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**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 18 JUNE 2024**

**SUBJECT: ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE (EEF) SERVICE PLANS 2024-25**

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

## **1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To invite the Committee to consider the Economy, Environment and Finance Service Plans for 2024-25, noting that the Service Plan for Financial Services will be considered at Corporate Committee on 11 June 2024, the Housing and Property Services Plan at the Housing and Community Safety Committee on 25 June 2024 and the Economic Growth and Development Services Plan will also be considered at the Housing and Community Safety Committee on 25 June 2024 and Planning and Regulatory Services Committee on 13 August 2024 and each in terms of their respective remits.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (50) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to ensuring that the organisation, administrative and management processes of the Council are designed to make the most effective contribution to achieving the Council's objectives and to keep these procedures under review.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **In terms of the remit of this Committee, and subject to later scrutiny and approval as set out in paragraph 1.1 above where required, it is recommended that Committee consider and approve the Service Plans for Economic Growth and Development, Housing and Property Services and Environmental and Commercial Services.**

## **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Service planning is a key aspect of the Council's Performance Management Framework and is undertaken annually to set out the strategic direction for services over the coming months.

- 3.2 It should be noted that actions from the Best Value Action Plan agreed by the Corporate Committee on 23 April 2024 (item 5a of the Agenda refers) will be monitored and reported out with the Service Plan process.
- 3.3 The service planning process focuses on forward planning for medium-term activities supporting delivery of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) and Corporate Plan. The Council planning process also includes team plans that focus on short term tactical and operational activities supporting delivery of the service plan and strategies and Employee Review and Development Plans (ERDP) provide individual planning for employees' activities and development.
- 3.4 As well as identifying service developments and improvement, the Service Plan Framework requires an assessment of the output and outcome requirements for the services based on the Council's priorities, statutory and regulatory requirements and other relevant factors such as Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) or other equivalent service improvement tool and matching of resources to these priorities. Priority outcomes are those included in the Council's Corporate Plan that directly relate to the service or are influenced by the service and should be clearly identified.
- 3.5 Setting clear measurable outcomes and defining key indicators by which progress will be assessed is a recognised area for development within the Council and these Service Plans are part of the improvement journey to implement the Performance Management Framework. For some actions it can be difficult to identify a measurable outcome (e.g. a change in legislation that must be implemented or updating a policy framework). It can also be challenging where there is currently no clear baseline or benchmarking from which informed targets and reasonable steps forward these can be developed. Therefore, as far as possible efforts have been made to set measurable outcomes for service plan actions but in some cases outputs or milestones have been used so that it is still possible to measure whether the action has been progressed as intended. In other areas, further work will be required to refine outcomes in future. So, for example, in some actions, strategic and delivery planning is not yet concluded and so performance indicators are not yet agreed. Where possible in such cases milestones are provided.
- 3.6 A summary of progress is given below based on the annual reviews carried out for each of the service areas and in so far as the activity is relevant for the remit of this committee. Elements that are directly relevant for other committee remits are shown in italics.
- 3.7 Reference is also made to the report to Moray Council on 28 February 2024 when the Council agreed the Corporate Plan for 2024-2029 and that the approach to delivery and performance management through service and strategic plans, which contain specific actions that support the delivery of priority areas in the new council corporate plan. This plan focusses on the period from April 2024 to April 2025.

## 2023/24 Updates

### 3.8 **Economic Growth and Development**

#### 3.8.1 **Progress on planned work (success)**

- Public Bodies Climate Change Report approved
- [Total £896K](#) secured from external funds to improve town centres, £317K of which target out with Elgin helping business start-ups, bringing vacant/derelict property back into use, heritage programmes and environmental improvements, plus funding for a Town Centre Officer post
- Full Business Case achieved for Moray Growth Deal Housing Mix delivery
- Achieved 84% on-target Route Map Net Zero actions
- Launched Moray Climate Action Network
- Forty-four staff and six elected members have been trained and gained certification as Carbon Literate
- *Planning Performance Framework achieved 14 green and 1 amber key markers in feedback report from Scottish Government*

#### 3.8.2 **Progress on planned work (areas for development/not delivered)**

- Focus on engagement with schools to increase Route Map net Zero actions on target

#### 3.8.3 **Planned focus in new plan (reflecting above and challenges to come)**

- Implementation and conclusion of Moray Growth Deal Housing Mix delivery phase
- Climate Change Plan and Routemap to Net Zero
- *Community Safety Action Plan*
- Proposals for Future Just Transition Bids
- *Review of Developer Obligations*
- *Review of Planning Performance Framework*
- *Prepare guidance document for Policy 11 c) in National Planning Framework 4*
- Community Wealth Building Strategy Action Plan

### 3.9 **Housing and Property Services**

#### 3.9.1 **Progress on planned work (success)**

- Smarter Working project rollout complete with fully operational hybrid meeting rooms
- *Repair feedback from handheld devices increased*
- *Reduction in complaints related to Repairs, Capital and Maintenance*
- *Revised Rent Setting Policy approved after extensive consultation with tenants*
- *Delivery of revised Housing Need and Demand Assessment and accreditation as 'robust and credible' by Scottish Government*

