



Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 02 October 2019

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a **Special Meeting** of the **Policy and Resources Committee** is to be held at **Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Wednesday, 02 October 2019** at **11:00**.

BUSINESS

- 1 **Sederunt**
- 2 **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests ***
- 3 **Corporate Services Service Plans 2019-20** 5 - 32
Report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services)
- 4 **Community Asset Transfer Request (2015 Act) Forres** 33 - 38
Town Hall
Report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services)

Any person attending the meeting who requires access assistance should contact customer services on 01343 563217 in advance of the meeting.

GUIDANCE NOTES

- * **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.

THE MORAY COUNCIL

Policy and Resources Committee

SEDERUNT

Councillor Aaron McLean (Chair)
Councillor Graham Leadbitter (Depute Chair)
Councillor George Alexander (Member)
Councillor Frank Brown (Member)
Councillor John Cowe (Member)
Councillor Lorna Creswell (Member)
Councillor John Divers (Member)
Councillor Tim Eagle (Member)
Councillor Ryan Edwards (Member)
Councillor Donald Gatt (Member)
Councillor Louise Laing (Member)
Councillor Shona Morrison (Member)
Councillor Sonya Warren (Member)

Clerk Name: Moira Patrick
Clerk Telephone: 01343 563016
Clerk Email: moira.patrick@moray.gov.uk



**REPORT TO: SPECIAL POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON 2
OCTOBER 2019**

SUBJECT: CORPORATE SERVICES: SERVICE PLANS 2019-20

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To invite the Committee to consider the Corporate Services Department Service Plans for 2019-20.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (34) 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 It is recommended that Committee consider and approve the Service Plans within the Corporate Services department.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Service planning is undertaken annually to set out the strategic direction for services over the coming months. Typically, actions will be with some level of detail and certainty in the short term but work will continue beyond a 12 month period and will feature in plans for more than a single year. The service planning process takes into account a range of factors used by managers to identify changes required to services i.e.

- Council priorities
- Moray Council corporate plan
- Resource changes
- Legislative changes
- Council policy changes
- Risk
- Customer and staff engagement
- Quality, performance and self-evaluation

- 3.2 Service plans represent a demonstration of good management practice. In this regard the Corporate Management Team has established minimum standards for services as noted below. A standard template for monitoring this is in use
- Self-assessment (Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF)) will be updated at least every third year;
 - Risk registers will be prepared and updated at least annually.
- 3.3 As well as identifying improvements, the service plan framework requires an assessment of the output and outcome requirements for services based on the Council's priorities, statutory and regulatory requirements and other relevant factors 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. A summary of progress is given below for each of the service areas.

2018/19 Updates

- 3.4 Financial Services: Highlights of the last year have been successful support to major projects, particularly NESS Waste Project and Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of town halls and community centres, and a successful outcome to the VAT review for leisure services, which will generate significant savings for the Council. The council's budget setting process was supported and a balanced budget approved by Council. Not all targeted improvements to budget monitoring have been achieved – these are partly dependent on other departments and are being carried forward in the Accountancy team plan. Due to staffing resources, limited progress was made on the Procurement Action Plan.
- 3.5 The other area where progress was limited was Phase 2 of the new HR/Payroll system. This joint project with HR is carried forward in the Financial Services service plan for 2019/20 in recognition of the projects cross-service importance to the council. If the recommended amendments to the council's structure are approved the Financial Service contribution to this project will be much smaller in scope.
- 3.6 Human Resources (HR) progress was largely dominated by the impact of budget savings whereby a reduced workforce plan was agreed as a result of this. Progress was achieved with the successful management of the workforce implications of the budget savings, continued support to managers for change through restructuring and service redesign, progressing the leadership and management development activity using an increasingly collaborative approach and continuation of the employee engagement and culture work.
- 3.7 The biggest challenges have been managing the impact of budget savings within the HR service while supporting the workforce related work to deliver the savings in other services, as well as dealing with an increased level of employee relations issues and more complex employment issues.
- 3.8 Looking forward, the HR Service will be continuing to support the improvement, modernisation and transformation work being undertaken within and across services under the various themes of the workforce strategy and

plan with a particular emphasis on ensuring the workforce is equipped to work with an increased focus on customer service, digital and being prepared for change.

- 3.9 ICT Services: A number of areas were progressed in the last plan including the new service desk managing 2,000 calls per month and the closure of the digital public services project which has introduced a secure personal account and approximately 100 online services benefitting the customer and providing efficiencies within the service. Some areas of the planned work had to be reviewed to avoid duplication of effort such as the acceleration of the virtual desktop programme which was suspended in favour of the Windows 10 migration which is required for compliance reasons. Regular re-prioritising of workload was also required to reflect shifting priorities of the council such as the introduction of charges for garden waste permits.
- 3.10 This was a challenging year for the ICT Service coping with the impact of previous budget savings within the ICT Service, dealing with uncertainties as work progressed on a major restructuring within the service and responding to other service requirements arising from their own budget savings.
- 3.11 The nature of the ICT workload is unlikely to change significantly in the coming months and years as technology underpins much of the work contributing to the Improvement & Modernisation agenda of the council. This, together with the need to comply with new and emerging standards related to ICT, particularly cyber resilience, will be a major focus for the ICT Service and plans will need to be fairly fluid as the Council moves forward.
- 3.12 Legal, Democratic and Customer Services managed to achieve the majority of goals which were identified. Notable achievements were: delivering most of the agreed budget savings within time; improving collection rates for Council Tax; improving turnaround times for benefits applications; and successful implementation of IT systems to improve efficiency including IDOX for licencing and a Committee Management Information System (CMIS).
- 3.13 Progress was made on encouraging digital self-service for Council Tax but there is still work to be done in this area which has been taken forward into next year's plan as part of the Transformation programme.
- 3.14 Some goals were not achieved as planned including digitisation of burial grounds and benchmarking for legal services, largely due to factors outwith the control of the Council. They have been taken forward onto this year's service plan.
- 3.15 Looking forward it is anticipated that a significant amount of time will be spent on the budget setting process. So it is important to be realistic about what can be achieved and to concentrate efforts on goals which align with the Council's priorities or improve efficiency.
- 3.16 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 taking account of the direction in the new corporate plan. On this basis, the 4 service Plans for Corporate Services are attached to this report as follows:

- Appendix 1: Financial Services
- Appendix 2: HR
- Appendix 3: ICT Services
- Appendix 4: Legal and Democratic Services

3.17 It should be noted that the Internal Audit function submits an annual plan and progress reports to Audit and Scrutiny Committee. The annual plan for 2019-20 was submitted to a meeting of Moray Council on 28 June 2018 (paragraph 16 of the Minute refers).

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 updated Corporate Plan. Primarily Corporate Services seek to support the achievement of council and community planning partnership priorities. As such, the services lead on a number of the organisational development and resource planning aspects of the 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 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.

(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) Consultations

The Corporate and Senior Management Team has been consulted on the key issues identified within the Corporate Services service plans. Any comments received have been reflected in the report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Service plans have been prepared for the services provided by the Corporate Services Department identifying the improvements targeted for the year to September 2020. In preparing the plans managers have taken account of risk, self-evaluation (PSIF), the LOIP, the Corporate Plan and other relevant factors such as audit outcomes. The service plans identify the resources allocated to each service and how these will be utilised to deliver core service requirements as well as improvements during the year.**

Author of Report: Denise Whitworth

Background Papers: None

Ref: H:\Management\Acting Director\Reports\P&R\Service Plan 2019-20 (02-10-19).docx

<p>Service Definition: FINANCIAL SERVICES Financial services provide the following support services across the Council, to Grampian Valuation Joint Board and – in partnership with NHS colleagues - contribute towards the support of Moray Integration Joint Board:</p> <p>Accountancy, Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable, Banking, Insurance, Payroll, Procurement, Treasury Management</p>	
<p>Service Resources: FTE 54.8 Budget: Capital £nil. Revenue £1,641,000.</p>	
What priorities have we identified for 2019/20?	What evidence did we use to identify these priorities?
<p>Strengthen the financial planning process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and develop the council's financial strategy Agree a medium term (3 years) financial plan 	<p>Corporate Plan and audit recommendation</p>
<p>Implement legislative / regulatory changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making Tax Digital / CIS reverse charge IFRS 16 	<p>These are requirements which the council has no choice but to comply with and which will involve significant work to ensure compliance.</p>
<p>Support major projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare NESS energy from waste project Moray Growth Deal Mainstream Participatory Budgeting Community Asset Transfer (CAT) 	<p>These are all major council projects which require financial support – they link to various National and Corporate priorities. Finance role will to a certain extent be dependent on the project plan for each project.</p>
<p>Implement external audit recommendations</p>	<p>As agreed with auditor and reported to members</p>
<p>Implement the Procurement Strategic Action Plan</p>	<p>A process of continuous improvement, this has links to improving the council's financial planning</p>
<p>Continue to develop the new HR / Payroll system</p>	<p>Brought forward from 2018/19</p>

Strategic Outcome	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcomes measures	Completion target	Lead	Priority Rating (1 high 3 low and 4 for ongoing, 5 for on hold?)
Corporate Plan	Creating a sustainable council					1
	Review and develop the council's financial strategy	Financial planning set in a longer term context.	Draft Financial Strategy approve by the council	October 2019	LP	1
	Agree a medium term (3 years) financial plan	Financial planning set in a longer term context, capital projects have a longer agreed lead-in period so can preparatory work can be done without the risk of being abortive.	Balanced budget for each of three years with a sustainable budget at end of three year period.	February 2020	LP	1
	Economic Development					
	Support the Moray Growth Deal	Dependent on project lead.	Dependent on project lead.	Dependent on MGD profile	LP	1
	Empowering Communities					
	Participatory Budgeting (PB)	Successful implementation of PB projects within the community	1% of budget (as defined by CoSLA) allocated via PB process	31 March 2021	PC	2
	Continue to provide advice and support to Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process	Sufficient time is prioritised to support CAT process successfully	CATs approved by Members and responsibility for asset transferred to Community/Group	Dependent on individual applications	PC	2

Service Outcome	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcomes measures	Completion target	Lead	Priority Rating (1 high 3 low and 4 for ongoing, 5 for on hold?)
Implement legislative / regulatory changes	Making Tax Digital/CIS Reverse Charge	Full compliance with HMR&C requirements.	Implementation of Financial Management system new "Business Tax Portal" Acceptance by HMRC of our submissions	Stage 1 – Oct 19 Stage 2 – April 20	DB	1
	IFRS 16	Fully compliant accounts.	Audit opinion.	June 2021	DO'S	1
Support major projects	Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare	Dependent on ELC plan.	Dependent on ELC plan.	Dependent on ELC plan.	LP	1
	NESS	Dependent on NESS plan.	Dependent on NESS plan.	Dependent on NESS plan.	PC	1
Implement external audit recommendations	Implement the agreed actions from the audit report.	Dependent on finalised report.	Dependent on finalised report.	Dependent on finalised report.	DO'S	2
Implement the Procurement Strategic Action Plan	Implement the actions identified as priority improvements by the Plan	Various improvements to project outputs, including communication, market engagement, contract management	Increase in performance as measured by the PCIP (every second year)	2020 – date to be determined by assessor (SXL)	DB	4
Continue to develop the new HR / Payroll system	The joint Development Group (HR, Payroll, ICT and Accountancy) to lead the implementation of the directions from the Project Board	Progress with the delivery of long standing project aims	Project Board to review progress against plan and to review efficiencies as they are delivered	Project targets	DB	3

Service Definition: The HR Service provides professional advice to ensure compliance with relevant legislation, best practice and industry standards to support the council in delivering its corporate priorities. The four main functions are: HR professional advisory service, corporate employment administration function, corporate health and safety and organisational development.							
Service Resources: 31.97 FTE							
Budget: Capital £000: Revenue £000: 2,063							
What have we identified for improvement in 2019/20?		What evidence did we use to identify this improvement?					
1. Workforce Transformation and Change		1. Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council that provides valued services to our communities 2. Corporate Workforce Strategy and Plan 3. Improvement and Modernisation Programme 4. Management of workforce implications of revenue budget savings 5. Feedback from Trades Union representatives, workforce and managers 6. Employee Survey results 7. Feedback from Engagement and Culture work					
2. Employee Engagement and Culture							
3. Leadership Development and Capacity							
4. Recruitment and Skills Development							
4. Strategic (Outcome?) Link	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcomes measures	Completion target	Lead	Priority Rating (1 high 3 low 4 ongoing 5 on hold)	
4.1 Workforce Transformation and Change: <i>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</i>							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	4.1.1	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	Satisfaction with change management from employees and trade unions for each change	As required	H/HR&I CT/HR M	1
	4.1.2	Work in partnership to support the IJB on the integration of health and social care	<u>HR</u> Workforce management arrangements in place per plan for 1. Continued HR support to partnership 2. Productive staff/TU partnership working 3. Recruitment and resourcing 4. Workforce Performance and Reporting 5. Policies	90% of plan completed	Work plan in development timescales tbc	SHRA	1

			<p>Health & Safety Clarity over how risks will be controlled in a joint working environment</p> <p>Improved oversight and management of the Health and safety risks in the joint environment.</p>	<p>A rolling safety audit programme to MH&SC in place</p> <p>Use of the NHS safety inspection form rolled out to MH&SC premises</p>	To be confirmed	SH&SA	1
<p>4.2 Employee Culture, Engagement/Morale and Motivation: <i>continue to develop effective communication and engagement across the workforce to sustain and improve engagement in a challenging environment and continue to develop a positive workforce culture.</i></p>							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	4.2.1	Implement actions to improve and promote a positive workforce culture and improve employee involvement and influence in the workplace	<p>Morale is good, people are proud to work for Moray Council and would recommend it to others</p> <p>Positive, trusted working environment is provided where employees confident that the council listens and tackles issues, including bullying and harassment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to address and improve issues that emerged in 2019 survey 2. Address issues of workload management 3. Enhance people management skills of all managers and supervisors 4. Continue to develop communications to ensure these are open and honest 5. Improve workforce perception of role of elected members 	<p>Improvement in results of pulse surveys</p> <p>Positive feedback from targeted services, workforce and workforce representatives</p>	Mar 2020	H/HR&I CT	1
<p>4.3 Developing Leadership Capacity: <i>prepare and develop current and future leaders to meet the demands of local government of the future to ensure the continuous improvement of services</i></p>							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a	4.3.1	Implement re-designed leadership development to ensure it develops the skills and	Managers developed to lead challenging agenda and council prepared for the future	Courses in place and feedback positive	Mar 2020	ODM	1

sustainable council		behaviours necessary for the corporate and strategic direction and leadership the council requires	1. Implement revised programme to meet organisational requirements				
	4.3.2	Continue to work to enhance management activity and consistency	Improved consistency of management practice and increase commitment to employee management and engagement Effective implementation of training to support Moray Management Methods	Improved results in pulse surveys and other forms of workforce feedback Positive feedback from managers attending MMM training Changes in practice are noticed (e.g. increase in ERDPs) Regular updates to Personnel Forum	Mar 2020	ODM	1
	4.3.3	Provide elected member support, training and development required for effective leadership of the council	Elected members are developed to ensure effective leadership skills and behaviours required for political leadership 1. Develop strategy for development 2. Implement plan to deliver strategy	Elected member development evidenced	Dec 2020	ODM	1
4.4 Workforce/Employee Development: <i>ensure that employees have the skills, competencies and experience required and are prepared to meet current and future requirements</i>							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	4.4.1	Develop the quality of the employee review experience, while continuing to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to participate in a review process on at least an annual basis	Employee review and development is addressed across the whole workforce and participation rates continue to increase	90% of erdps and pr&d completed	Mar 2020	ODM	1
	4.4.2	Review Management Appraisal Framework	Management Appraisal Framework to be reviewed to reflect experience and best practice and ensure optimum performance management and ongoing development	Framework produced and positive feedback received	Mar 2020	ODM	1

