued, and to challenge performance in the interests of future service development. To be productive PPR has to involve the right information going in the right way to the right people at the right time."
Source: Statutory guidance (The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 Best Value Guidance)

(c)   Financial implications
None.

(d)   Risk Implications
None.

(e)   Staffing Implications
None.

(f)   Property
None.

(g)   Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
None.

(h)   Consultations
The Corporate Management Team and Head of Human Resources, ICT and Organisational Development have been consulted and are in agreement with the content of this report. Heads of Service have reviewed and contributed to the content of the public performance report in respect of their services.

5.   CONCLUSION

5.1   The Public Performance Report 2021-22 reports on progress against Corporate Plan priorities. With the agreement of the Council, the report will be published on the council's website.

Author of Report: Kirsty Craig, Senior Communications Officer
Background Papers: Held by Communications
Ref: SPMAN-1656699058-126 / SPMAN-1656699058-127

► Heron photographed at
Findhorn Bay
by Digital Photo
Professional

Public Performance
Report 2021-22

Contents

Our corporate plan

Our 2019-24 corporate plan sets out our aims for Moray, and our vision, which is 'a life of opportunity for all where people can thrive in vibrant communities and we work together to enrich our future.'

It details our four priorities: our people, our place, our future, and working towards creating a financially sustainable council. Within this public performance report, these priorities will be broken down into outcomes, actions, measures of success and next steps, to demonstrate progress towards achieving these.

Underpinning all of this are our values, which are the driver of everything we do.

We are:

- **Fair**
  in tackling inequalities and tailoring services

- **Ambitious**
  promoting Moray making it better for the most vulnerable

- **Improving**
  driving improvement and investing in the future

- **Responsive**
  involving and listening to communities

More about us

Moray is a largely rural area covering a land mass of 2,238km^2.

It has a long coastline on the Moray Firth with harbours, fishing villages and world-class beaches. The area's population in 2021 was 96,410.

Moray Council was established in 1996 following local government reorganisation and the demise of regional councils. Elections are held every five years to appoint the 26 councillors who form the membership of the Council. During 2021/22 the Council was led by a minority SNP administration. There were four groups of councillors: SNP (eight councillors until 24 November 2021, when Cllr Coy resigned, leaving seven SNP members), Conservative (nine councillors), Moray Open Group (four councillors), Moray Alliance Group (two councillors) and a Labour councillor and two independent councillors not aligned to any group.

In August 2020 the Accounts Commission published the Best Value Assurance Report for Moray Council. This set out serious concerns about a lack of sustained improvement in Moray Council over many years. A follow-up report in March 2022 stated: 'We are encouraged by the steps taken by the council since (August 2020) to put in place elements needed to deliver improvements, against a backdrop of the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, to which the council has responded well. We note in particular the attention being given by the council to its approach to improving educational attainment and housing.'

However, it was also recognised that there were still challenges in delivering some of the council's strategic priorities. Alongside this, disruption to supply chains intensified in 2021/22, resulting in increased tender prices for construction work and lengthy lead-in time for ICT equipment and vehicles.

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Recovery and renewal

Responding to the pandemic and supporting recovery continued to be a major focus for services in 2021/22. Delivery of the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan passed on 18 February 2021 was continued, with work to embed recovery into existing strategies such as Moray Economic Strategy underway.

Vision for Recovery

A strong, agile and inclusive recovery; flexing and innovating to regenerate the area; a new Moray – more resilient with the council primed to deliver its priorities. Key focus areas are identified as economic, educational, social and health.

What we did:

Economic

- Administered grants totalling £12.7 million to local businesses in 2021/22.

- Implemented the Economic Recovery Plan approved in 2020/21 which provided £3.8 million investment in the local economy with a number of initiatives, such as pop-up shops and start up grants, to encourage economic activity.

- Administered Low Income Pandemic Payments to reduce Council Tax for people on lower tax bands or entitled to Council Tax Reduction.

- Provided 1,985 grants totalling £620,000 through the Flexible Food Fund.

- Grants totalling £810,000 in family pandemic payments supported 3,437 families.

- Administered supplier relief.

- Restart grants totalling around £9.2m were issued under the Strategic Framework Business Fund (SFBF) and Small Accommodation Providers (SAP) scheme in April 2021.

- The Discretionary Business, Restriction and Restart Funds allocated a total of around £1.17m from April 2021 to June 2021 to businesses not eligible to apply for the SFBF.

- As a result of local restrictions in May 2021, due to rising cases in Moray, 646 businesses received a total of £390k in small grants and 218 businesses received a total of £244k for local restrictions during July.

Health

- Administered £419,000 in grants to individuals who had to self-isolate.

- Introduced a digital platform to offer physical activities to reduce social isolation.

- Created green space walks to support mobility and mindfulness.

- Worked with community partners to offer a summer programme of events accessible for older people, supporting participants to try activities for the first time and renew confidence as part of a self-management focus.

- Distributed over 1,000 information and activity booklets with a reach of over 2,500 community members.

- Launched the Escape Pain programme of group rehabilitation in rural areas.

- Moray Council responded to the need to provide short-term support to the health and social care team by asking for volunteers to redeploy temporarily. Twelve volunteers from within Moray Council were identified for possible redeployment: 4 for administration roles; 2 for care only roles (1 for all care tasks; 1 for meal preparation and medication tasks, weekends only; and 6 for Care) and Administration roles (1 for light personal care, meal preparation and medication tasks, the other 5 for meal preparation and medication tasks).

- In response to the challenges with recruitment for care at home services, staff resources have been identified to form a recruitment cell working closely with Moray Council Human Resources Team. There is an open advert with interviews being held weekly and necessary training schedules being aligned to streamline the process as much as possible.

Educational

- Supported learners and families through another disrupted exam diet and further lockdowns.

- Supported and safeguarded children's health and wellbeing through further lockdowns.

Social

- Re-started locality planning and wellbeing activities.

- Re-started community events in libraries and community centres.

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Our people

Provide opportunities for people to be the best they can be throughout their lives with a strong and sustained focus on those individuals and groups in our society who experience the most disadvantage and discrimination.

Corporate Plan Priority

1. Children and families: Provide opportunities where young people can achieve their potential and be the best they can be

What we want to see:

The attainment gap between most and least disadvantaged children will reduce

To achieve this, we've worked to reduce the impact of poverty:

- Funding targeted in support of identified children and families

- 1,200 devices rolled out to school pupils to reduce digital exclusion

- Expanded Free School Meals to P5.

- Pursued wider understanding on the impact of the cost of the school day on families.

How can we tell it's working?

Education performance data over the last couple of years has been impacted by covid however, in spite of the pandemic, there has continued to be a focus on education attainment. Some metrics were not gathered during 2020 so comparisons should be made with caution.

Figures using the latest reported data demonstrates that the gap between the most and least disadvantaged in the percentage of P1, P4 and P7 (combined) pupils in literacy and numeracy has increased since 2018/19 (the last time this was measured) to 19.75% and 17.55% respectively.

The attainment gap in literacy and numeracy between least and most deprived remains in and around the top quartile nationally (2nd and 9th respectively). We'll know renewed frameworks are working when the gap between the most and least disadvantaged in the percentage of P1, P4 and P7 (combined) pupils in literacy and numeracy decreases.

The percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or higher has increased over the last four years (to 2020/21), going from 57% to 63%. Moray is closing the gap on the national figure (67%) and is 24 out of 32 Local Authorities.

In 2020/21, 75% of looked after leavers of education achieved 1+ award at Level 4, an increase on the previous year (68.4%). Nationally, 77% attained – up on 75% in the previous year. 96.8% of all Moray leavers attained 1+ award at Level 4, up on 95.2% in the previous year - nationally 96% attained, in line with the previous year.

What's next?

Schools continue to develop approaches to wellbeing and family engagement, strengthening knowledge and developing interventions.

What we want to see:

Improved literacy and numeracy attainment at both the Broad General Education and Senior Phase

To achieve this, we've taken action to improve attainment including:

• Growth in collaborative working across the Northern Alliance Partnership.

• Supported pupils to prepare for exams through Universal Pupil Support.

How can we tell it's working?

The aim for P1, 4 and 7 achieving their expected level in literacy is 67% with 2021/22 seeing a result of 65.1%, an increase from 63.9% the previous year. The same cohort for numeracy achieved 71.8% with a target of 73%, up from 67.8% in 2020.

While figures for S3 achievement levels weren't collated in 2020, due to the pandemic, in 2021/22 literacy levels were at 72%, just below the aim of 75% and numeracy reached 86%, slightly below the aim of 89%.

In 2021/22, S4 pupils attaining Level 4 literacy and numeracy increased to 88%, which measures two points higher than the national indicator of 86%. Over a five year period this has been a 15% increase in attainment in Moray, closing the national gap.

In 2021/22, S4 pupils attaining Level 5 literacy and numeracy sits at 54%, just below the national indicator of 57%, which also sees a national rise of 5%, but signals an increase of 13% over five years and closes the national gap considerably.

What's next?

Schools continue to be supported to improve attainment through a strategic approach utilising: Raising Attainment Strategy and Toolkit; Supporting All Learners Strategy; Quality Improvement team support and challenge regarding data analysis, tracking and monitoring and attainment discussions with all schools.

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What we want to see:

Young people are better prepared for life beyond school and for the workplace

To achieve this, we've targeted action to improve employability skills and sustain positive school leaver destinations for all people:

• Sustained improvement in initial positive school leaver destinations

• Moray Pathways Employability and Training Hub at the Inkwell launched in July 2021

How can we tell it's working?

The impact of this can be seen in 94.1% of 16-19 year olds participating in education, training and employment, albeit slightly below the national average of 95% and approaching the target of 96% and an increase on the previous year total of 93.1%.

The Employability and Training at the Inkwell celebrated its first year, initially set up to target young people, the Hub now supports all ages; just short of 500 residents have used the Hub support provisions and partners have delivered over 200 sessions in the Inkwell extending the Hubs reach.

What we want to see:

A plan for an affordable, sustainable Learning Estate

To achieve this, we've progressed our review and transformation of the learning estate:

• Design brief for Findrassie Primary School approved

• An outline business case and action plan were approved in August 2021 to take forward a review of additional support needs.

• Completion and move in to the new Lossiemouth High School building, including community leisure and library services.

• Supported community consultation on the future of Inveravon Primary School.

How can we tell it's working?

A reviewed Learning Estate Strategy was approved in collaboration with parents and school communities. An options appraisal on major learning estate investment priorities was completed.

In 2021/22, a programme of local condition surveys found that 46.3% of schools were rated B or better for condition. The national measurement is based on surveys which are up to 8 years old therefore reports Moray as 56.8%.

What's next?

Submit for Scottish Government Learning Estate Improvement Plan (LEIP) funding for new Forres Academy and Buckie High School.

What we want to see:

More children live with their families and are cared for in strong, safe communities in Moray

To achieve this, we've worked with families as partners to give their children the kind of lives they want them to lead so that their children grow up to be strong and resilient:

- Refreshed branding and increased presence on social media in Foster and Kinship Care

- Placement Services inspection was completed

How can we tell it's working?

The percentage of children in community-based care decreased from 82.5% in 2020/21 to 81.5% in 2021/22. The number of looked after children in Moray as at March 2022 was 178.

Latest LGBF data available for this indicator (2020/21) is based on the annual social work return as of 31 July 2021. While showing an improving trend from 81.28% (2019/20) to 82.18% Moray is placed 29 out of Scotland's 32 Local Authority areas and second bottom of our comparator authority group. The number of looked after children in Moray in 2021 was 174, a decrease of 7.4% in 2020. Our comparator authorities show the same decrease, while nationally it was 8.3%.

What we want to see:

Improved life chances and outcomes for care experienced children and young people

To achieve this, we've improved identification and monitoring in the youth and criminal justice systems and worked to reduce over representation of care leavers and care experienced young people:

- Decrease in the percentage of care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems

How can we tell it's working?

As at March 2022, 9.9% of care experienced young people were in the youth and criminal justice systems.

National evidence shows in 2021/22 there is a higher proportion of care experienced young people, per capita, in the Criminal and Youth Justice systems in comparison with mainstream young people, and the aim is to reduce this.

Corporate Plan priority

2. Improve health and wellbeing for the people of Moray

What we want to see:
Improved outcomes for our more vulnerable young people and families

To achieve this, we've made improvements in children and young people's health and wellbeing with continued engagement around this.

• NSPCC Graded Care Profile purchased and roll out planned for 2022/23

• Safe and Together Model training delivered

• Draft business case, in line with 'The Promise' developed

How do we know if it's working?
The number of children on the child protection register has increased to 2.3 per 1,000 of the 0-15 population.

The rate of registration has been on a decreasing trend since 2017/18. At the end of Q2 2020/21 the rate was 1.6 per 1,000 of 0-15 population, by the end of Q4 2021/22 the rate had increased to 2.3 per 1,000 population. Latest national data 2020/21 shows that Moray is in line with the national position.

What's next?
Continue the integration of Children and Families and Justice Social Work Services with the MIJB.

Corporate Plan priority

3. Optimise outcomes for adults and older people by enhancing choice in the context of a home first approach delivered through the IJB

What we want to see:
People will be able to look after and improve their own health and well-being and live in good health for longer in home environments that support independent living

To achieve this, we've enabled people to have greater opportunity to remain independent within their communities by working with partners to deliver appropriate housing, adaptations and technology enabled care options.

How can we tell it's working?
93% of adults are able to look after their health very well or quite well; this is higher than the national figure at 91%. (Scottish Health and Care Experience survey).

What's next?
Introduce NearMe appointments in council facilities to allow easier access to services, including health and social care appointments.

What we want to see:

People are able to live independently at home or in a homely setting in their community

To achieve this, we've ensured that people are supported at home or in a homely setting as far as possible.

• Discharge to Assess (D2A) Initiative aimed at securing early discharge of clinically stable hospital in-patients who require short-term support has achieved improved patient outcomes and overall cost savings in first eight months of operation.

How can we tell it's working?

79% of adults are able to live as independently as possible; this is aligned with the national figure.

73% of adults agreed that the care they received has had an impact on improving or maintaining their quality of life; albeit below the national average of 78%.

▼ Andrew Simpson, Lord-Lieutenant of Baniffshire, Major General Seymour Monro Lord-Lieutenant of Moray, who coordinated the Moray Emergency Relief Fund response to Covid-19.

What we want to see:

People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected

To achieve this, we've provided choices and control for service users over decisions affecting their care and support and have assessed and responded to housing needs of older people in partnership with the IJB.

How can we tell it's working?

68% of adults rated services in Moray as good or very good.

60% of adults had positive experiences at the GP in Moray.

Adults are 70% positive that they have a say in how help, care or support is provided to them in Moray. This is similar to the national figure of 71%.

What's next?

The draft Workforce Plan 2022-2025 will be implemented, taking account of the requirements set out in the National Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care in Scotland.

Reducing the number and length of time people are delayed in hospital remains a priority. Moray continues to progress the Home First approach (Hospital Without Walls) to supporting people to avoid unnecessary hospital admission and to return home, wherever possible, without delay.

Highlights of the year

Pupils move into £42m new Lossiemouth High School. Phase 3 was still underway at 31st March 2022

Cooper Park design competition for Moray's young people launched

Re:connect partnership launched

Buckie Harbour gets £770,000 regeneration boost

Celebrating the Speyside Low Carbon Hub

Buckie's Darling unveiled as the new gateway feature for the town

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Over 80 new homes for Hopeman and Lhanbryde

£100 million investment in Moray endorsed as Moray Growth Deal signed

Public invited to discuss Moray's £300m Learning Estate Strategy

Moray communities to create vision for their locality

Dedicated team being recruited to offer intensive housing support to vulnerable residents

£1.8m Lossiemouth East Beach Bridge officially open

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▲ Moray Council marks Emergency Services Day 2022

Our place

Corporate Plan Priority

1. Empower and support communities to build capacity by becoming more informed, involved and influential in service design and delivery

What we want to see:
Our communities' ability to address their own needs and aspirations is improved

To achieve this, we've enhanced community participation in service delivery:

• Completion of the Community Asset Transfer of Cullen Community and Residential Centre and Findochty Town Hall.

• Supported The Fishermen's Hall Trust in Buckie in the Community Asset Transfer of the hall.

• Worked with the Findhorn Village Conservation Company in the successful Community Asset Transfer of the Findhorn Public Toilets.

• Collaboratively developed new Community Action Plan in Buckie.

• Supported community resilience during Storm Arwen response.

• Revised Allotments Policy approved.

• 17 Community Councils reformed following elections in September 2021.

How can we tell it's working?
Three out of eight community asset transfers have been completed, an increase of one from 2020/21.

What's next?
Continue to support the Community Asset Transfer of Garmouth Water Tower and land at Bogton Road in Forres.

Progress further Community Action Plans.

What we want to see:

1% of council budget allocated through Participatory Budgeting by April 2021

To achieve this, we've completed our first mainstream PB exercise which attracted £70,000 additional investment from the community to add to the Council's budget of £50,000 and provide a playpark to the design the community chose with the additional facilities they wanted.

How can we tell it's working?

As at March 2022, a £50,000 spend on Rothes Play Park had been confirmed, against a target of £1.975m (1% equivalent).

What's next?

So far we have achieved 2.8% of the PB target, with progress delayed by the pandemic. However, we have plans to expand upon that in 2022/23 with further play park support and also a number of schools have used PB for some of their Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), with pupils voting on the allocation.

Corporate Plan priority

2. Improve our understanding of the issues in our communities based on the experience of local people

What we want to see:

More of our activities, services and plans are influenced by the communities they serve.

To achieve this, we've developed engagement with the public on the future of council services:

- Consulted parents and carers on the Early Learning and Childcare values and aims.

- In April 2021, the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) board approved delivery frameworks (action plans) for each of the four Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities providing a better focus on outcomes and measures to monitor these.

How can we tell it's working?

ELC values and aims, influenced by parents and carers, adopted by the service.

Local action plans in development following community consultation.

What we want to see:

We are more successful in developing a shared understanding between the council and communities that helps us to design the future together

To achieve this, we've developed locality engagement to ensure solutions are influenced by the experience of local people:

- Undertaken significant consultation events in the reporting year:

    · Cluny Hill Woodland Management Plan

    · Elgin City Centre Masterplan

    · Six town centre improvement plans: Aberlour; Buckie; Dufftown; Forres Keith; Lossiemouth

    · Buckie South Masterplan

    · Local Place Plans

- Ran a design competition for young people to redesign Cooper Park in Elgin.

How can we tell it's working?

Elgin City Centre Masterplan virtual town hall exhibition received 3,514 views, 100 attendees to in-person events and 917 comments and responses to the proposals. Responses used to inform funding and grant applications.

Consultation issues have informed Moray Growth Deal aims and projects, giving people in Moray a direct influence over strategic priorities.

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Our future

Corporate Plan priority:

1. Create a step change in the regional economy to enable inclusive economic growth

What we want to see:

Increased economic impact of tourism in Moray, and an increase in the level of 16-29 years living and working in Moray

To achieve this, we've:

- Invested £850,000 in staycation facilities throughout Moray with waste disposal, car parking enhancements and improved signage.

- Launched the re:connect programme with a partnership approach from Police Scotland, NHS Grampian, and outdoor learning and arts organisations to support the development of activities and opportunities for young people.

- Granted planning permission and agreed to take ownership of the new Lossiemouth East Beach Bridge.

- Upgraded the Lossiemouth West Beach footpath.

- In April 2021, launched the Moray Employer Recruitment Incentive (MERI) scheme supporting 12 month job placements for 16-24 year olds offering £8k for employers who provide a supported job placements - 106 individuals were employed.

How can we tell it's working?

The economic impact of tourism in Moray had grown steadily over the 10 years to March 2020, when it reached £134m.

A sharp decline to £58m in 2020 was a direct result of the pandemic restricting social movement and limiting tourist numbers, which fell from 804,000 annually to 281,000. The sector has since begun to rebound, with visitor numbers back up to 480,000 in 2021 generating an economic impact worth £96m. Though still below pre-pandemic levels, this offers optimism the sector can return to its upwards trajectory of the previous decade.

Moray's 19-29 year old population figure showed a slight increase in 2021/22, up to 15.3% from 15.1%.

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What we want to see:

Better employment, skills and earnings, increase in higher-skilled jobs and wage levels through a reduction in the gender pay gap, and increasing apprenticeships in key sectors

To achieve this, we've:

• Signed £100m Moray Growth Deal.

• Invested £770,000 in Buckie Harbour regeneration ahead of the Ocean Winds offshore renewables investment.

• Delivered small business start-up grants.

• Dispersed up to £800,000 in European Social Fund with the Local Employability Partnership.

How can we tell it's working?

There has been a decrease in the percentage of people earning less than the living wage, now sitting at 19.4%, down from 21.5% in the previous year – ranking Moray 18 out of 32 Local Authorities in Scotland.

There were 366 Modern Apprenticeships started in 2021/22 - up from 341 in 2020/21. The Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate (percentage of apprentices who complete their training) is 70.7% for Moray, a decrease of 8% from the previous year. This is reflected in the national achievement rate, which fell to 72% from 76% in 2020/21.

The gender pay gap, which was showing signs of improvement, increased, most likely due to the continued impact of the pandemic. This is due to women being predominant in roles most affected by pandemic related changes to working patterns, hours and ways of working.

The gender pay gap has continued to narrow at a national level, from 14.7% in 2019 to 11.5% in 2021. In Moray, the gap has widened from 19.3% to 22.6% in 2021. We'll know action is working when we see this gap reduce as economic recovery progresses.

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Corporate plan priority:

2. Work to protect and enhance our environment, creating a more resilient and sustainable future

What we want to see:

Achievement of targets, indicators and outcomes identified in climate change action plan

To achieve this, we've:

- Supported the planting of living lawns and wildflower areas to improve biodiversity.

- Accepted more types of plastic in our recycling facilities.

- Signed the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration ahead of COP26.

- Utilised over £100,000 from the Nature Restoration Fund.

- Retained a top 5 in Scotland position for recycling rates.

- Partnered with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to introduce a new Energy from Waste plant.

How can we tell it's working?

Council agreed the climate change strategy and action plan in March 2021, setting a goal of being carbon neutral by 2030. While in 2021/22 the council's carbon emissions increased by 8.97%, compared to reporting year 2020/21, it should be noted that the previous year was impacted by the covid-19 pandemic, potentially impacting emissions figures. For a more beneficial comparison with 2019/20, the reduction in 2021/22 is 9.56%.

What we want to see:

Increased provision and use of electric vehicles and plant, with supporting infrastructure

To achieve this, we've promoted and developed active and green travel:

- 16 additional electric vehicle charging points commissioned taking the total in Moray to 41.

- Introduced a folding bike hire pilot.

- Completed the Speyside Low Carbon Hub.

- Draft Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan published and consulted on.

How can we tell it's working?

While in 2021/22 the council's carbon emissions increased by 8.97%, compared to reporting year 2020/21, it should be noted that the previous year was impacted by the covid-19 pandemic, potentially impacting emissions figures. For a more beneficial comparison with 2019/20, the reduction in 2021/22 is 9.56%.

36 out of 45 primary schools have delivered the Bikeability programme, resulting in the highest recorded sustainable journeys by the Travel Tracker Programme since its introduction in primary schools.

Across Moray 2021/22 showed as trend of increased levels of walking and cycling.

A £82,169.60 grant resulted in the procurement of 33 fleet chargers over three depots with 12 electric vehicles purchased.

What's next?

Electric vehicle strategy to be brought to council.

What we want to see:

Implement surface water infrastructure improvements in vulnerable flood risk areas

To achieve this, we've developed Surface Water Management Plans:

- Identified risk of surface water flooding through surface water management plans alongside Scottish Water.

- Invested in £56,000 of drainage improvements in Clovenside Cemetery in Forres to reduce impacts of flooding.

- Approved funding to support residents to purchase flood protection measures at cost price.

How can we tell it's working?

Offered flood protection products to residents.

What's next?

Publish Local Flood Risk Management Plans in collaboration with Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council.
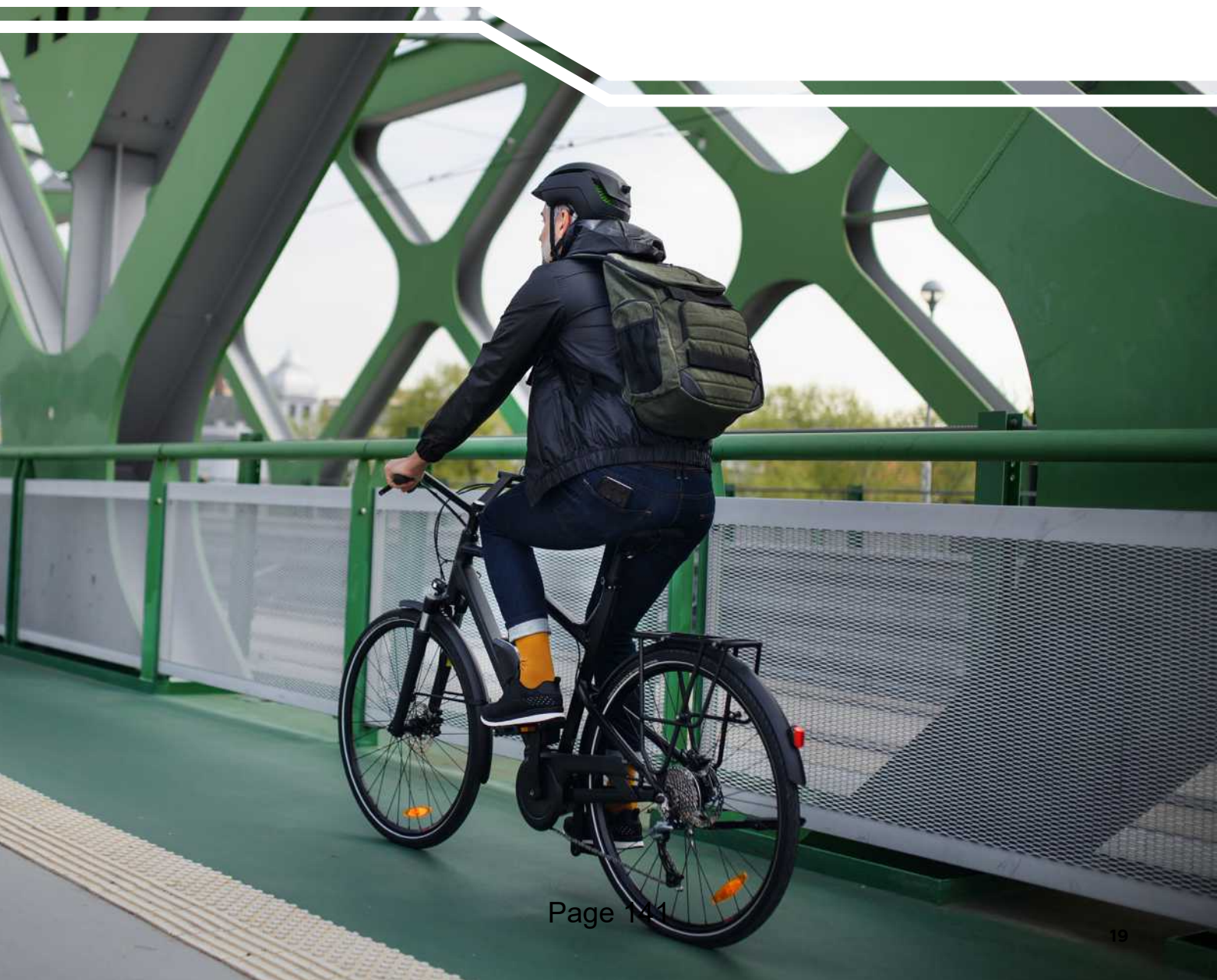
Sustainability

Create a sustainable council that provides valued services to our communities

Corporate Plan priority:

1. Council's Financial strategy

What we want to see:

Financial planning set in longer-term context, and a longer agreed lead-in time for capital projects.

To achieve this, we've reviewed and developed the council's financial strategy:

- A medium to long-term financial strategy setting out how we will realign finances to fit with corporate plan priorities.

How can we tell it's working?

We set aside reserves to fund transformation of services and other council priorities, planning to use our reserves strategically to develop financially sustainable services.

Despite delays, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and global supply-chain issues, we invested £38m in our assets.

When the council set its budget for 2021/22 it included savings of £1.333 million – the bulk of the savings were achieved and further savings taken during the year, including energy efficiency measures.

Corporate Plan priority:

2. Transformation to achieve through our modernisation and improvement programme

What we want to see:
Our modernisation and improvement transformation delivering an ICT strategy taking account of council priorities and requirements; implementation of online services for staff and services users for improved outcomes; a single service point of contact; and cultural change in customer service which delivers an enabling approach for most, with support for those who need it.

To achieve this, in May 2021, the council approved a revised and re-prioritised improvement and modernisation programme (IMP). This more clearly aligned the IMP to council priorities, and set short and medium to long-term targets. The council also approved a preliminary project team to support delivery of the IMP and allocated £6.4 million for transformation projects.

How can we tell it's working:

• Increase of 181,264 online sessions on moray.gov.uk in 2021/22 to complete actions compared to 2020/21.

• Remodelling of access points to information hubs continues.

• Corporate asset management plan approved in April 2021.

What's Next?
Customer service redesign.

What we want to see:
Development of our workforce, including workforce planning taking account of council priorities and requirements, and effective and timely employee relations associated with change management at service and corporate level

To achieve this, we've reviewed and developed the workforce strategy and managed workforce changes:

• Regular workforce pulse and mental health surveys

• Planning for updates to the flexible working policy

How can we tell it's working:
Employee mental health survey June-July 2021 results show a high percentage (82.44%) of employees who have not suffered a mental health issue that led to health professional intervention. 71.43% Employees said they felt able to maintain their mental health and wellbeing during the last year.

Work will continue to support employees through future changes to ways of working following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Risks and opportunities

Future risks

We maintain and keep under review a Corporate Risk Register, with risks grouped under nine themes. This section of the management commentary identifies the Council's main concerns for financial risk and also areas of planned development.

We expect to need to make further savings over the next two years in order to balance our budget without relying on reserves. However, there are a number of dynamic factors which will may have a significant impact on our future financial position.

- Risks arising from increased inflation and interest rates, with likely impact on pay claims and general increases in prices across the board;

- Future funding, with Scottish Government finances under pressure and being targeted to specific priorities;

- Significant funding at UK and Scottish Government level coming from bid funds, requiring expertise and effort to access and with considerable monitoring requirements;

- Demographic pressures and emerging social needs post pandemic;

- Significant difficulties in recruiting staff ;

- Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) is overcommitted against its budget and we will have to fund our share of any overspend. The long-term impact of the pandemic on MIJB services is as yet unknown;

- Our school estate requires significant investment to bring facilities up to the Scottish Government's recommended 'B-B' standard;

- Meeting our target of carbon neutral by 2030 will be a financial and technical challenge.

How we are managing these risks

- Financial monitoring and review;

- Working within Moray Economic Partnership to support the local economy;

- Developing Community Wealth Building;

- Creating cross service teams with expertise in bidding for funds;

- Workforce planning;

- Reviewing our capital programme for areas of increased risk of slippage and / or costs increase and developing a mechanism to further prioritise our capital spend;

- Engaging with local communities on council services and locality planning;

- Joint monitoring reviews with MIJB officers and officers and Board members from NHS Grampian;

- We have commenced a comprehensive Learning Estate Review;

- We have mapped out a high-level route map to net zero.

Opportunities...
and potential opportunities

- The Moray Growth Deal, which will see significant investment in Moray's economy;

- Learning lessons from the pandemic about new ways of working and opportunities which arise from this;

- Our Improvement and Modernisation Programme, redesigning how we deliver services in today's world to deliver efficiencies, building on our investment in ICT for flexible working and investing in Council priorities;

- Our Learning Estate Review, looking at how we can improve the learning experience by enhancing the environment in which it takes place;

- Our Climate Change Strategy, looking to become carbon neutral by 2030.

What's next?

The Council is preparing its budget for 2023/24 and indicative budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26. Given the level of spending from the Scottish Government we will need to make savings to continue.

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What we invested in:

£31.0m

Invested in Moray during the year – main items summarised below

£9.9m

New schools, improvements to existing schools and facilities for early learning and childcare

£7.1m

Waste management facilities, including a joint project with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils to build an energy from waste plant (£6.3m) and completion of works at Moycroft depot

£4.9m

Road improvements, road safety measures and sustainable travel

£2.6m

Bridge renovations and the replacement bridge on Lossiemouth beach

£2.0m

Vehicles and electric car chargers

£1.3m

Other land and buildings

£1.0m

Various works at harbours, including pontoons at Findochty

£0.9m

ICT and other equipment

£0.4m

Street lighting

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234080

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER CHARTER UPDATE

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To invite the Committee to consider and approve the updated Customer Charter in **Appendix 1.**

1.2   This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (37) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to matters monitoring and developing customer access and information.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   **It is recommended that the committee considers and approves the updated Customer Charter.**

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Council provide a wide range of services to the public in Moray. It is important that the public (as stakeholders and as customers) can rely on high standards of customer service from the Council.

3.2   The Council's Policy and Resources Committee agreed a Customer Focus Strategy and a Customer Charter on 29 April 2015. (Para 10 of the minute refers).

3.3   The **Customer Focus Strategy** set out actions to improve the Council's customer focus in response to the 2012/13 Best Value inspection report. This report noted that the Council needed to take a more strategic approach to customer focus.

3.4   The actions set out in the Strategy are now embedded in council practices and include:
- Customer care web page.
- Training modules for staff.
- Improving performance monitoring and reporting.
- Improving the performance information for the public to see on the Council's web pages.
- Providing councillors with details on complaints.
- Roll out of Customer Services self-assessment.
- An officer group to monitor actions.

3.5   These actions are now embedded in the Council's Performance Management Framework and, as the Strategy has served its purpose, it is not proposed to renew it.

3.6   The current **Customer Charter** sets out service standards which the public can expect from the range of services across the Council and received praise from external consultants who reviewed the Council's customer service offer 2019.

3.7   Given changes to the ways customers interact with the Council the current Charter would now benefit from review.

3.8   The pandemic has had a major influence on both our customers and our working styles. Technology continues to change and develop the way we work and how our customers engage and access services. We therefore must look to embrace and harness these changes and have reflected these in our promise to our customers. We also want to inform our customers how they can support and allow us to deliver high quality customer service.

3.9   The current Charter set out minimum standards which all customers could expect when dealing with Council services and has been adopted across the Council. It should be noted that only partial service calls are routed through the Customer Contact Centre where service standards are for 93% of calls to be answered. For the last reporting period the service achieved 93.3% with 77% of these answered within 60 seconds. Call handling information is only available in the Customer Contact Centre but the Charter requires calls to be answered promptly by services not routed through the Contact Centre.

3.10 The Council has changed the way face to face customer contact happens for many services. We have moved away from a walk in service at Access Points located in Buckie, Elgin, Forres and Keith and introduced Information Hubs at all Libraries across Moray, where customers and visitors are supported to access Council services. They are provided with free access to a telephone or digital device to contact customer services or complete online where required.

3.11 Where customers do need to see an officer for a discussion or support then they can now do this in person or virtually. Services now arrange appointments to see customers when required. These can either be held in person with a suitable location agreed for the appointment or could be completed online using tools such as Teams or Near Me.

3.12 Whilst the current Charter sets out the minimum standards which all our services promise to meet, some services have higher national or service pledges that apply. An example would be Social Housing Charter which sets out the national standards which apply. No work has taken place to review or update any of these as part of the refresh of Council's Customer Charter.

4. **Proposals**

4.1 An updated Customer Charter taking account of the changes in customer contact is attached as **Appendix 1**. Changes from the current Charter shown as tracked changes. In summary these are:
- Provide Information Hubs for public enquiries.
- Facilities for attending appointments remotely.
- Provide free access to a telephone or PC at Information Hubs.
- Encourage the use of our online services where possible.
- Use of data to help shape future service delivery.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
The Corporate Plan sets out our vision, values and priorities. By working together to deliver and achieve these will ensure a strong core of services are achieved to meet our customer's needs. The update to the Charter will help deliver on this commitment.

(b) Policy and Legal
The need for a clear policy/strategy on how the Council places its customers at the heart of service delivery

(c) Financial implications
There are no direct financial implications

(d) Risk Implications
No risks have been identified as part of this report.

(e) Staffing Implications
There are no staffing implications as part of this report

(f) Property
None

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
The Council's ongoing commitment to equalities is set out in the Charter which underlines key customer rights in this area.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts
No climate change or biodiversity implications have been identified by this report.

(i) Consultations
Consultations have taken place with Equalities Officer.

6. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

6.1 The Customer Focus Strategy continues to reflect the strategic approach which has been embedded in council practices. Customer Charter which sets out the standards that the public can expect reflects how the approach for customer contact has developed.

Author of Report:	Andy Donegan Customer Development Manager
Background Papers:	Report to P&R 29 August 2017 – update on customer focus
	Report to Audit and Scrutiny 19 June 2019 – update on customer focus
Ref:	SPMAN-2045703626-246 / SPMAN-2045703626-245

Customer Charter 2023

Contacting Us

You have a right to the following:

- See your personal information held by the Council
- Access translation services or obtain documents in alternative formats
- Discuss your enquiry in private
- Request an interview with a member of staff
- Where consent has been provided have someone deal with the Council on your behalf

When we visit you we will:

- Arrange an appointment in advance, if appropriate
- Show you personal identification
- Give you as much notice as possible if the appointment is cancelled or altered

In person we will:

- Provide accessible Information Hubs for public enquiries
- Aim to give you the advice and information that you need straight away
- Help you to complete forms
- Provide free access to a telephone or PC at Information Hubs when you need additional support or advice.
- Provide an accessible Reception for attending meetings.
- Attend to you promptly at all facilities.

If you have an appointment, do our best to ensure that you are seen at the agreed time and are kept informed if there is any delaOur Pledge

When you contact us online we will:

- Ensure the Moray Council website is available 99% of the time except for scheduled maintenance
- Provide routine service information in a user friendly format
- Provide services online where possible

When you telephone us we will:

- Answer your call promptly and courteously
- Tell you who you are speaking to
- Try to resolve your enquiry
- If we are unable to give you an answer straight away, explain how your enquiry will be handled

When you write to us we will:

- Aim to respond to your enquiry in full within 10 working days
- If we cannot respond fully within that time, we will acknowledge your enquiry and advise when you will receive a full response

What we expect in return:

To deliver high quality customer services, we need your help.

Here are some things you can do to make it easier for us to do our job:

- Use our online services where you can
- Give us all of the information we need to help you
- Let us know if you require additional assistance or support
- Attend appointments on time.
- Inform us if you will be late or can't attend
- Ask us to explain anything you are unsure of
- Treat our staff with respect
- Tell us how we can improve our services

Our Pledge to You

We will:

- Provide high quality customer service regardless of the way you choose to contact us
- Offer you choices in how you contact us to get information, request services or tell us what you think
- Provide a responsive service where issues are resolved at the first point of contact wherever possible
- Be polite, helpful, sensitive and discreet in all our dealings with you
- Treat you fairly and equally, communicating in plain language
- Keep your information safe
- Respond to routine enquiries promptly or tell you why it will take longer. Urgent enquiries will be responded to as a priority
- Use data, customer views including complaints to help improve and shape future service delivery. Check regularly that the terms of our Charter are being delivered to you. Where we have fallen short, we will investigate and look to address.

Service Charters

The Council's Customer Charter sets out the minimum standards which all our services promise to meet.
In some areas, higher standards may either be prescribed nationally or be set out as part of a wider service pledge.

In the case of Council Housing Services, the Social Housing Charter sets out the national standards which apply.
In the case of telephone calls routed through the Council's Customer Contact Centre, we aim to answer most calls within 20 seconds.

In the case of Building Standards, the Building Standards Customer Charter applies.

Finally, for planning control and enforcement, the Development Management Charter sets out the relevant service standards

Other Useful Links

- Customer Complaints
- Service Performance Results

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: FREEPHONE NUMBERS FOR SERVICE USERS

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   Further to a Notice of Motion, to provide the committee with information on the cost and impact of implementing free telephone access to council services.

1.2   This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (44) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the provision of central support services.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   It is recommended that the committee notes the background and cost of customer telephone contact with the Council and agrees that:

(i)   existing local call rates are retained for customers who contact the council by telephone;

(ii)   the availability of call back continues to be promoted for those who are unable to phone for financial reasons.

(iii)   free telephone access is retained at the Elgin HQ reception and Information Hubs.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   Contact Centre Model

The Contact Centre provide a first and where possible a single point of contact for many customer enquiries. The advisors deal with telephone and email enquiries recording customer contact in the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system Lagan, providing a single view for customer transactions.

Not all services have their customer contact routed through the Contact Centre with many services including Education, Children's Services, Leisure, and Libraries still taking customer contacts directly within their service area.

3.2 Call and email volumes

The contact centre currently receive the following volume of customer enquiries:

Year	Telephone	Email
2019/20	180339	74847
2020/21	139174	106040
2021/22	162405	95207

3.3 Digital First

The Council is committed to a "digital first" approach for customer services as part of its Improvement and Modernisation Programme. The aim is to provide digital self-service options for customers where possible, whilst retaining personal support for those who need it.

This approach should deliver efficiency savings and a more convenient service for customers.

3.4 Cost of different types of contact

Research shows that the cost of telephone contact is between 20 and 25 times the cost of online.

3.5 Telephone code categories

The UK telephone numbering plan is administered by Ofcom. The prefix designates the type of call and the table below shows the type of numbers typically used by the council for customers to contact us.

Prefix	Designation	Cost to caller from landline 01 or 02	Cost to caller from mobile	Cost to Council
01 and 02	Geographic numbers or local numbers	Typically 16p per minute, many providers charge a 23p call set up fee.	Cost vary depending on plan. Typically they are included in free call packages. Calls to 01 and 02 outside any	Free to receive calls

Prefix	Designation	Cost to caller from landline 01 or 02	Cost to caller from mobile	Cost to Council
			inclusive minutes can cost between 3p and 65p per minute	
03 including 0300 and 0345	Non geographic - UK wide	Typically 16p per minute, many providers charge a 23p call set up fee.	Cost vary depending on plan. Typically they are included free in call packages. Calls to 03 numbers outside inclusive minutes cost between 3p and 65p per minute.	0.5p per minute
0800 and 0808	Free phone service	Free	Free	1.6p per minute

3.6 The current volume of calls through the 0300 and 0345 numbers is approximately 92,000 calls per year, with a further 26,000 calls received on the two 01343 numbers. However, it is emphasised that this covers only calls made through the council's Customer Contact centre as this information can be analysed. There are other telephone contact points for which there is no data available.

3.7 Whilst a significant proportion of calls received are from mobile phones (and the majority of these will likely be from inclusive contracts) it is recognised that a small proportion of customers will rely on pay as you go or landline and costs could be prohibitive.

3.8 Current mitigation for those unable to meet call costs

(i) **Free digital access** available at all libraries where customers can be supported to use our online services. Where possible and appropriate use of our online services is our preferred contact method. As indicated in 3.4 there are significant cost differences between telephone and digital customer transactions.

(ii) **Free telephone access** is provided at the HQ Annexe Reception and in all the Information Hubs. Following the redesign of Customer Services as part of the Improvement and Modernisation programme Information Hubs have been established in all Council libraries.

(iii) **Call back**. Where a customer calls the contact centre and indicates they have insufficient credit for the call then the contact centre will call them back to support their enquiry. There is no data on the volume of these specific credit related call backs. The total annual call backs are around 4500 but most of these are for scenarios where customers have requested more information, an update or when a call has been unexpectedly disconnected.

(iv) **Near me**. Elgin Library currently provides access to Near Me, a facility to attend NHS appointments remotely. This will be available at an expanded range of libraries during the course of 2023/24

3.9 Costs of moving to 0800 freephone numbers

Introducing 0800 Freephone numbers to replace existing 0300 and 0345 numbers would cost an additional **£7500** (approximately) per annum.

Introducing Freephone numbers for the main switchboard number 01343 543451 and to replace the 01343 563456 number would introduce a new cost to the council of £0.016 per minute. It has not been possible to accurately identify the impact on call costs, due to no call information available once the call is transferred to a service. However, as an example to illustrate potential costs, with a volume of 118,000 calls if each call lasts an average of 5 minutes the additional cost would be £9440 per annum.

As well as the direct call costs to the council there would be other installation and configuration costs for implementing the solution. There would also be a number of indirect costs around the updating of customer contact numbers on printed materials and web content. This is estimated at between £5,000 and £10,000.

Whilst making all calls to the contact centre free of charge would help those unable to afford costs, it could be seen as a disproportionate way to tackle the issue. As noted above a number of mitigation measures are in place for those unable to afford the costs of a telephone call to the customer contact centre.

3.10 Other considerations for moving to Freephone 0800

(i) Impact on digital first programme: making the phone route more attractive would not be consistent with this approach and could undermine efforts to encourage digital by default if costs of calls are removed.

(ii) Not all Council services are accessed through the Customer Contact centre services including Education, Schools, Libraries, Leisure, Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Registrars that all use 01 local numbers for customer telephone contact. As a result this would provide different costs for these service users.

(iii)   There is no information available on the volume of customer contact in services that are not currently supported by the Customer Contact centre. We therefore cannot predict how customer calling patterns would change if Moray Council were to introduce Freephone numbers. With no call information available we cannot predict the additional costs if customer switch to using Freephone numbers.

(iv)   Currently the Customer Contact centre achieve a 93% call answer rate. Any shift by service users to use new Freephone numbers would impact of the service delivery levels currently being achieved.

3.11   Calls through the internet

As technology continues to develop new customer channels continue to become available. Social media applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook introduce the potential of new customer channels. The ongoing improvement and modernisation of Customer Services will allow for these solutions to be considered and where opportunities exist allow for business cases to be developed.

3.12   What happens elsewhere?

A review of all other Scottish Local Authority websites indicated that no authority is providing 0800 Freephone numbers for general customer contact. Several provide them for out of hours emergency and some for emergency homelessness.

4.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
The proposal would contribute to the Corporate Plan commitment to tackle inequalities and tailor services. However, this approach would not contribute towards delivering a sustainable council for the future.

(b) Policy and Legal
The Council's Customer Charter sets out the response times and standards which council service users can expect but does not deal with the telephone costs.

(c) Financial implications

When the Council approved the budget for 2023/24 on 1st March 2023 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers) it balanced only by using reserves and one-off financial flexibilities. The indicative 3 year budget showed a likely requirement to continue to make savings in the order of £20 million in the next two years.   All financial decisions must be made in this context and only essential additional expenditure should be agreed in the course of the year. In making this determination the committee should consider whether the financial risk to the Council of incurring additional expenditure outweighs the risk to the Council of not

incurring that expenditure, as set out in the risk section below and whether a decision on funding could reasonably be deferred until the budget for future years is approved.

(d) Risk Implications

The main risks of moving to 0800 freephone numbers are the potential impact this would have on taking forward the digital programme; the unknown change in calling patterns and impact on service delivery in the Contact Centre.

The costs of the change cannot be accurately forecast in terms of direct payments for the service, calls and the additional resources required to handle calls compared to more efficient digital business. In an environment where the council has not yet identified a means to address its predicted budget gap, the significance of unknown additional costs must be considered high risk.

(e) Staffing Implications

There is the potential that if call volumes increase by introducing a Freephone service that additional Customer Service Advisors will be required to maintain the current level of service. There will be implications for ICT staff required with the installation and configuration changes to deliver the Freephone solution.

(f) Property

There are no property implications with this report

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no Equalities/Socio Economic impact associated with the report. There would be no change to access to BSL users as part of this solution.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no climate change and Biodiversity impacts directly associated with this report. There may be a small one time increase associated with updating printed material.

(i) Consultations

The equal opportunities officer and Committee Services Officer have been consulted as part of this report and feedback incorporated.

5. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

5.1 The introduction of Freephone numbers will increase costs for the council.

5.2 We have a number of measures in place with free access to telephones in all Information Hubs and HQ Annexe Reception. We also call back users when asked. We have no evidence on the number of requests we receive from service users to call back due to cost of calls.

5.3 **Unable to predict the impact on call patterns by introducing Freephone numbers and affect this would have on current call handling performance and staffing requirements in the Contact Centre.**

Author of Report: Andy Donegan Customer Development Manager
Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-2045703626-247

REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 25 APRIL 2023

SUBJECT: STRATHISLA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES &
                   ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1.   **REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1   To inform the committee of membership issues in relation to the Strathisla
      Community Council and recommend the dissolution of the community council
      as a result of these.

1.2   This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B)(47) of the
      Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the Council's functions in
      connection with Community Councils.

2.   **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1   **For the committee to consider the report and agree to the dissolution of
      the Strathisla Community Council.**

3.   **BACKGROUND**

3.1   Strathisla Community Council boundary covers areas in local government
      Ward 1- Speyside Glenlivet and Ward 2 - Keith, including Aultmore,
      Berryhillock, Craighead, Drummuir, Botriphnie, Boharm, Rothiemay, Newmill,
      Farmtown, Grange, Glentauchers, Knock, Maggieknockater, Mulben and
      Towiemore.

3.2   Strathisla Community Council (CC) was re-established during the October
      2021 CC elections unopposed, with five members standing for ten available
      seats, with an electorate of 2538. No member co-options have been made by
      the CC since October 2021.

3.3   In October 2022, the Community Council Liaison Officer (CCLO) advised
      Democratic Services that due to the resignation of a member, the CC had
      fallen below the minimum operating membership, with four members
      remaining.

3.4   In line with the terms of the Moray Council Scheme for Community Councils (Scheme), under para 6.6 the CC was granted 3 calendar months, to address any arising issues and seek to achieve the minimum membership required by co-option, with the support of the CCLO, to allow time for the CC to regroup.

3.5   The CC cancelled November and December's scheduled in-person meetings and do not routinely meet in January. The meetings were not rescheduled by the CC, despite the time limit of 3 months for resolution of the membership issues.

3.6   Following a scheduled meeting of the CC in early February, which was attended by the CCLO, a CC member advised that an individual was potentially prepared to come forward to be co-opted, however that individual was not at that meeting and no co-option was tabled or agreed.

3.7   Following the February meeting, the CCLO advised the former Democratic Services Manager (DSM) (retired March 2023) with an update on membership issues, and it was noted that no progress had been made.

3.8   On discussion and investigation into the operation of the CC, it appears that minutes have not been routinely taken at scheduled meetings since March 2022 or submitted to the CCLO / local authority as is required in both the CC's own approved constitution, or in terms of para 4.42(b), 12(f) and 14a of the Moray Council's Scheme for Community Councils. The CCLO had reminded the CC of their responsibilities during this period and flagged this to the CC secretary and the chair.

3.9   During discussion with the DSM, Strathisla CC members have suggested the option of a merger of the Strathisla CC with neighbouring Keith CC. However no approach has formally been made to Keith CC, by Strathisla CC, to explore this proposal. This option would require a formal Interim Community Council Scheme review, with public consultation periods, remapping of boundaries and report to Committee, a process taking approximately 4-5 months, should there be agreement with Keith CC to examine this option.

3.10   The DSM has advised the CC that the merger proposal is a separate issue entirely from the continuing membership issue. The CC member had indicated that the potential co-option noted in para 3.6 was conditional, if a merger was not forthcoming. The DSM further advised that co-option of new members should have been the CC's priority.

3.11   Following a letter from the DSM to the CC, with the intention to recommend dissolution, discussion with a CC member resulted in two draft minutes being forwarded to the DSM from June and September 2022. On examination it is unclear if these minutes were formally agreed or published. It is further noted that when the CC had met in June 2022, the meeting was not quorate as only two members had attended, when three members are required to hold a meeting, as per the terms of the Scheme and the CC constitution.

3.12   Following the discussions noted above, the DSM referred the matter to the Depute Chief Executive (ECOD) for further consideration of the situation, noting her reasons for recommending CC dissolution.

3.13 Taking into account the implications noted in this report and due to the lack of progress or impetus by the CC, even with the additional support of the CCLO, the long standing difficulty in recruiting new members and lack of interest at recent elections, the Depute Chief Executive (ECOD) is in agreement with CC dissolution.

3.14 In terms of the scheme, the proposal for CC dissolution must be brought before Committee for approval. Options open to the Committee, as per the Scheme are;

(i) Agree the dissolution,

(ii) Propose that arrangements are made to hold an interim election, with the agreement of the Returning Officer,

(iii) Extend the 'supported status' of the CC, for a further 3 month period to resolve membership issues, thereafter if no resolution results the CC is dissolved.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))
In relation to the Corporate Plan and LOIP, this report raises issues in supporting community capacity and empowerment, and connecting local communities.

(b) Policy and Legal
(i) Community Councils and their members, as statutory bodies and in receipt of public funds have duties and responsibilities in their operation, in relation to the Scheme and their own constitution.

(ii) Should twenty or more electors subsequently wish the re-establishment of a CC for the area, these electors shall submit a petition to Moray Council in accordance with Section 52(7) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, on receipt of which the Returning Officer may arrange for elections to be held in accordance with the Scheme.

(c) Financial implications
(i) The Community Council is in receipt of an administrative grant from the council, and including monies already held holds a balance of approximately £4,200. Should the CC be dissolved, this balance would be surrendered to the Council, via the CCLO.

The CC is also in receipt of grant of £50,000, awarded in August 2022, from Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks Resilient Communities Fund. It is understood this money has not been disbursed and is subject to partial match funding requirement of £20,000.

Initial discussions with SSEN by the Council's Community Support Unit, indicate that the fund could in theory, be reallocated to another constituted body, or bodies, in the area for the same purpose, subject to the award of match funding from other identified sources and fundraising.

(ii) Should the option of an interim election be determined, there are financial implications in terms of production and publication of public notices, awareness costs if more local input is sought due to the rural area covered and costs relating to staff time in organising the same. Should a contested ballot be required, then costs would be incurred in terms of ballot paper production, inward and outward postage costs, processing and count costs as well as staff time. This has not been costed at this time.

(d) Risk Implications
As the CC is not operating in terms of their constitution or within the Moray Council Scheme for Community Councils in terms of their membership and operation, the Council has a duty to review the CC's continued operation in the public interest and in upholding processes of local decision-making and transparency.

(e) Staffing Implications
There are minimal staffing implications in dissolving the CC, other than the CCLO and CSU overseeing the return of CC assets and funds, and liaising with SSEN in relation to the grant made.
If other routes are determined, then additional staff resource for either further support and/or election will be made available from existing staff complement.

(f) Property
There are no property implications arising from this report. However the CC holds assets of a laptop and printer to conduct their business. Should the Community Council be dissolved these would be surrendered to the CCLO and held securely. Should the CC reform in the future, these would be returned to the established CC.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
There is recognition of the role of voluntary and community organisations in supporting residents in their areas. Should the CC be dissolved there may be an impact on those that are more vulnerable or less able due to the absence of a support network at this level to represent and connect with them on local issues, limiting access to opportunity in this rural dispersed area.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts
There are no implications for climate change and biodiversity arising from the proposals.

(i) Consultations

Consultations have been undertaken with Debra Duke, Community Council Liaison Officer, Dawn Brodie, Community Learning & Engagement Team Manager, Alison Davidson, Elections Officer, Alasdair McEachan and Denise Whitworth, Depute Chief Executive (ECOD) and Returning Officer. Discussion has also taken place with some CC members about the operation of the CC and local members are aware of the situation.

5.   CONCLUSION

5.1   Strathisla CC has long standing low-level membership issues and has been operating in conflict with its constitution and the terms of the Council Scheme for Community Councils. The CC has been unable to progress and resolve issues in the timescales granted under the terms of the Community Council Scheme, and considering the options available dissolution is recommended in this instance.

Author of Report: Moira Patrick, Democratic Services Manager
Background Papers: With Author
Ref: SPMAN-2045703626-249