



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

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT (ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES) – PERIOD TO MARCH 2024

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

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 Council in terms of Section III (A) (4) of the Council's Scheme of Administration to monitor performance of the services within the Committee's remit in accordance with the Council's performance management framework.

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;**
- (ii) notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

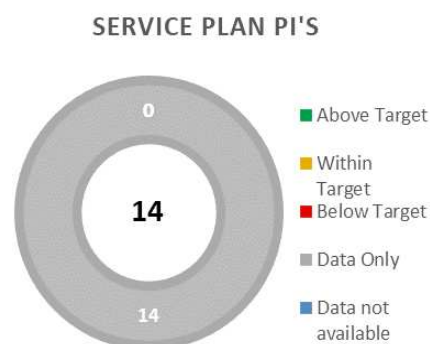
3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Moray 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. The Committee is invited to review progress to secure assurance that it is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.
- 4.2 The narrative included is by exception, links to Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Backing Papers of this report.
- 4.3 Latest Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Indicators covering 2022/23, initially published in February 2024, will be refreshed in June. The full suite can be viewed via the [LGBF Dashboard](#). In total, there were thirteen indicators covering Economic Development published, six of the indicators were ranked highly when compared nationally and eight indicators ranked highly in the top 4 when compared in our family group of 8 local authorities. Overall, results improved to a slightly greater extent than they worsened with results improving across seven indicators. Published indicators for this service have been incorporated within the relevant section of this report depending on whether used to evidence progress against strategic, service plan or service performance priorities. 2023/24 LGBF data will be available early 2025.
- 4.4 Scottish Local Authorities Development Group (SLAED) publish an annual report under the SLAED Indicators Framework. The report sets out a range of data and information to assist local authorities to evidence and publicise the contribution made through economic development activities, providing a basis for collating consistent data used to better understand impact and identify potential areas for improvement. In previous years, these indicators have been reported to this Committee separately report, however going forward these will be incorporated within backing tables where they evidence progress against strategic, service plan or service performance priorities, or otherwise included as an additional table to report performance over time.

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES		RAG
STRATEGIC LEVEL	Moray Growth Deal: Development and delivery of Housing Mix Delivery Project	90%
	Moray Growth Deal: Cultural Quarter Project	47%
	Climate Change and Biodiversity Route Map	75%
SERVICE LEVEL	Identify route for training local Environmental Health Officers and associated budget needs	33%
	Maximise external funding for Council priorities including Town Centre Improvement works and employability.	70%
	Town Centre Improvement Delivery Plan and LDP 2027.	55%
	External funding achieved for delivery of strategic plans associated with Town Centres and LDP	75%
	Service identifies and secures future needs for succession planning	50%
	Service improves the ERDP experience and holds accurate records, including CPD.	75%
OVERALL PLAN PROGRESS		64%



Strategic Outcomes - successes

- 4.5 The Public Sector Report on Compliance with Climate Change Duties 2022/23 was approved by this Committee on 14 November 2023 (para 10 of the Minute refers) and submitted to the Scottish Government within the required timescales. (**ACTION:** EGD24-4.2a)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

- 4.6 Planned work on actions contributing to the Delivery of Moray Growth Deal is progressing slightly out with original due dates. Delivery of the Housing Mix Delivery Project is nearing completion, the Full Business Case was agreed by the Moray Growth Deal Board and progression of Phase 1 on Dallas Dhu and Elgin site is well advanced with some good public engagement at an exhibition in Forres Community Centre and another similar event planned for builders and architects. The Full Business Case for the Cultural Quarter is anticipated by June 2024 to the Growth Deal Board and Full Council in August 2024, two months adrift of original target schedule, but not impacting on overall project timescales. (**ACTIONS:** EGD24-4.1a & b)

- 4.7 Although significant progress has been made in this reporting quarter against the Climate Change and Biodiversity Route Map actions, for most work will continue slightly past original due dates of March 2024. A progress update report on the Route Map to Net Zero is anticipated in the next reporting cycle. Online training on Climate Change awareness raising has been developed and will require promotion going forward whilst supporting the development of carbon knowledge and skills was subject to slippage due to competing priorities, this action will carry forward to the 2024/25 Service Plan. The draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) focussing on decarbonising heat networks over the next 5 years was submitted to Council on 24 April 2024 (item 4c of the Agenda refers) with publication date expected in August 2024. Moray Climate Action Network is fully operating and collaborations continue as external influence in engagement and promotion of Climate Change. A report on the Natural Capital Enhancement Opportunities was presented to the last meeting of this Committee (item 4d of the Agenda refers) in developing a Carbon Offsetting Plan. (**ACTIONS:** EGD24-4.2b,c,d,e,f,h,i,j,k **INDICATORS:** RMNZ-EGD1)
- 4.8 LGBF in February 2024 published CO2 emissions indicator results for the period 2021/22, although Moray is ranked in the third quartile for area-wide greenhouse gas emissions it is in the lowest quartile for greenhouse gas emissions within scope of the local authority. It is expected that recent achievements in reducing carbon emissions from council buildings by 8% in 2023 will improve comparator rankings. (**ACTIONS:** EGD24-4.2, **INDICATORS:** CLIM01, CLIM02)

Service Level Outcomes – successes

- 4.9 Nothing to report.