5. Service Level Outcomes or Priorities	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcome Measures	Completion Target	Lead	Priority rating	
5.1 Health and Well-being: <i>pro-actively support the health and well-being of employees</i>							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	5.1.1	Manage risks well by implementing our health and safety system effectively	Improved quality and practical usability of risk assessments in higher risk services Rolling programme of audits of the health and safety arrangements in the higher risk services or services with specific safety problems (as determined by the H&S team)	3 Risk assessments reviewed from each of the higher risk areas in rolling programme 3 Toolbox talks reviewed in selected higher risk areas 3 Internal safety inspection arrangements reviewed in selected higher risk areas	Mar 2020	H/HR&I CT / SH&SA	1
	5.1.2	Ensure the Council has a suitable policy framework for managing health and safety	Compliance with legislation, guidance, improved safety record, reduced risks	Complete specified policy reviews Increased use of corporate safety management system by managers and staff Reduced number of health and safety related incidents	Mar 2020	ODM / SH&SA	2
	5.1.3	Contractor control	Managers and supervisors fully understand responsibilities related to contractor control Property Service assisted in monitoring the safety performance of framework contractors.	Spot checks of maintenance and project contract works. Greater awareness among Council staff of the need for contractor control Review of the arrangements included in last years' service plan	Mar 2020	SH&SA	2
5.2 Workforce and Succession Planning: Address workforce issues in relation to demographic changes and skill shortages and develop strategies to address the consequences							

Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	5.2.1	Work with services on specific challenges	Services are supported with specific challenges e.g. Early Learning and Childcare	Specific initiatives implemented as required Positive feedback received from services	As required	HRM	3
5.3 Recruitment and Retention: <i>ensure that Council Services are as well-resourced as possible by making the Moray employment package as attractive as possible and deploying appropriate recruitment strategies</i>							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	5.3.1	Consider recruitment and retention activities to promote employment opportunities and profile of Moray Council	Attractive presentation of Moray Council as an employer	Increased number of candidates (who meet criteria) for identified hard to fill posts	Mar 2020	SHRA	2
5.4 Reward and Recognition: <i>have in place fair and competitive pay and conditions that are recognised as such and are free of bias</i>							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	5.4.1	Continue to monitor the long term impact on the pay structure arising from the living wage and other pay related issues	Council prepared should action be required	Oct 19: Research and background work on historical issues, current spread of posts in grades completed and initial modelling work begun (HR & Accountancy) Dec 19: First draft models and costs reviewed and options appraisal developed Jan 20: Options considered by CMT and preferred option chosen Mar 20: Detailed project plan agreed	Ongoing	H/HR&I CT	1
	5.4.2	Undertake equal pay audit	Assessment of extent of pay equality issues within the workforce	Audit completed and action plan prepared to address any issues that emerge	Mar 2022	HRM	3
5.5 Other Actions							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable	5.5.1	Employment Policies – rolling review of policies (and development of new)	Employment policy areas prioritised and addressed to ensure council employment framework is current and appropriate.	90% of policies produced and agreed per plan	Mar 2020	SHRA	3

council	5.5.2	Respond to changes in legislation and national policy development	Council determines approach to new developments and information is communicated to managers and workforce as appropriate and incorporated into relevant training	90% of planned work completed	As required	HRM	3
	5.5.3	OD support to services as required	OD support provided that supports services to achieve their outcomes: (i) reduction in violence and aggression as whole school approach is piloted	OD plans produced and implemented	Mar 2020	ODM	3
	5.5.4	Information/Performance	Performance and service information is relevant and current providing useful source of reference, guidance and support	75% of planned work completed	Mar 2020	H/HR&I CT	3
5.6 On Hold							
Corporate Plan: Working towards a sustainable council	5.6.1	Develop and implement the corporate approach to apprenticeships and other schemes aimed at young workers	Address future skills gaps Contribute to the development of the younger workforce	Project on hold, continue with current approach meantime.	On hold	H/HR&I CT	5
	5.6.2	Work with Educational Services to develop recruitment strategies (both long and short term) for the improvement of Teacher recruitment	Improve the supply of quality candidates into the Moray teaching workforce in order to reduce number of long term vacancies in teacher posts in primary, secondary, promoted posts	Increased retention of NQTs moving into longer term appointments Reduction in number of repeat advertisements for i) teacher posts and ii) promoted posts Reduced reliance on short term temporary cover arrangements Reduced number of long term vacancies	On hold	SHRA	5

Service Plan Template

1. Service Definition: The service focuses on leveraging the maximum benefits from our ICT investment and ensuring that we have a sound ICT infrastructure in place to support the Council's strategic and service priorities. The service provides procurement of systems/services, provision of equipment, such as desktop PCs desktop, laptops and smartphones, implementation of solutions, compliance, application and infrastructure support.						
2. Service Resources: 45 FTE (figures as of 31/03/2019) Budget: Capital £000: 1,286 Revenue £000: 2,674						
3. What have we identified for improvement in 2019/20?		What evidence did we use to identify this improvement? Please add benchmark information wherever available and relevant to the improvement.				
Transformation of council services		Corporate plan – Work towards a financially stable council that provides valued services to our communities ICT & Digital Strategy Improvement and Modernisation Programme Strategy for use of ICT in schools Emerging national direction for ICT				
Decision support solutions						
Legislative compliance						
Forward planning						
4. Strategic Outcome or Priority	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcome measures	Completion target	Lead	Priority Rating (1 high 3 low and 4 for ongoing, 5 for on hold?)
Corp Plan: Sustainable council	4.1 Transformation - Expand and enhance the provision of flexible and mobile working within the council.	Flexible workstyles reviewed and criteria set for establishing the device allocation to maximise efficiencies arising from flexible and mobile working across council services including the potential for property rationalisation.	a) Increased number of staff utilising virtual desktops b) Increased number of flexible working staff c) Reduction in number of fixed workstation requirements.	Mar 2020	IS MGR (DM)	1
Corp Plan: Sustainable council	4.2 Transformation - Establish a digital culture within the council.	Adopt a recognised standard for essential digital skills and make training material available to staff.	a) Staff survey reporting increased confidence in the technology they are asked to use.	Sep 2020	TL (AD)	1

Corp Plan: Sustainable council	4.3 Transformation - Provide shared access to systems for Integrated Health and Social Care	IHSC staff can access prioritised systems	a) Agreed list of systems accessible to IHSC staff regardless of network.	Mar 2020	TL (MA)	1
Corp Plan: Sustainable council	4.4 Transformation - Extend the availability of online services available to the parents of school children and provide a single view of their transactions with the council via the customer portal.	Implementation of online services for parents	Demonstrate an increased use of the following online services a) Absence reporting b) report cards c) Annual data checks d) Parents evening bookings e) Subject choices	Aug 2020	TL (AD)	1
Corp Plan: Sustainable council	4.5 Transformation - Extend the availability of online services available to Integrated Children's Services and provide improved access to services via the council web site and customer portal.	Implementation of online services for staff and clients to deliver improved outcomes	a) Demonstrate a shift of from face to face to telephone and online b) Reduce the volume of white mail c) Reduce the travel costs associated with staff meetings and client visits d) Consistent approach across the service area e) 24/7 access to services where possible	Sep 2020	TL (AD)	1
Corp Plan: Sustainable council	4.6 Transformation – Implementation and promotion of Video Conferencing	Staff have easy access to video conferencing and use of this technology increases.	a) Infrastructure reviewed b) Documentation and promotional material produced c) Baseline established for measuring increased use	Feb 2020	TL (MA)	1
Corp Plan: Sustainable council	4.7 Forward planning – Schools strategy development	Strategy prepared defining how the use of ICT will deliver improvements within schools.	a) Documented aims, objectives, investment requirements and benefits from the use of	Mar 2020	INF MGR (GC)	1

5. Service Level Outcomes or Priorities	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcome Measures	Completion Target	Lead	Priority rating
Transformation	5.1 - Further develop the intranet to provide secure access to all staff and to promote the intranet as a staff engagement vehicle.	Improved intranet facility with a clear focus on corporate communication that support the council's culture and the employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide secure access to interchange for all staff and underlying content b) Noticeboard functionality opened up to all council staff c) All staff have the facility to subscribe to alerts for council services 	Jan 2020	TL (MG)	1
Transformation	5.2 - Schools infrastructure roll out.	To ensure technology is available to suit long term educational requirements. (Year 4 of a 5 year programme.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 115 Interactive panels b) 87 wireless aerials 	Dec 2019	INF MGR (GC)	1
Decision support	5.3 – Introduce new data dashboards to provide visual representation of management information	Improved access to accurate and timely information to enable informed decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A suite of datasets identified for inclusion within a digital dashboard environment 	Jan 2021	TL (MG)	2
Decision support	5.4 – Introduce automated system monitoring arrangements for our online services	Monitoring tools installed and configured to monitor customer service solutions to deliver regular performance reports and major system alerts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Daily reports produced. b) Alerts for major performance issues 	Oct 2021	TL (MG)	2
Compliance	5.5 – Review ICT security policy	ICT infrastructure and systems are secure and meet the required accreditation standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Gaps in current policy identified b) ICT Security Policy Updated 	Mar 2020	TL (MA)	1

Compliance	5.6 – Upgrade the Microsoft Windows operating system and office productivity toolset.	Migration to Microsoft Windows 10 and Office 2016 to meet required accreditation standards.	a) All Microsoft windows devices have been configured and migrated: - 1500 Corporate devices - 4500 Education devices	Jan 2020	IS MGR (DM)	1
Compliance	5.7 – Review our business continuity arrangements to mitigate against potential risk to position the council to deliver essential functions in the event of a disaster.	Development of a business continuity plan to ensure that services continue to operate during emergencies or disasters.	a) Business continuity plan documented.	Nov 2019	INF MGR (GC)	1
Compliance	5.8 – Update web site design to ensure they meet accessibility standards	Web sites managed by the ICT Service meet accessibility standards and compliance achieved.	a) 100% of all web sites meet the accessibility standard	Sep 2020	TL (MG)	1
Compliance	5.9 – Cyber resilience	Implement measures to ensure the Council achieves Cyber essentials plus accreditation for the corporate network and Cyber essentials for the schools network.	a) Cyber essentials plus accreditation achieved for corporate network b) Cyber essentials achieved for schools network.	Nov 2020	TL (MA)	1
Compliance	5.10 – Telephony and Contact Centre system upgrade	Implement new telephony and Contact Centre solution to address end of life support issues and to ensure that the solution meets the required accreditation standards.	a) Phase 1 - Core telephony and Contact Centre solution implemented. b) Phase 2 telephony systems implemented.	Mar 2021	TL (MA)	1
Forward planning	5.11 - Consider the potential for the Internet of Things to deliver improvements to service delivery and efficiencies.	Benefits of implementing solutions based on the Internet of Things identified and incorporated into forward plans.	a) Development of a business case for the adoption of Internet of Things.	Oct 2020	TL (GS)	3

Forward planning	5.12 – Investigate options to deliver efficiencies through the adoption of “cloud” / “online” services where they comply with PSN requirements, provide cost effective solutions and do not introduce unnecessary risk to the operation of the council	Benefits of adopting cloud based solutions are identified and incorporated into forward plans.	a) Development of cloud assessment / readiness document.	Mar 2020	TL (MA)	3
Forward planning	5.13 – Content management system review	Feasibility study conducted into the options available for replacing our Web Content Management System.	a) Development of a business case for the replacement of our web content management solution.	Oct 2020	TL (MG)	3
Forward planning	5.14 – Office 365 review	Feasibility study conducted into the use of Office 365.	a) Development of a business case for the potential deployment of Office 365.	Jun 2020	INF MGR (GC)	2
Forward planning	5.15 – Review of Artificial Intelligence	Feasibility study conducted into the potential for Artificial Intelligence to be used in the council.	a) Development of a business case exploring the potential adoption of artificial intelligences.	Mar 2021	TL (GS)	3
Forward planning	5.16 – Review of Chatbot technology	Feasibility study conducted into the use of chatbots	a) Development of a business case exploring the potential adoption of chatbots.	Mar 2021	TL (MG)	3
Forward planning	5.17 – Deliver the ICT action plans	Manage the Infrastructure and Information systems projects	b) Complete the information system requests c) Complete the infrastructure enhancements	Mar 2021	IS MGR (DM)/ INF MGR (GC)	4

Service Definition: Public services: Customer Services (contact centre and access points), Revenues, NDR, Benefits, Money Advice, Licensing, Registrars Service, Elections Support services: Legal (inc Monitoring Officer) , Licensing, Committee services. Elected Members support, Mail room.	
Service Resources: 135 FTE Budget: Revenue £4,504,000:	
What priorities have we identified for 2019/20?	What evidence did we use to identify these priorities?
1. Progress Transformation projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing customer services • Digital • Constitutional documents 	Requirement in Corporate Plan contribute to financial sustainability of Council
2. Continue to support project work in other services arising from strategic priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure review • Development plan • Sustainable education review/ new builds • Early years education expansion • Poverty 	Central service input required to implement projects, requires to be prioritised alongside our routine transactional work.
3. Support areas of significant increased activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community asset transfer • Planning inquiries for windfarms • Tourism bid • Brown bins • Budget changes impact 	Anticipated spikes in workload need to be balanced alongside routine transactional work.
4. Implement, maintain and review software systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burials software • Council tax/NDR/Benefits • Licensing/Idox mobile app 	Requirement to maintain service efficiency

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lagan customer modules • Sharepoint • Telephony 						
<p>5. Consolidate services following staffing reductions and look for opportunities for further efficiencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate new legal services structure • Re-locate registrars in HQ • Consolidate sharepoint and customer support services and general management arrangements • Re-locate access point from Auchernack to Forres House • Consolidate Money Advice, Welfare Benefits, and Income maximisation services 	Requirement in Corporate Plan contribute to financial sustainability of Council					
Strategic Outcome	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcomes measures	Completion target	Lead	Priority Rating (1 high 3 low and 4 for ongoing, 5 for on hold?)
Corporate plan: financial sustainability of Council	Progress transformation projects					
	Analyse failure demand and identify measures to reduce this	Efficiencies and savings through economies of scale, simplified consistent processes and harnessing available technology	Action plan detailing potential savings Achieve the savings identified in the project mandate	Sept 19	EB	2
	Customer Services Redesign	Culture change in customer	Further measures to be	March 2021	EB	2

		service delivery towards enabling approach for most customers with supported service delivery for those who needed Single service for first point of contact.	detailed when business case is advanced. Achieve the savings identified in the project mandate			
	Governance Review	Effective council governance that: Reduces bureaucracy Streamlines decision making process	Present alternative options to full Council future arrangements agreed Fewer reports to committee Reduced number of committee steps in decision tree	October 19	AM	2
LOIP/Corporate Plan	Support strategic projects					
	Continue to provide advice and support projects such as property review, early years expansion, Schools admin review	Sufficient time is prioritised to support these projects to ensure their success.	Outcome measures will be detailed in the service plans for the lead services.	-	-	1
Service Outcome	Action	Planned Outcome	Outcomes measures	Completion target	Lead	Priority Rating (1 high 3 low and 4 for ongoing, 5 for on hold?)
	Support to areas of increased activity					
	Assist with transfer of Children's services to MIJB	Amend existing Integration Scheme and Council Scheme of Administration.	Revised integration Scheme approved by Scottish Government.	July 2020	AM	1

			Revised constitutional documents approved by Moray Council			
	Software systems					
	Council Tax	Reduce paper and phone. Increase online self-service	20% increase in contact on line per annum thereafter	April 2020	EB	3
	NDR – support refresh of Elgin bid and proposed new Moray Tourism Bid.	Collection of levy from businesses if ballots are successful	Implementation within agreed timescales	TBC	JT	3
	Registrars: finalise digitisation of burial grounds records.	Have records for all cemeteries online.	100% cemeteries online by April 2020	April 2020	MP	4
	Lagan system, Sharepoint and telephony systems	Installation of essential upgrades	Fully supported systems compatible with other complementing software	October 2020		
	Service Consolidation/efficiencies					
	Benefits – provision of shared space in Council offices for Social Security Scotland officers	SSS officers co-located in Council buildings.	Serviced desk space identified and re-charged.	Dec 2019	NM	2
	Re-locate Registrars service into HQ – [carried over from last year].	Registrars working from HQ building with adequate meeting space.	Free up current building for alternative use.	May 2020	MP	3
	Implement revised performance framework.	Better understanding and skills in outcome based planning	Improved indicators in future years' plans	May 2020	NP	3
	Develop process for forward planning and performance monitoring for corporate plan and LOIP.	Clear set of indicators and regular reporting to committee	Evidence of councillors scrutinising corporate performance	May 2020	NP	2
	Re-locate Access Point services into Forres House	Access Point services delivered from library facility within Forres House	Auchernack building freed up for alternative use New way of working piloted.	Nov 2019	EB	2
	Money advice, welfare benefits and Income Max services.	Re-badge as a joined up service	Improve access to related services	March 2020	NM	2

LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES - How we demonstrate continuous improvement

Legal		Committee		Registrars		Customer Services		Revenues		Benefits	
Date of last review	Date of next review	Date of last review	Date of next review	Date of last review	Date of next review	Date of last review	Date of next review	Date of last review	Date of next review	Date of last review	Date of next review

How we engage with our customers

Customer service excellence review	Jan-17	n/a	Dec-16	n/a	?	n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a
Customer satisfaction survey	Aug-17	Aug-20	Jul-13	Jul-17	Mar-17	Mar-20	Mar-17	Mar-20	N/A	Mar-20	N/A	Mar-20
Regular client/customer meetings	annual		n/a		Feb-18	Feb-20	ongoing		ongoing		ongoing	

How we demonstrate good governance

Annual budget review	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20
Regular reporting budget to Committee	quarterly		quarterly		quarterly		quarterly		quarterly		quarterly	
Departmental procurement action plan	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20	Feb-19	Feb-20
Team Plan	Jan-17	Jan-20			none	Feb-20	Dec-18	Dec-19	Dec-18	Dec-19	Dec-18	Dec-19

How we measure performance

Corporate (SOLACE) benchmarking	Dec-19	Dec-20	Dec-19	Dec-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service benchmarking	Dec-17	n/a	ongoing		NRS annual		informal		info sharing		n/a	
Review of performance Indicators	quarterly		quarterly		quarterly		quarterly		quarterly		quarterly	

How we demonstrate service improvement

PSIF review	Dec-17	Dec-20	Dec-17	Dec-20	Jan-19	Jan-22	n/a	Dec-20	n/a	Dec-20	n/a	Dec-20
Audit Scotland Inspection	n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		biennially	

How we engage with and develop our staff

Staff survey (corporate)	Jun-17	Sep-19	Jun-15	Sep-19	Jun-17	Sep-19	Jun-17	Sep-19	Jun-17	Sep-19	Jun-17	Sep-19
% staff ERDP	100%		100%		100%		76%		70%		100%	
Personal Development Plans/CPD	Oct-16	Oct-17	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	
Workforce planning	Jan-19	Jan-20	Jan-19	Jan-20	Jan-19	Jan-20	Jan-19	01/01/20	Jan-19	Jan-20	Jan-19	Jan-20
Regular team meetings	monthly		monthly		quarterly		monthly		monthly		monthly	

How we manage risk

Operational risk register	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20
Any additional Business Continuity Plan	n/a		n/a		Feb-19	Feb-20	n/a		n/a		n/a	
Health and Safety Risk Assessments	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	May-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-19	Mar-20



**REPORT TO: SPECIAL POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
ON 2 OCTOBER 2019**

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST (2015 ACT):
FORRES TOWN HALL**

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report invites the committee to consider a community asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 for the transfer of ownership of Forres Town Hall.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the committee in terms of Sections III(B)(16) and III(B)(59) of the council's Scheme of Administration relating to the management of common good and trust property and to the consideration of community asset transfer requests.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The committee is invited to:

- (i) approve the request to transfer ownership of Forres Town Hall to Forres Area Community Trust subject to the terms and conditions set out in section 5 of this report;**
- (ii) authorise the Legal Services Manager to apply to Elgin Sheriff Court for consent to sell the property to Forres Area Community Trust; and**
- (iii) note that, if the request is approved and unless otherwise agreed with the trust, it will have 6 months from the date of the decision notice to submit a formal offer to purchase the property from the council, failing which the agreement will have no further effect and the asset transfer process will come to an end.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 11 April 2018, Moray Council approved transitional arrangements aimed at enabling successful community asset transfers of seven of its town halls and

community centres (paragraph 6 of the Minute refers). These arrangements included entering into short term leases with eligible groups.

- 3.2 On 2 July 2018, Forres Area Community Trust (FACT) took entry to Forres Town Hall in accordance with the agreed transitional arrangements. On 21 June 2019, FACT submitted an asset transfer request under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 for the transfer of ownership of the town hall for a price of £75,000 being 50% of the building's market value. As the property is held on a common good title, the request also falls to be dealt with under Part 8 of the same Act.
- 3.3 In accordance with the Asset Transfer Request (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 and section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the asset transfer request was the subject of an 8-week public consultation, details of which together with the responses thereto are published on the council's website. The redacted submissions, representations and responses are available on the council's Committee Management System at <https://moray.cmis.uk.com/moray/CouncilandGovernance/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1541/Committee/5/Default.aspx>.
- 3.4 Forres Town Hall is held on a potentially inalienable common good title. Consequently, court consent would be required to transfer the asset.
- 3.5 The public consultation confirmed strong support from the local community for the requested transfer of the town hall to FACT.

4. ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 FACT's governance and financial management arrangements are considered to be strong and sustainable. Best value characteristics are in evidence in the proposal. Overall, the projected benefits are considered to be acceptable and could lead to value for money.
- 4.2 The projected benefits relate to economic development, regeneration and social wellbeing. They support the Local Outcome Improvement Plan priorities of developing a growing, diverse and sustainable economy, and empowering and connecting communities. They also support the Corporate Plan priorities of ensuring caring and healthy communities and encouraging economic development and growth.
- 4.3 The council's Estates Manager has advised that the estimated market value of the town hall could reasonably be stated as £150,000. The projected benefits of the proposal are considered to be commensurate with the requested discount of £75,000 on the market value.
- 4.4 There is a low risk of the presence of State Aid as the proposed service is considered to be local and, therefore, unlikely to affect intra-community trade among EU member states.

5. **TERMS OF TRANSFER**

- 5.1 If the recommendations are agreed, the following terms would apply to the transfer:
- (a) Subjects – the asset comprises Forres Town Hall, High Street, Forres;
 - (b) Price – the price payable would be £75,000.
 - (c) Existing Lease – the existing lease terms would apply until the date of the transfer;
 - (d) Fees/Expenses – each party would meet its own legal expenses in the processing of the transaction, including legal expenses and surveyors fees; and
 - (e) Other Terms – any other detailed terms agreed with the council's Legal Services Manager and Estates Manager.
- 5.2 FACT will have a right to request that the council reviews its decision if the request is refused, no decision is made by 21 December 2019, or the terms of the decision differ from those requested.

6. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

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

Where the property is held on a common good title, the interests of the inhabitants of the former burgh take precedence over the council's Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (LOIP). Nevertheless, transferring assets to the community supports the 10 Year Plan (LOIP) aim of creating more resilient and sustainable communities and is consistent with the Corporate Plan value of promoting community empowerment as a means of supporting communities to take on more responsibility. The council's corporate priority of working towards a financially stable council should be taken into consideration when dealing with requests for the transfer of an asset at less than market value.

(b) Policy and Legal

On 21 March 2017, this committee approved the following policy statement (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers).

“Moray Council recognises the important role that the transfer of property assets can play in empowering communities and strengthening their resilience. Where appropriate, the council will use the transfer of assets to give more control to communities and local people, inspire them to find local solutions to community needs, and as a means of helping communities become more sustainable in the long term. In determining all asset transfer requests, the council will have regard to the guidance provided by the Scottish Government in relation to asset transfer

requests made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, whether or not such requests are made under the provisions contained in the Act.”

Section 82(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires the council to agree to the asset transfer request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusing it.

Section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that before taking any decision to dispose of a common good property the council must first publish details of the proposed disposal. In publishing these details, the council must:

- (i) notify the relevant community council and any community body that is known to have an interest in the property, and
- (ii) invite those bodies to make representations in respect of the proposals.

In deciding whether or not to dispose of the property, the council must have regard to any representations made, whether by those invited or by some other relevant party.

In administering common good assets, the council is required by section 15(4) of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 to have regard to the interests of the inhabitants of the area to which the common good related prior to 16 May 1975. As Forres Town Hall is considered to be an inalienable common good asset, the council must also obtain the consent of the Sheriff Court in terms of Section 75(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 before it can be transferred.

Assets transferred to the community at less than market value must comply with the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010, which requires the council to be satisfied that the proposed transfer is reasonable and that the disposal is likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement within Moray of any of the following purposes:

- a) Economic Development,
- b) Regeneration,
- c) Public Health,
- d) Social Wellbeing, or
- e) Environmental Wellbeing.

Reasonableness in this context is taken to imply that the requested discount is the minimum necessary to allow the project to proceed and that it is commensurate with the likely benefits of the project.

(c) Financial Implications

The council's Estates Manager has advised that the estimated market value of the town hall could reasonably be stated as £150,000. A sale of the building for this sum would generate a capital receipt that would be invested to provide an annual income to Forres Common Good. In reaching its decision, the committee should consider whether the projected benefits to the Forres community from the transfer are commensurate with the requested discount of £75,000.

The costs of obtaining court consent to dispose of the building would amount to a minimum of £2,000. It is not possible to provide an accurate estimate of the potential costs involved as this would depend upon whether there are any objectors to the application. If there are no objectors and the court is satisfied with the process, it could be dealt with in a few months. However, if there are objections to the proposal then a period of 18 months might be more realistic. The costs would be met from the resultant capital receipt.

(d) Risk Implications

Project risks have been considered by FACT and appropriate actions identified to mitigate these. The risks of the project failing are considered to be low. In the event of its winding up or dissolution, FACT's constitution provides that any remaining assets would transfer to another community or charitable body approved by Scottish Ministers.

The transfer requires the consent of the Sheriff Court, which has the power to refuse or grant permission either with or without conditions. If permission is refused, the Council would be unable to recover its costs. In reaching its decision, the court is likely to take into consideration the level of community support for the proposed transfer.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property

The property implications are as detailed in this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required as agreeing to the asset transfer request would have no impact on council service delivery. The proposals are projected to have a positive socio-economic impact.

(h) Consultations

The members of the Asset Management Working Group's CAT Sub-Group*, Acting Head of Housing and Property, Legal Services Manager, Property Resources Manager, Estates Manager, Principal Accountant (P. Connor), Committee Services Officer (Caroline Howie), and Equal Opportunities Officer have been consulted and comments incorporated in the report.

(*Corporate Director (Corporate Services), Head of Development Services, and Head of Financial Services.)

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed transfer is likely to contribute the priorities set out in the council's Corporate Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

and that the projected benefits are sufficient to justify a disposal at less than market value.

7.2 It is considered that there are no reasonable grounds for refusing the request for a transfer of ownership, subject to court consent being granted.

Author of Report: Andrew Gray, Asset Management Coordinator
Background Papers: Held by author
Ref: CAT/059/ATR (2015 Act)