- *Significant improvement in the management of void properties, with reduced turnaround time and loss of rental income*
- Response to emergent issues with Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), with assessments of corporate buildings and remedial programme required for Forres Academy
- Assumed responsibility for Refugee Resettlement activities, significant community work with asylum seekers and integrating Afghan and Ukrainian households

### **3.9.2 Progress on planned work (areas for development/not delivered)**

- Stores and depots review - OBC has been delayed due to capacity issues but approved in April
- *Improvement of housing stock, progress made and accelerated programme developed for monitoring*

### **3.9.3 Planned focus in new plan (reflecting above and challenges to come)**

- *Continued reduction in complaints related to repairs*
- *Tenant Survey undertaken for 2024*
- *Development of the Strategic Commissioning Plan with IJB*
- *Review of Gas Servicing ICT systems*

## **3.10 Environmental and Commercial Services**

### **3.10.1 Progress on planned work (success)**

- Planned increase in EV charging points and EV Strategy complete
- Successful migration to web-based system for Road Maintenance with improved service efficiencies identified
- Joint Energy from Waste Project complete and site fully operational
- Active Travel projects delivered through Participatory Budgeting
- Core Paths Action Plan in place with recruitment of Core Path Ranger complete
- Recycling rate of 57.79% confirmed with Moray ranked highest amongst all Scottish Local Authorities
- Planned self-assessment work using the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) complete

### **3.10.2 Progress on planned work (areas for development/not delivered)**

- Implementation of public use charging infrastructure remains ongoing with funding to be confirmed for the Pathfinder project
- Work continues on the Road Safety Plan with a final version expected quarter 1 2024/25
- Development of Buckie Harbour Masterplan remains ongoing due to inclusion of Just Transition work

### 3.10.3 Planned focus in new plan (reflecting above and challenges to come)

- Continue to deliver on actions in line with Climate Change strategy
- Continue to engage with communities through Participatory Budgeting
- Deliver planned infrastructure projects linked to Moray West Wind Farm and Buckie Harbour
- Key themes as follows:
  - Decarbonise transport / develop sustainable travel
  - Flood Risk Management
  - Promote Buckie Harbour for growth and development
  - Improve open space management
  - Improve infrastructure asset management
  - Procure efficient and effective school transport
  - Deliver efficient waste and recycling management

### Service Plans for 2024/25

- 3.11 Given the pressures across all services and the need to prioritise resources to the Council's priorities, services are focussing on essential service delivery and developments and taking account of the planned review of the Corporate Plan when undertaking service planning. The three Service Plans are attached to this report as follows:

**Appendix 1:** Economic Growth and Development

**Appendix 2:** Housing & Property

**Appendix 3:** Environmental and Commercial

## 4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

The Service Plans were informed by the LOIP and the Council's Corporate Plan.

### b) Policy and Legal

Statutory requirements and Council policies are considered by managers when preparing service plans for the year ahead.

### c) Financial implications

No additional financial resources beyond those previously reported to service committees are required to support the Service Plans.

### d) Risk Implications

Up to date risk registers are maintained and considered as part of the service planning process.

### e) Staffing Implications

Service Plans are integral to good management practice including workforce planning and assisting with communication about work plans for staff, identifying priorities and matching staff time to the Council's priorities.

However, there are a number of areas for development that have been identified where there are concerns about the availability of resources to deliver the required outcomes within an acceptable period of time. It may be necessary to report back to committee to consider resources or re-prioritisation of work to ensure adequate progress on these key priorities.

Workforce Planning takes place with service management teams and includes review of workforce data such as turnover and absence, identification of key posts for planning, recruitment issues and plans, training and development requirements in the context of council and service priorities. It is also of note that the services are carefully prioritising work to reflect the restricted capacity of their teams. This is exacerbated by hard to fill vacancies, absence, and pressing operational work that cannot be re-prioritised.

**f) Property**

There are no property implications arising from this report.

**g) Equalities**

Managers consider equalities issues for staff and service users when assessing current service delivery arrangements and future requirements.

**h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

There are no climate change and biodiversity impacts from this report.

**i) Consultations**

Heads of Service have worked with their management teams to prepare the Service Plans attached as **Appendices 1-3** and have contributed to the updates in this report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 The Service Plan has been prepared identifying the service priorities targeted for 2024/25. In preparing the plan, managers have taken account of risk, performance data (including inspections and Best Value), the LOIP, the Corporate Plan and other relevant factors such as audit and inspection outcomes. The Service Plan identifies the resources allocated to each service and how these will be utilised to deliver core service requirements and improvements.**

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Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-1108985784-929 / SPMAN-1108985784-943  
SPMAN-1108985784-944 / SPMAN-1108985784-932