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

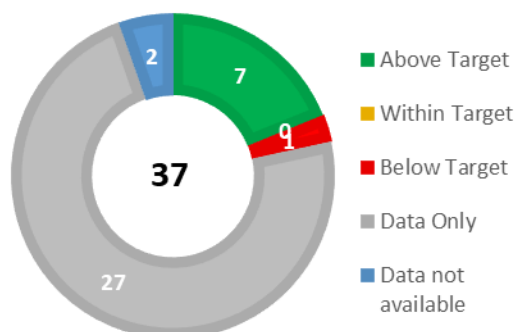
- 4.10 Budget pressures have meant that just one of the proposed two trainee Environmental Health Officers (EHO) posts can be filled. Further budget constraints have reduced capacity to supervise student EHO's whose complete training takes four years and work continues on ways to address this issue.
- 4.11 Planned work contributing to maximising external funding for Council priorities has made good progress but will complete out with original target timescales. In 2023/24, the Lossie 2-3 Group transformed the ground floor of a derelict theatre into a bright, spacious venue for childcare and community space. The Moray Coast to Country project began in 2021 with the aim of improving visitor experiences to rural areas in a low-carbon, sustainable manner. Moray was successful in securing funding from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund to improve motorhome facilities, toilets and car parking in tourist hotspots. The project has now reached its conclusion and the final report has been submitted. (**ACTIONS:** EGD24-5.2 **INDICATOR:** SLAED-OC11)

- 4.12 Progress in delivery of Town Centre Improvement Plans and Local Development Plan 2027 (LDP2027) continues beyond original timescales. An evidence report for LDP2027 was presented to the meeting of Council on 24 April (item 4h of the Agenda refers). Elgin Town Board has been established and widespread engagement was launched inviting ideas around the Levelling Up Fund award. (**ACTIONS:** EGD24-5.3a, 5.3b, **INDICATORS:** ECON09, ECON10)

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 in this report is by exception, links to Service Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Background Papers at the end of this report.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE PI'S



Operational Indicators - successes

- 5.3 Building Standards indicators continue to exceed target year on year, although well within target, the data does show is an emerging trend of increasing response times. The service is aware and continues to monitor. (**INDICATORS:** ENVDV-BS-KPO1(A), (B) and (C), ENVDV046a, 046b)

Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

- 5.4 The number of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population fell from 12.4 to 11.1 in 2022/23 (ranked 27th of 32 authorities). There were 107 businesses startups, below the target of 130, There remains uncertainty which has increased the risk of starting a business, labour shortages and disrupted supply chains have increase barriers for business start-ups. It is unlikely that performance will improve in the short term. Moray Economic Strategy, Moray Growth Deal and other programmes are intended to stimulate this area, but any improvement will only become evident in the longer term. Meantime, the service continues to provide support and advice to local business through

events, workshops and seminars. (**INDICATORS:** ECON08, SLAED-A1, A2, A3, OC9)

- 5.5 Moray retains a higher proportion of properties without access to sufficient broadband speeds (86%) than across Scotland as a whole (95.5%). The Scottish Government's R100 programme is targeted to addressing this issue. However, despite the R100 North Lot contract being awarded to BT in December 2020, there have been no properties served locally through the rollout of the main contract, with many not scheduled to be served until 2028. Even then, several properties will remain without access to superfast broadband as the cost of delivery is deemed too significant but will be eligible to access support via the Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme. In Moray, a new project has been funded via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund aimed at increasing awareness and uptake of this scheme. (**INDICATOR:** ECON08)
- 5.6 Vacancy rate of retail floor space has increased over the last three years to 12.65% as at March 2024, below target (10%). The biannual Town Centre Heath Check reported the decline largely within Elgin and Forres. The first annual Town Centre Perception Survey was completed, and significant engagements are ongoing to inform decisions around the Levelling Up Fund. (**INDICATORS:** ENVDV250)

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. Links to complaints tables can be accessed within the Backing Papers of this report.
- 6.2 A total of 15 complaints were closed in the half year to March 2024 of which 6 (40%) were frontline stage and 9 (60%) were investigative stage. None were upheld and 60% were closed within target timescales.
- 6.3 In addition to complaints, a total of 34 MSP/MP complaints were received in the last two quarters, all were resolved. Common issues were planning issues and concerns around utility capacity.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

- 6.4 Nothing to report.

Case Studies

- 6.5 Nothing to report.

Consultation and Engagement

- 6.6 Nothing to report.

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 Economic Growth & Development Services, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment & Finance) and Service Managers, have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8. **CONCLUSION**

- 8.1** As of 31st March 2024 the service plan overall is 64% complete. A number of actions, subject to slight slippage in not meeting original due dates will complete within the next reporting quarter.

Author of Report: Christopher Dewhurst, Research & Information Officer

Background Papers: [Service Plan Actions](#)
[Service Plan Performance Indicators](#)
[Service Performance Indicators](#)
[Service Complaints](#)

Ref: