



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT (EDUCATION RESOURCES AND
COMMUNITIES) – PERIOD TO 31 MARCH 2024**

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Committee in terms of section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration in relation to the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- i) scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2024; and**
- ii) notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

3. BACKGROUND

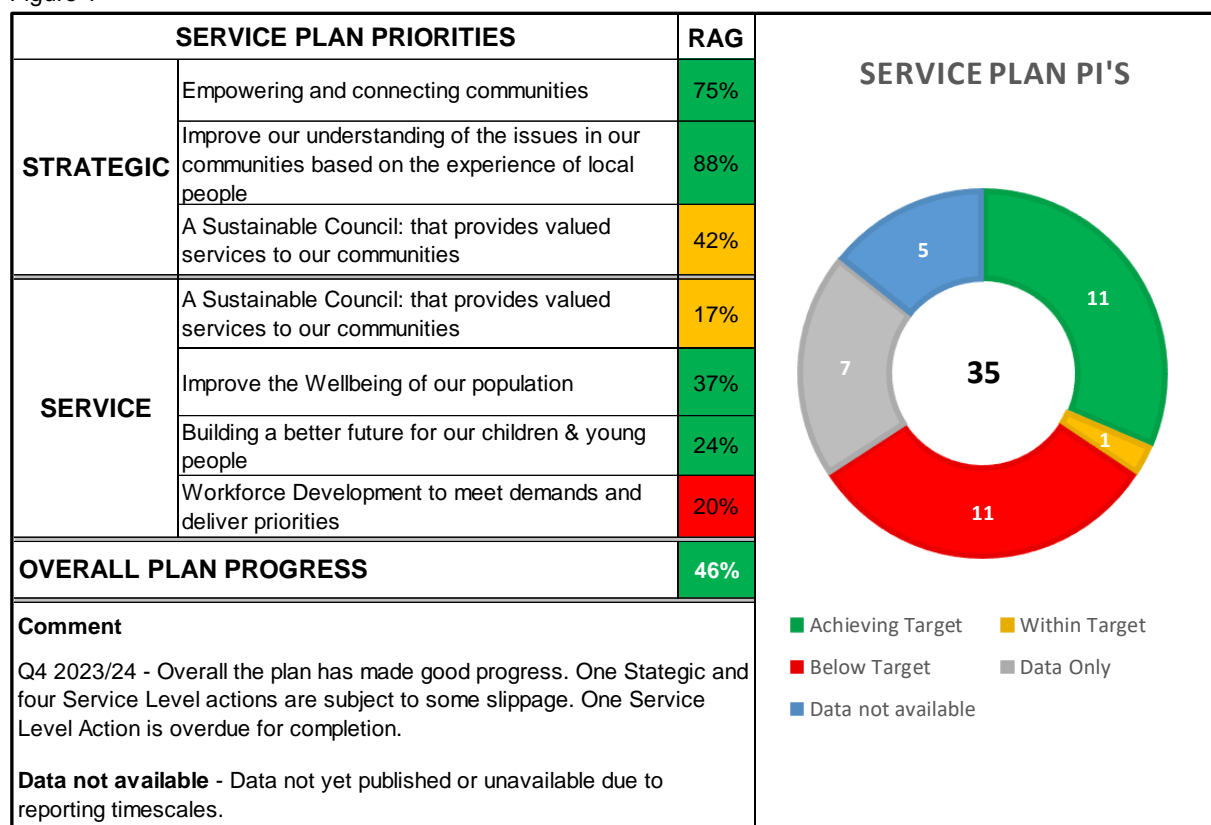
- 3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

4. SERVICE PLANNING

- 4.1 Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key outcomes and performance indicators. Committee is invited to review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

- 4.2 The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.

Figure 1



Strategic Outcomes - successes

- 4.3 Work with Council services to deliver Participatory Budgeting (PB) exercises continued during the second half of 2023/24 and the action was able to complete by the deadline date. Significant activity in supporting a range of projects took place during quarters 3 and 4 including £91K being allocated to eight arts projects through the prosperity fund. Due to the restructuring of PB delivery, influenced by difficult budget decisions, the continuation of PB activity will rest within individual Council services. Community Support Unit (CSU) staff affected have now been successfully redeployed via the Transform process. All existing PB activity within the CSU has now been closed off. (Action STRAT ERC1.2 23-27)
- 4.4 Support for locality planning in the Buckie and New Elgin areas progressed well during quarters 3 and 4. With both groups operating effectively, outcomes have been achieved and this action has completed. Both groups, with CSU support, have put in place regular events which are well attended and sustainable. Community lunch provision in Buckie served 564 lunches by an average of 15 volunteers during the second half of 2023/24. The Strategic Equity Funded project in New Elgin primary school continues to deliver a well-attended weekly youth club. An ambitious target to increase resident participation in the locality planning process was set for 2023/24. Although a significant increase of 38.5% was witnessed it fell short of the 50% target. (Action STRAT ERC 2.1 23-27, PIs ERC008, ERC008a)

- 4.5 Engagement with the public on the future of Council services has developed well during quarters 2 and 3, this action is now complete. A public survey was undertaken and supported by CSU lead focus groups regarding the modernisation of Sport, culture and Leisure services. Further surveys were undertaken in the Forres and Buckie ASG areas to gauge public opinion in relation to 'A sustainable learning estate'. The Forres consultation process is now complete and the process for the Buckie ASG is ongoing. Further details of surveys undertaken can be found at para 6.8 of this report. Community Action Plans have been produced and are in place for Lossiemouth, Forres and Keith meeting the target for 2023/24. (Action STRAT ERC 2.3 23-27, PI ERC003)
- 4.6 The cost per attendance of sport facilities (including swimming pools) has reduced from £2.66 to £2.44 between 2021/22 to 2022/23 ranking Moray in the top quartile of Scottish Local Authorities (5/32). Moray is placed 2/8 within our family group where the average is £4.87. (Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) PI CLS01)
- 4.7 Although the percentage of adults satisfied with libraries has reduced from 82.3% to 79.3% between 2021/22 to 2022/23 it remains in the top quartile (7/32). Within our family group Moray is ranked 4/8 where the group average is 71%. (LGBF PI CLS05a)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

- 4.8 The action to address the affordability and standard of Moray schools is subject to slippage with key milestones not being met by agreed deadlines. Resourcing issues and the effect of budget savings have impacted on their achievement. Revised submission dates during quarters 1 and 2 2024/25 are in place for the reports and plans linked to these milestones. Although the Crossroads Primary school community engagement finished in November 2023, resourcing issues within both Education, Resources and Communities and Education services prevented the completion of the options appraisal on the future of the school. Two site options have been identified for the proposed new build of Forres Academy. Public engagement is underway to seek views on preferred site selection. The survey element of the consultation is due to close on Thursday 25 April, an update report will be submitted to full council on 22 May with recommendations. Currently 22 of 53 schools in Moray as condition B or better, showing no improvement. With the school estate reduced, due to the closure of Inveravon, the condition has proportionately deteriorated. (Action STRAT ERC 3.1, PI EdS100)
- 4.9 The cost per library visit has increased significantly from £2.75 in 2020/21 to £6.55 in 2022/23 placing Moray in the bottom quartile with a ranking of 29/32 nationally and 6/8 with our family group. Previous misinterpretation of LGBF guidance regarding the recording of virtual library visits led to inflated figures for years prior to 2022/23. The loss of two major income streams for the library service since the COVID pandemic (passport verification and ILA grant for teaching ICT courses) led to a significant reduction in income and increasing overall service costs. (LGBF PI CLS02)
- 4.10 The percentage of adults satisfied with museum and galleries has decreased from 62.3% in 2021/22 to 58.3% in 2022/23 placing Moray 24/32 nationally and 7/8 in our family group. (LGBF PI CLS05c)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

- 4.11 The Changing Lives approach within Sport & Culture services is embedding well. The changing lives mindset is about using sport and physical activity to intentionally bring about positive change for people and communities. Adopted as a new approach in 2022/23, the figures recorded have provided a baseline from which improvement can be measured. Cumulatively, quarters 3 & 4 have shown a significant increase of participants, in comparison to the first half of the year and exceeded expectations. Whilst there was a slight increase in annual participants from 2022/23 to 2023/24 (489 to 494), the ambitious target of a 10% increase was not met. Four specific areas: poverty, mental health, disability and older people were focussed upon during quarter 4. Both the libraries and sport and leisure services have developed programmes that follow the approach. Moving forward measures will need to be designed to measure positive outcomes for participants. (Action SERV ERC 2.1 23-27, PIs ERC021, ERC021a)

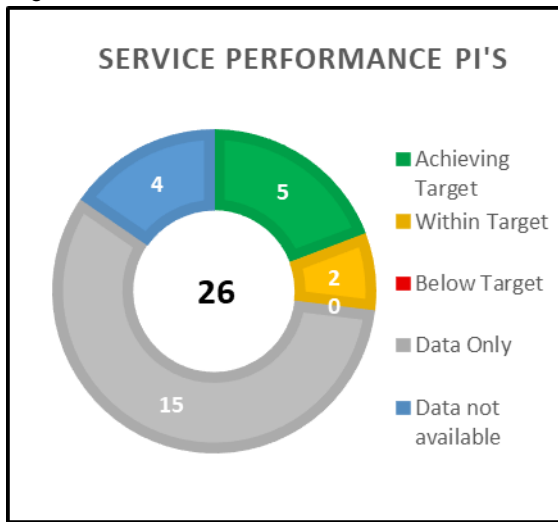
Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

- 4.12 Little progress was made during the second half of 2023/24 in the development and implementation of the school business admin review and one milestone for Phase 1 implementation was not met. Staffing vacancies and an inability to free resources from the current team has prevented progress. Plans are in place to release officer time from quarter 1 2024/25, however further resource will be needed to move forward at pace. Action SERV ERC 1.1 23-27)
- 4.13 Progress has been slow in further developing and implementing the Sport and Leisure Capital Investment plan during the second half of 2023/24, with the key milestone to have asset management plans in place for 25% of facilities not being met. The development of the plan is dependent on decisions in other service areas, such as the learning estate, which have taken precedence. The proposal to extend Moray Leisure Centre was presented to elected members in quarter 3 and discussions are ongoing. The Speyside 'Astro Carpet' replacement is nearing completion and handover of the refurbished facility is expected in quarter 1 2024/25. (Action SERV 1.2 23-27, PI ERC030)
- 4.14 The update and implementation of the Sport & Leisure business plan has not progressed as expected. The process to develop a new approach commenced in quarter 1 after a presentation from Public Health Scotland of a 'Systems based approach' to physical activity. In quarter 4 the new approach received endorsement from the Community Planning Partnership. Work has commenced on the new plan with partners and other organisations, but progression is proving challenging in bringing agencies together. (Action SERV ERC 2.2 23-27)
- 4.15 SERV ERC 4.1 23-27 No significant progress was made in improving the ERDP experience during quarters 3 & 4. Staffing changes and management vacancies have led to the delay in progress of this action. The process has already begun to schedule ERDPs for 2024/25 with some progress to be noticed from quarter 1. (Action SERV ERC 4.1 23-27, PI ERDP.ERC3)

5. **SERVICE PERFORMANCE**

- 5.1 In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance significantly below comparators will be reported to this Committee for member scrutiny.
- 5.2 The narrative included is by exception, links to Service Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.

Figure 2



Operational Indicators - successes

- 5.3 Attendances at Indoor leisure services, swimming pools and Health & Fitness suites have all increased in comparison to 2022/23. Total admissions to leisure services have shown an increase of 9%, swimming pools by 15% and Health & Fitness suites by 17%. (PIs ERC018c, EdS407.1 & EdS407.2)
- 5.4 Use of library facilities (Static & mobile) continues to increase. In comparison 2022/23 library facilities have seen a 12% increase in usage. (PI ERC046)
- 5.5 The percentage of Data Protection requests responded to within 30 calendar days has consistently improved during 2023/24. The annual average for 2023/24 at 96.9% is significantly higher than recorded in 2022/23 (81.3%). (PI CE037)

Operational Indicators – challenges and actions to support

- 5.6 In comparison with 2022/23, the number of attendances at staffed community centres has fallen with 8% less attendances in 2023/24. With the impending closure Elgin Community Centre, it is likely that numbers attending these facilities will continue to decrease. (PI EdS407.5)

6. **OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA**

Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

- 6.1 In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to

respond, outcome and learning points. Detailed tables can be accessed within the Background Papers section of this report.

- 6.2 Four complaints were received during the second half of 2023/24 and six complaints closed. Of those, five were at frontline stage (83%), two were upheld and three were not upheld. One (20%) frontline complaint was closed within the 5-day target timescale. No frontline complaints were escalated.
- 6.3 One investigative complaint was closed in the same period, this complaint was not upheld. Time to resolve the complaint, at 25 days, was out with the 20-day target timescale. No investigative complaints were escalated.
- 6.4 There is no commonality with the two upheld complaints.
- 6.5 Eight MP/MSP enquiries were received during the second half of 2023/24, all resolved within the period. Five enquiries related to sport & culture services and two regarding the school estate.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

- 6.6 Nothing to report.

Case Studies

- 6.7 Nothing to report.

Consultation and Engagement

- 6.8 A number of surveys were undertaken in the second half of 2023/24, supported by the Community Support unit. These surveys included budget consultations, sustainability of the school estate for two ASG areas and most recently the Forres academy location survey. To date collectively these surveys have received more than 6,000 responses. During 2024/25 it is planned to continue the roll out of the sustainability of the school estate surveys for the six remaining ASG areas.

7. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

(c) Financial implications

None.

(d) Risk Implications

None.

(e) Staffing Implications

None.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(h) Consultations

The Head of Education Resources & Communities, Deputy Chief Executive (Education, Communities & Organisational Development), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 By 31 March 2024, Service Plan actions are 46% complete with most actions progressing well. Four Strategic actions completed during the period. One Strategic action and three Service actions are subject to slippage, all have completion dates in 2025, 2026 and 2027 so have sufficient time to be brought back on schedule. One Service action is overdue for completion.

Author of Report: Iain Sneddon, Research & Information Officer
Background Papers: [Service Plan Actions](#)
[Performance Indicators](#)
[Service Performance Indicators](#)
[Service Complaints](#)

Ref: