Moray Council

Wednesday, 23 August 2023

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

The undernoted reports have been added to the Agenda for the meeting of the **Moray Council** to be held at **Council Chambers**, **Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Wednesday, 23 August 2023** at **09:30.**

BUSINESS

6a. **Corporate Plan Review Progress**   3 - 36

Report by Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)

REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 23 AUGUST 2023

SUBJECT: CORPORATE PLAN REVIEW PROGRESS

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

1.   REASON FOR REPORT

1.1   To seek Council approval for draft high level priorities for the Council Corporate Plan for 2024 to 2029 and to proceed with engagement with the community and council workforce alongside financial planning engagement activity.

1.2   This report is submitted to the Council in terms of Section II (13) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the preparation of a plan that is of a corporate nature.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

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

i)   **Reviews and notes the progress made on developing the 2024-29 Corporate Plan;**

ii)   **Notes the Moray context document (Appendix 2) that provides background, data and context to inform corporate planning;**

iii)   **Agrees the Corporate Plan draft Vision and draft Priorities as set out in Appendix 1 for consultation and engagement;**

iv)   **Agrees that community and workforce engagement takes place on the draft priorities and future direction alongside financial planning engagement activity; and**

v)   **Notes that a further report will be submitted for the Council to consider the outcome of this engagement and to finalise the Corporate Plan and the actions and measures to ensure its delivery.**

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Council's Corporate Plan is an important document that is intended to provide clarity and direction on the council's priorities, values and plans for the future. Its publication assists in communicating these to the public, the workforce and partners. Reference is made to the report to the Council on 2 October 2019 (para 9 of the minute refers), which explained the purpose and context for the Corporate Plan. At that meeting the Council agreed the draft Corporate Plan for 2019-24 and the engagement plan to launch the plan and support delivery of the priorities.

3.2   A report to the Council on 19 January 2022 (para 14 of the minute refers) made reference to a number of indicators that suggested a review of the Corporate Plan may come forward in 2022/23. These included the May 2022 local government elections, emerging issues from the Covid pandemic, the Scottish Government Programme and the opportunity to refresh the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) at its five year mid-point.

3.3   Taking account of the potential for review of the corporate plan, the Council in January 2022 agreed an outline process and timeline for development of a revised corporate plan. This work was undertaken and progress was reported to the Council on 2 February 2023 (para 15 of the minute refers).

3.4   As noted in the February report, following a demanding autumn schedule further time was required to refine the political input into the Corporate Plan and to explore the service implications and actions that would be required to support delivery of the Administration priorities.

Moray Context for Corporate Plan and Delivery Framework

3.5   The development work has taken account of the information gathered during the preparations for the renewed corporate plan. This has been captured in a Moray Context document (**Appendix 2**) which sets out the considerations from: national and local planning; Covid experiences; successes to date and challenges for the future; Moray data and evidence; community engagement and arrangements for monitoring the revised plan. This is expanded upon below.

3.6   Data analysis and information gathering was completed including work with the council senior managers and partners from the community planning partnership. In common with the findings across Scotland, the covid-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis have exacerbated the pressures experienced, particularly in relation to issues such as financial hardship and mental well-being. The key messages from the data analysis were consistent with those from 2019 and include:

- Population growth above Scottish average, household growth is lower;
- Above average, increasing percentage of older people, decreasing younger population;
- Health comparatively good, including mental health, suicide levels remain high;
- Challenges of poverty, including growing child poverty, against a national trend;

- Low wage economy, p/t employment, small no. industries, small businesses, tourism;
- Influence of the MOD on population and job market;
- Young people leaving the area after school and not returning;
- Some young people do less well in exams or what they do after school;
- Town/rural divide in relation to outcomes and challenges (e.g. digital, transport);
- Social isolation and service access due to rural nature of Moray.

3.7 Consideration has also been given to external factors and issues and these were captured in a high level PESTLE (political, environment, social, technical and economic) assessment the outcome of which has been included in the context document supporting the corporate plan delivery framework.

3.8 Information was gathered from service managers across all Council services to identify progress on current Corporate Plan priorities, where work should continue and where it could be concluded as well as new emerging pressures and issues that should be considered for inclusion in future priorities in the Corporate Plan. This has also been reflected in the carry forward of the Corporate Plan priorities into the delivery framework.

3.9 Community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken to feed into the LOIP and Corporate Plan in order to provide a community perspective. A summary of the points that emerged has been included in the Moray context document (**Appendix 2**). This work included new approaches that aimed to include new members of the community in the engagement as well as those who traditionally participate.

Influences on Next Steps for Draft Corporate Plan

3.10 Given the scale of the financial challenge the Council faces and the service adjustments that are likely to be necessary to address the budget gap the Council will require to carefully review and narrow the actions and outcomes against the priorities to be advanced before finalising the corporate plan and delivery framework in order to be confident that the most important issues are prioritised for delivery in the new operating environment. This will have significant impact on the community including reductions and changes to highly valued services. Therefore, it is proposed below to commence a programme of community and workforce engagement to include consideration of how priorities can be further focussed in the financial context. Feedback will be used to inform financial planning, budget proposals and the Corporate Plan delivery framework which will be brought back to the Council for approval.

3.11 In this context, the position reflected in the Audit Scotland Local Government overview report is a useful reference to the circumstances of local government across Scotland and how this needs to be factored into future planning. The report notes that since March 2020 councils have been working in an unprecedented context. Audit Scotland describe this as Councils now having to address the impact of the pandemic, wider pressures, increased service demand and unmet need. They also find that councils are operating in an increasingly volatile and uncertain landscape as these pressures increase and funding is forecast to be reduced in real terms. Further, that increasing

poverty and hardship from the economic crisis is placing added pressure on communities and individuals which places pressure on services at a time when there is less capacity to support people. The report describes a context of increased financial pressure, changing local needs, an increasing programme of national policies, workforce challenges and the need for strong leadership.

3.12   The Audit Scotland report draws this into a conclusion that it is unlikely that councils will be able to maintain performance across all services and difficult choices will need to be made about service and performance priorities. The report identifies strengthening the use of data and consulting and involving communities as key to this prioritisation.

3.13   Moray is no exception to this wider local government landscape and there will be some challenging decisions ahead to determine how to respond to this and prioritise how services are revised and directed to ensure need is met locally. It is proposed below that a process of engagement, consultation and information is commenced with communities and continues over the autumn and winter of 2023/24. It will also be important to consider how the council and its workforce adjust to this and to ensure that the culture and working environment is in place to support the change required. Therefore, a parallel process of workforce development and engagement will be essential to ensure the necessary leadership, direction and ways of working are in place.

3.14   At the end of June 2023, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Scottish Government agreed a new Partnership Agreement (the Verity House Agreement), setting out a vision for a more collaborative approach to delivering shared priorities for the people of Scotland. The Agreement sets out the way local authorities and Scottish Government will work together, approach shared priorities, and how we will engage. There are three shared priorities – tackling poverty, just transition to net zero and sustainable public services. It is recognised that each of these encompasses a breadth of existing activity and potential programmes of joint work, and that local flexibility will be required to maximise impact. This agreement is a high-level statement of intent upon which it is intended to build.

3.15   This is a developing area and it is important that the council is in a position to consider how best to respond to the agreed priorities locally and that this is taken into account in the new corporate plan. It is also of relevance that there is a commitment to develop a shared fiscal framework by September 2023 of which regular budget engagement will be a part and by October to have undertaken a review creating more freedom and flexibility for Councils to address our shared priorities in locally appropriate ways. It is hoped this will give greater clarity on Scottish Government funding earlier in the financial planning process to enable the Council to make timely decisions in preparation for the 2024/25 budget setting and beyond.

3.16   Meantime budget planning for 2024/25 and beyond has continued since the last update on Short to Medium Term Financial Planning to Council on 28 June 2023 (Para 12 of the draft minute refers). Building on an initial budget workshop held with members on 12 June 2023 further development sessions with members will be held in August including consideration of a refreshed

Short to Medium Term Financial Strategy and savings options to make progress in bridging the £19m budget gap to 2025/26. It is anticipated that options will be reported over a series of full council meetings later in 2023, with workforce development and engagement in line with this iterative approach.

Development of New Corporate Plan, Vision and Priorities

3.17   The work on the new Corporate Plan has been informed by the priorities of the Administration Group and their political objectives and aspirations for the Council. The Administration Group have a strong ambition for the Council and for Moray and aim to build on strengths and focus efforts to address priorities.

3.18   While this work was underway, the extent and challenge of the council financial position has been crystallising and the national position has been developing and clarifying as set out above in terms of Scottish Government and collective local government positions.

3.19   It is recognised that in the current context more than ever, ambition has to be refined to ensure the best impact from what it is possible to deliver with the resources available. Therefore, it is important to be clear on the critical impact and outcome required from each of the priorities and that the community perspective has influence on how this is developed. As referred to in previous reports there is also an opportunity to work closely with community planning partners, including the reframing of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, to ensure that impact is maximised across public sector partners. The Community Planning Partnership continue to work on a revised Loip and so the opportunity for alignment remains live.

3.20   This whole emerging picture has given some pause for thought in the development of future planning locally and the opportunity is being taken to ensure that all of the current and emerging context is fully considered in setting the Council corporate priorities for the coming years by proposing a draft position for engagement and discussion.

3.21   As a result, new draft priorities have been developed taking account of the existing council priorities; feedback from community, partner and manager engagement; the national context, in particular the recent Verity House agreement and the Council's financial position. At this stage the proposed vision statement and priorities set out in **Appendix 1** are in draft so that there is a clear opportunity for influence through community and workforce engagement and interaction with partners on impact ahead of a final position being determined by the Council. It is proposed to use all of this feedback to inform the Council decision on finalising the priorities and the desired results.

3.22   The outcome of engagement will also be relevant to corporate plan delivery framework that provides an overview of the actions required to deliver the corporate direction and on which service planning is based. An updated set of actions will be required to set provide clarity on what is to be delivered with available resources in line with the new priorities as budget planning progresses .

Community and Workforce Engagement

3.23 It is proposed to begin a programme of engagement, communication and information provision with Moray's communities that will flow through a number of stages as the issues develop and become clearer. A draft is set out in **Appendix 3** to provide an outline process that can develop as detailed proposals become available. The proposal has been developed taking account of the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act, the national Community Engagement standards, the Councils duties under Best Value and the local Moray Community Planning Partnership Community Engagement strategy and builds on council experience of previous budget and corporate plan engagement work.

3.24 The aim of the engagement programme is to build understanding and relationships between the council and the community helping both to understand and take action on the needs or issues that communities experience in a way we can afford. This would aim for the engagement and consultation to lead to decisions that make the best we can of our resources to:

- deliver efficient and effective value for money services

- better align services to meet essential needs

- better reflect community values and improve outcomes

- have a greater likelihood of effective implementation

3.25 As set out in the outline in **Appendix 3**, the work with communities would vary from engagement, to consultation to information depending on circumstances and would enable a dialogue with communities to help the Council to understand the impact of decisions, including equality impacts, possible alternatives, mitigations and how implementation could best be managed. For each proposal, the council would be clear about the nature of the discussion and what it would be possible to influence. The outline illustrates the purpose and points for information gathering that could be used at each stage, although this will require development as the detail emerges. The proposal also aims to manage expectations by making it clear that during a time of increasing need and declining resources, the outcomes may well be the council doing less, reducing standards, increasing charges and targeting services to the most vulnerable.

3.26 It should also be noted that the detailed arrangements for workforce consultation and engagement will be addressed separately due to the specific requirements that must be met in certain circumstances. These will follow the council's existing employment policies and relevant legislation.

3.27 Taking account of the points raised elsewhere in this report, the proposed engagement approach is also cognisant of the resources available to support this work. Therefore, it is proposed to maximise the use of online tools and collective processes as far as possible and to use in person approaches with specific affected groups and users where options become more focussed.

This will require service input and will be tailored to circumstances, resources and timescales.

3.28   General factual information on council budgets and services is being prepared to support the first stage of engagement to develop awareness and understanding of the forecast situation and to seek views on how best to realign priorities in the corporate plan taking account of that. It is proposed that this Stage 1 engagement begins as soon as possible and runs through September. Draft information to support the engagement will be circulated to all members as soon as possible ahead of the public engagement.

3.29   Options have been considered to identify an online tool to gather and gauge views in a way which manages the manual evaluation required of the data in order to be as efficient as possible. Examples of these are in use by other councils and include allocation of points and budgets across services to illustrate where priorities might lie. However, recognising the financial position and the options from tools already available at no additional cost, this option has been set aside due to the indicative cost to purchase and establish an appropriate online tool.

Next Steps

3.30   If the Council agrees to the community engagement proposed above, the next steps will be to:

- finalise the factual information to support the engagement activity
- set up the online information
- make ready the online survey
- set up and activate social media engagement
- Consider options for citizens panel/group engagement (likely later stage of engagement)
- Gather feedback for reporting to council late 2023/early 2024

3.31   There is a considerable challenge in delivering revised priorities and their outcomes while also managing the challenging financial position and recognising the impact that the pandemic has had on communities and the workforce. There is a need to ensure that the culture and leadership are in place to ensure the drive and direction for the Moray Council needed for the future and this will require to be addressed through workforce and organisational planning and development, including leadership and skills development opportunities.

4.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

    (a)   **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
        The report proposes a new Corporate Plan and delivery framework.

    (b)   **Policy and Legal**
        Consideration has been given to relevant policy and legislative requirements and direction in the revision of the Corporate Plan and preparation of Service Plans.

(c) **Financial implications**

The Corporate Plan should provide direction and focus for financial planning and the alignment of resources to priorities. Any significant changes may require review of associated funding and resourcing.

(d) **Risk Implications**

It is important to ensure that the Council is position to respond to policy and legislative requirements and funding opportunities; that services are ready to meet emerging and changing needs and that there is stability in the delivery of council priorities and services and this is what the corporate plan aims to address.

Failure to make adequate preparations and to take account of the lead in times required for strategic planning, could result in stagnation, lack of progress and gaps in service provision moving forward.

In the current financial context it is important to have clear direction from the Council on key priorities and ways of working that can be delivered within reducing resources and increasing pressures. There is a risk that the council will be unable to achieve too wide a set of priorities. This is addressed by the planned community engagement and subsequent review by the council of the number of priorities before finalising the 2024 Plan.

Much of the Council agenda is driven by operational imperatives and external policy and funding and there is a risk that it will be challenging to deliver this and that this can reduce the scope for local priorities to be addressed.

Preparing for the corporate plan and bringing forward Service Plans aims to ensure that services have clear agreed priorities for significant parts of their work so that there is stability in council services and that they are ready to respond to the issues that will face the Council.

(e) **Staffing Implications**

There will be staff resources required for the community engagement work. It is proposed that requirement is managed by using online engagement and tools for general issues and that in person is for only specific proposals and requirements. On this basis there are no additional resources required and work will be accommodated by existing employees.

It is also of note that the realignment of resources may require to be considered should there be any significant shift in council priorities from revision of the Corporate Plan.

(f) **Property**

None at present but if required this will be reported for consideration and approval once the Corporate Plan review work is complete.

(g)   Equalities/Socio-economic impact
There are no equalities impacts from this report. There may require to be equality impact assessments on particular areas of action within the Plan and these will be reported as necessary along with the specific issues. The engagement process aims to capture equalities impacts for relevant issues

(h)   Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts
There are no Climate Change and Biodiversity impacts from this report.

(i)   Consultations
The Corporate Management Team have been consulted on this report. A small officer working group has been developing the engagement proposals and has contributed to Appendix 4 and to the specific engagement aspects of the report.

5.   CONCLUSION

5.1   Progress has been made with the planned work to update and refresh the Council Corporate plan for 2024 onwards. This has included updating the Moray Context to provide a base point to inform planning and engagement with community representatives. The Administration Group have contributed their political aspiration for Moray and account has been taken of the emerging national Verity House agreement and the challenging financial position in the context of service pressures and demands.

5.2   This has provided direction for a draft vision and set of priorities (Appendix 1) which it is proposed form the next stage of community and workforce engagement in a programme of engagement alongside the Council's financial planning over the autumn and winter of 2023/24. This will inform the transition from the current corporate plan to the final version of the future corporate plan and delivery framework to be reported back to the council.

Author of Report:	Denise Whitworth, Depute Chief Executive (ECOD)
Background Papers:	
	Full Council 2 February 2023 ([Item 10a](#))
	Audit Scotland Local Government Overview report
	Summary of Scottish Government Programme for Government
	Verity House Agreement
Ref:	SPMAN-1108985784-877

CORPORATE PLAN

OUR VISION

A Moray where people prosper, free from poverty and inequality.

What will this look like?

- Our young people grow up safe, well-educated and reach their full potential
- People lead healthy lives and have access to quality care when they need it.
- Our businesses and communities prosper
- We leave a better environment for future generations

OUR PRIORITIES

We will work with partners, communities and businesses to:

Tackle poverty and inequality –

- Reduce child poverty and inequalities in incomes, health and education
- Support vulnerable members of our community

Build a stronger, greener, vibrant economy

- Deliver the Moray Growth Deal
- Focus on a wellbeing economy, one that provides opportunities for all
- Consider the environment and sustainability in everything we do

Build thriving, resilient, empowered communities

- Involve and empower our communities in shaping places that people want to live in, visit and invest in
- Provide modern and sustainable services, housing and infrastructure that meet the needs of our communities

How are we going to do this?

OUR VALUES

Fair	Ambitious	Improving	Responsive
- Tackle inequalities - Treat people fairly - Promote equalities and awareness - Consider our impact on others	- Be outward looking - Promote and celebrate Moray - Be a great place to work - Ensure sustainable and efficient council services	- Drive improvement - Encourage innovation - Take commercial opportunities - Invest in transforming to meet future needs	- Be open and transparent - Promote community participation and involvement - Listen to and involve our communities

CORPORATE PLAN – MORAY CONTEXT

Introduction

Local and National Planning

External Context

Moray Evidence and Context

Success and Challenges to date

Community Engagement

Delivering Our plan

Managing Performance and Measuring Success

Introduction

This document sets the context for the Corporate Plan. It recognises the influence on the work of the council of national plans and strategies and of shared priorities with local partners through community planning. Information and data about our local communities has also been a key influence on our corporate planning and the main issues are highlighted along with more detail in links and appendices. The views and experiences of local communities are important in shaping council priorities and how we go about delivering, including working with our communities. The feedback from engagement is included in this document and it is planned to continue to engage with and work with our community as we develop out delivery framework.

Of course, we are not starting afresh and we also want to learn from experience to date, build on success and ensure we grasp the challenges. We have reflected on experience of delivering our 2019-24 plan and on our Covid pandemic experience to ensure we take forward the best of that learning. There are summaries of these below.

Over the years, our duties as a local authority have grown; yet our resources have not. So, we need to focus on the areas which will deliver the best possible outcomes for as many people and communities as possible.

The next few years presents enormous challenges for the delivery of public services in terms of budget reductions, sustaining services and supporting resilience in our people and communities.

We will be closely monitoring and adjusting our delivery of the corporate plan delivery framework over this time to ensure the council delivers on its priorities and our monitoring arrangements are explained at the end of this document.

Planning Documents

National Performance Framework
Budgets
Local partner priorities
Public consultation priorities
COVID lessons
New / carried forward strategic priorities

Corporate Plan 2023-2027
Provides the vision, values and priorities of council political leaders

Corporate Plan Delivery 2023-2027
Expression of Corporate Plan 2023-2027 refined to deliver within current resources

Identifies what we are going to do to contribute towards the delivery of political aspirations

External Environment and Influences

Consideration was given to external factors and issues and these were captured in a high level PESTLE (political, environment, social, technical and economic) assessment.

Political	Economic	Social
• Cascade of national performance framework/programme for Govt • National direction and ring-fencing of funding • Public sector finance including new UK Govt funding and future LG settlements • Elections (UK 2024)	• Covid 19 & recession impacts – business; local economy; employment; communities • Inflation – pay, fuel, construction – service effect • Inclusive growth and a wellbeing economy – place based growth and development, town centre re-vitalisation	• Covid 19 & recession impacts – widening poverty related gaps, impact on women, children, well-being • Ongoing impact of Covid on learning and education – poverty related attainment gap; • Impact on demand in other services including housing, children's services • Potential targeting services to needs
Technical	**Legal**	**Environmental**
• Digital opportunities for service delivery • Digital connectivity in rural areas • Digital and higher level skills and knowledge for workforce and communities	• UNCRC, The Promise, Additional Support for Learning Review (Morgan) • National Care Service • Brexit • Planning (Sc) Act 2019 • Best Value • Education reviews: Skills Review (Withers), Review of Qualifications (Hayward)	• Climate Change – national policy and targets; Local strategy and targets • Transport – encourage shift to public transport; active travel; issues for rural areas • Environment and Infrastructure to meet future needs – housing, schools, roads, digital, energy, 20 minute neighbourhoods

Moray Profile: Our Key Facts

Moray's economy overall is a low wage economy with over three thousand micro businesses and is also dependent on public organisations for employment. Some of Moray's young people do not do as well at school as they could; while others leave the area after leaving school and do not return. These economic factors contribute to issues such as the growing child poverty levels.

Our overall population is growing; yet the composition of the population has an increased number of older people to young people. Moray also has a growing number of pupils with additional support needs, which have been compounded by the impact of the pandemic. Our population make-up will generate a particular set of needs for individuals with potential pressures on council resources.

Moray's natural environment is to be envied, and we need to protect it against the effects of climate change. We also need to recognise the challenges of being a rural authority which contributes to higher costs for public services, limited public transport options and the dangers of social isolation.

We have gathered and analysed a range of statistics about Moray and shared these during engagement sessions with community representatives. The importance of local lived experience is

recognised and we build that into our planning in local areas. However, from the statistics, the main issues for Moray include:

- population growth continues to be above the Scottish average, but household growth is lower
- above average and increasing percentages of older people, decreasing younger population
- challenges of poverty and cost of living, including growing child poverty, against a national trend
- growing levels of need among children with additional support needs
- low wage economy and reliance on a small number of industries and small businesses
- influence of the MOD on population and job market
- young people leaving the area after school and not returning
- some young people do less well in exams or what they do after school, which affects their future choices
- a town/rural divide in relation to outcomes and challenges
- social isolation and challenging access to services because of the rural nature of Moray
- climate change – flooding, pollution from burning fossil fuels, water shortages, wildfires and rising sea levels

We also try to gather information on and recognise what our communities experience. Working with our community planning partners and through engagement with local people we have considered a range of facts to understand what these experiences mean. We have already worked with communities in Elgin, Buckie, Forres, Lossiemouth and Keith to develop our understanding of what would make the most difference to them and we plan to do more work with communities in future.

Data Links to be added

- Poverty Analysis
- IS Site with Local Authority Data
- Scottish Government Schools Data Tool

Emerging from Covid

The Council's response to Covid was delivered through its Recovery and Renewal Strategic Framework (RRSF), approved in June 2020 adapted through the course of the pandemic to address the constantly shifting balance between the three spheres of response, normal service delivery where possible and recovery. The Framework was subject to public engagement and with some lessons acted upon immediately in terms of the feedback provided. To preserve a coherent and systematic approach to strategic planning and service delivery, RRSF outcomes were incorporated within 2020-22 Service Plans, allowing corporate and service priorities and RRSF outcomes to be viewed holistically. RRSF activities were consolidated to the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan (RRAP) allowing consideration as to whether service responses were fully comprehended within existing service planning arrangements.

Going forward social renewal and economic recovery are being progressed through the delivery of key partnership strategies and plans aligned to Community Learning and Development Partnership and Moray Economic Partnership with health related harms encompassed in strategic planning aligned to NHS Grampian and the Moray Integration Joint Board.

Broader learning recognised the agility of local government in its responses, digital advancement, the role of Local Resilience Partnerships and importance of partnership working and community engagement, the sustainability of the Third Sector and pressures on key services such as environmental health as well as on overall finances.

Successes and Challenges

Looking back there are many things that have gone well and that we are proud of. There ae also challenges ahead and areas where we need to adapt to change. The section below captures these.

Creating opportunities for a vibrant economy	
Successes	**Challenges for the Future**
• Community Wealth Building Strategy in development • Partnership Apprenticeship Strategy agreed • Preparation of Local Development Plan 2025 underway • Hydrogen Strategy for Moray approved, feasibility studies on potential projects to be carried out due to successful bid from Just Transition Fund • Specialist support with exporting to mitigate impacts of Brexit delivered to local businesses • £43m administered in business support grants over course of the pandemic • Discretionary Business Support Fund to provide financial assistance to businesses from Hospitality and Leisure administered • £1.7m Town Centre Capital Fund allocated to 68 projects in 2022/23 • Town Centre Capital Business Improvement and Town Centre Capital Business Start-up funds awarded for repurposing town centres • Coast to Country project enhancing tourist infrastructure and facilities nearing completion • Scotland Loves Local Gift Card' scheme launched • Moray Growth Deal: Ministerial launch of Digital Health Project, Cultural Quarter engagement commenced, Bus Revolution services launched • Programme of employability support and training provided by the Moray Pathways Local Employability Partnership • The Moray Pathways Hub @ the Inkwell celebrated it first anniversary with over 500 people having received employability support and training	• Creating choices that encourage young people to remain in Moray • Stagnation of business start-ups post pandemic • Capacity to deliver projects (TCIP) • Cost of doing business and energy crisis • Tourism recovery to pre-pandemic levels • Identifying land sites for industrial development in Forres and Speyside • Wrap around child care provision • Sufficient housing for local need and talent attraction and keyworkers

• Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, Moray Routes: Bright Futures Plan approved • Buckie Harbour Master Plan created	

Providing services to support vulnerable people	
Successes	**Challenges for the Future**
Cost of the School Day guidance to support all schools engage in tackling poverty Universal free school meals successfully implemented to P1-5 with an increased uptake of school meals Increased number of online services available to community, including parents of school pupils	Closing the poverty related attainment gap Developing our use of digital solutions and overcoming ICT infrastructure challenges to sustain change and drive forward attainment
Young Leaders programme established through Active Schools which provides training, mentoring and leadership opportunities - 150 currently involved in programme The Essential Skills team have delivered a broader range of Family and Community Based Learning including maths skills, driving theory test support	Expanding service for holiday childcare and activities. Sustaining sport and culture services with escalating cost of operating and cost of living pressures
Positive performance in leaver attainment for Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF levels 4 and 5, above virtual comparator for the first in a five year trend Positive progress with Stretch Aims for 1 or more SCQF level 5 and level 6 qualifications All key breadth and depth measures across levels 5, 6 and 7 above 2019 results (last year formal SQA examinations were the principal form of assessment in place) Positive progress in implementing the Scottish Attainment Challenge through Attainment Scotland Funding. Elgin High School and Buckie ASG strategic equity fund projects underway, progress with Pupil Equity fund monitoring and impact, Underspend of Pupil Equity Fund reduced, roll-out of Seemis Progress and Achievement training continues through 'train the trainer' approach Positive increase in initial leaver destinations in 2022, above all comparators for first time in 5 years	Progress in achieving stretch aims for attendance and exclusion in secondary schools Raising aspirations of young people and families to aim high for positive achievement Ensuring PEF spend is targeted to increase interventions to support families in the economic climate e.g. breakfast clubs etc. Improvement in the poverty related attainment gap for literacy and numeracy Managing the ongoing impact of the pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff and the impact on attainment and achievement.

Supporting All Learners Strategy, developed in line with the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and The Promise, to promote systems and processes for supporting all learners socially, emotionally, mentally and physically was agreed	Increasing demand for services to support children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) Creating flexible sustainable service model for ASN services that responds to need and improves results
80% of our schools and early learning childcare settings inspected achieved good or better ratings in inspection reports, an improvement for the 3rd year running	Maintaining our progress in achieving better performance and improved inspection outcomes Improving the financial sustainability of our early years service
Children's Services Plan 2023-26 signed off by Community Planning Board incorporating key partnership plans exclusively focusing on improving outcomes for children and families	
Development of pilot locality planning model to respond to children and families needs at both an individual and population level	Focusing on whole familiy well-being and support, strengthening families and communities Advancing our Promise work ensuring the rights of children are front and centre to all we do Continue to understand better the routes to earlier intervention and prevention and as such understanding what further would make a difference
Development of a variety of community groups that focus on connectivity, health and wellbeing across Moray through the work of the IJB 21 Ball Groups 12 Social groups including Mens Sheds 3 Specialised health and Wellbeing Groups 1178 people across Moray Development of a volunteer programme through the IJB supporting 223 clients with 77 alarm responders and 146 "Buddy" roles	Demographic pressures – demand on services from an ageing population and impact of outward migration of young people Ongoing need to support health and wellbeing through community based activities with a strong emphasis on keeping well through prevention and early intervention
Develop better support to unpaid carers Develop and delivery on a coproduced strategy for unpaid carers	
Work with communities and third sector groups to support citizens in their community, through community placed based programmes to support people to "wait well" whilst waiting for assessments and or appointments	Optimising digital solutions to support people in their homes and communities e.g. home first, digital health solutions
Community co-owned locality plans refreshed for New Elgin and Buckie. Plans are also developing for Lossiemouth, Forres and Keith	Meeting aim that 1% of council budgets be subject to participatory budgeting to support the development and implementation of locality planning across Moray targeted at addressing priorities

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) reviewed to incorporate funding provision, interim impact and adjustment for pandemic. Targets to reduce temporary accommodation unit numbers by 5% and average homeless journey by 1 week achieved	Maintaining homeless performance challenging if demand continues to increase

Protecting our environment while improving our infrastructure	
Successes	**Challenges for the Future**
Investment in 44 Electric Vehicles as a part of efforts to reduce carbon emissions	Establishing replacement scheme for petrol and diesel vehicle fleet by 2030
Local Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure expanded	
Energy from Waste project: Construction phase completed Summer 2023 Work towards achieving a 60% recycling rate for the waste handled within Moray	• Transition from waste disposal to landfill to the EfW once construction and commissioning is completed • Adjusting services for changes to legislation specific to the waste industry: Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) & the biodegradable landfill ban (as referred to above)
Learning Estate Strategy and Delivery Programme: Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) Phase 3 bid submitted	Creating a learning estate which is in good condition, suitable for all learners, fit for the future and affordable, especially with current inflationary pressures Managing the financial and resourcing pressures of multiple school projects Establishing a repair and maintenance programme to ensure long term planned approach to learning estate building condition
Expansion programme for Early Learning Centres: 4 new build nurseries constructed, 6 major refurbishments, 3 minor refurbishments completed	Programme delays due to pandemic and budget pressures due to inflationary costs of building materials, completions anticipated summer 2023
Updated Climate change strategy approved and route map agreed for delivery	Commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030 is challenging and will require priority to be given to decarbonisation in building maintenance plans. Significant implications of achieving carbon neutral
Cycle 2 Surface Water Management Plans have completed. Data gathering commenced for Plans in each area.	Funding not confirmed so Schemes unlikely to progress before 2026 Explore potential for a Moray Coast Natural Heritage Park Securing increased woodland cover, safeguarding/ increase of priority habitats and species

New footbridge over the River Lossie in Lossiemouth opened on 31 May 2022	Identifying funding and agreeing approach to secure UK Govt funding offer for Cloddach Bridge
Delivery of stock investment programme to meet the EESSH standard in line with carbon reduction commitments and to reduce fuel poverty amongst council tenants	Ensure Council Housing stock meet strict Scottish Government targets for energy efficiency and standard
69% of Primary schools delivering level 2 bikeability. 28 EV chargers in place across Moray	Working towards target of all primary and 50% secondary schools engaged Continuing expansion of EV chargers
Flood Risk Management Schemes – general maintenance continues	Rural challenges of transition for Transport and Energy
Compensatory planting scheme for trees removed by development established. Research into opportunities for additional carbon sequestration from council land holdings underway	Climate change and government low carbon commitments - achieving carbon neutrality in terms of the council footprint by 2030
Sport and Leisure review	
Target to provide 30% of new build affordable housing as specialist / amenity housing has been achieved	Ability to work across agencies effectively to address complex health, social care and housing needs
A number of CATs have been completed with a regular flow of requests	Increasing demand on services and reduced finances to deliver community expectations – possible further community transfers
Allotments in Elgin	Connectivity – physical and digital
Strategic Housing Investment Plan – • Provide 199 affordable homes over next 2 years, approximate cost of £20m per year	Availability of range of houses and tenure types Meeting housing need in rural communities Lack of formal accommodation provision for gypsy travellers

Community and stakeholder engagement

Engagement with internal and external stakeholders included a leadership forum event that shared information and gathered feedback, presentation at the employee conference with group discussions, focus groups, a larger community event with discussion groups. The summary of outputs as follows.

PEOPLE	PLACE
✓ Working with volunteers – scope for better communication, partnership working with and support for communities but also issue of sustainability ✓ Improve services for older people (care, respite, transition from hospital, digital) ✓ Support for our young people (leisure, education, attainment, mental health, ASN, careers, jobs)	✓ Transport – poor provision in rural areas, needs joined up ✓ Deterioration of High Street – need to create spaces people want to visit ✓ Digital Connectivity – issues in some areas and for some residents doing things digitally can be challenging ✓ School estate – to accommodate priorities of support Hubs, Libraries & Leisure
SUSTAINABLE COUNCIL & FINANCE	**FUTURE**
✓ Improve marketing of Council services to generate income (Council tax components as 'build your own package' to give residents more agency; Increase discretionary charges – make choices within if possible) ✓ Communication (Internal to link services; external community awareness and engagement; clear points of contact) ✓ Support required for those who cannot access digital services	✓ Connectivity – transport and broadband ✓ Housing needs (insulation; availability; affordable housing; housing for young people; in smaller communities) ✓ Employment (limited opportunities; young people; transport; higher wage jobs;

Link to Engagement Report to be added

Delivering our Plan

The priorities set out in this Corporate Plan sit alongside the day-to-day delivery of Council services. It is not intended to encompass each and every service that contributes directly or indirectly to the priorities, or the delivery of our core services. The detail on these services and how they will contribute is contained in our service planning process.

Our Corporate Plan is supported by a number of key strategic plans and documents

Children's Services Plan
CLD Strategic Plan
Education Strategic Plan
Employability Plan
Local Development Plan
Moray Economic Plan
Moray Growth Deal

Implementing the Plan and Measuring Success

The Corporate Plan sets out the council's high-level priorities and how we intend to take them forward. Details of how we will implement our priorities are contained in our strategies linked to the Corporate Plan and in-service plans. These set out the development, delivery, outcomes and measures that we will use to check on the progress of the priorities in this corporate plan.

Outcomes indicators are consistent across these plans and are designed to measure results so we can demonstrate our success or make adjustments to bring things back on track if needed. We will use the Council's Performance Management Framework for monitoring and reporting. Based on that, we have developed a performance management document specifically for the corporate plan that encompasses all of the priorities and actions, so progress is monitored effectively.

There are a number of enabling plans and strategies that form the suite of documents to support the delivery of the priorities in this corporate plan:

- ❖ Financial Strategy
- ❖ Improvement and Modernisation Programme
- ❖ Workforce Strategy
- ❖ ICT Strategy
- ❖ Performance Management Framework
- ❖ Customer Focus strategy

We will publish annual reports against the plans as set out in the performance management framework

Appendix (Data)

OUR KEY FACTS

Moray Area Profile

POPULATION 2021 (National Records of Scotland NRS) 96,410 population	AREA 2,238 sq km (864 sq miles) (National Records of Scotland NRS)	HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS 2018-43 (National Records of Scotland NRS) 8% increase in households (42,554 to 45,957) (Scotland = 10% increase)
• **32.7%** aged **16 to 44 years** (Scotland = 36.6%) • **22.3%** aged **65 and over** (Scotland= 19.6%) Since 2001 Moray population increased **10.8%** (Scotland = 8.2%)	**10th most** sparsely populated **area in Scotland** • **42.2%** of the **population live in a rural area** • **4.1%** live in settlements with **fewer than 500 people**	**FUEL POVERTY 2017-19** (Scottish Government Scottish House Condition Survey) **31.6%** of **households** in **fuel poverty** (Scotland= 24.4%)
ETHNICITY 2011 (Scotland's Census 2011) **77.7%** White - Scottish (Scotland= 84%) **18%** White – other British (Scotland= 7.9%)	**CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY 2020/21** (End Child Poverty) **21.3%** of children live in poverty (Scotland= 20.9 %) (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation SIMD) **2.7%** of the Moray population live in Scotland's most deprived 20% of datazones (**2,644 people**) **13.1%** live in the least deprived 20% of datazones (**12,529 people**)	**CAR/VAN OWNERSHIP 2019** (Scottish Household Survey) **14%** of households **have no car/van** (Scotland= 28%) **34%** of households **have 2 or more cars/vans** (Scotland= 31%)

Economy and Income

GVA PER CAPITA 2020 (Office for National Statistics ONS)	WEEKLY WAGES 2021 (Office for National Statistics ONS - NOMIS)	BUSINESS SIZE 2021 (Scottish Government – Businesses in Scotland 2021)	BUSINESS TURNOVER 2021 (Scottish Government – Businesses in Scotland 2021)
£21,868 (Scotland= £26,403) **GDP PER CAPITA 2020** (Office for National Statistics ONS) **£23,780** (Scotland= £29,629)	**£566** (live in Moray) **£579** (work in Moray) (Scotland= £622)	**47.3%** employment in **small businesses** (<50) (Scotland= 36.5%) **39.3%** employment in **large businesses (250+)** (Scotland= 49.6%) **81.4%** in **private sector (businesses with < 10 employees)** (Scotland= 63.2%)	**£3,748m** (Scotland= £293,198m) **Turnover between 2018-21:** **10.0%** growth (Scotland= 12.1% growth)

Education and Learning

SCHOOL ATTAINMENT 2020/21	POSITIVE DESTINATIONS 2020/21	MORAY COLLEGE STUDENTS 2020/21 (Moray College)	QUALIFICATIONS: WORKING AGE POPULATION 2021 (Office for National Statistics ONS - NOMIS)
63.9% of pupils left school with **one or more SCQF level 6 or 7** (Scotland= 70.2%) **ATTENDANCE 2020/21** **95.6% primary** (Scotland= 94.0%) **90.7% secondary** (Scotland= 89.1%)	**Initial leaver destination (2020/21) 94.1%** (Scotland= 95.5%) **Follow up destination (2020/21) 92.3%** (Scotland= 93.2%)	**74.7% successful completions (Further Education)** **2,062** full / part time students	**48.3% have NVQ4+** (Scotland= 50%) **5.2% have no qualifications** (Scotland= 7.8%)

Life Stages/Health and Well-being

LIFE EXPECTANCY 2019/20 (National Records of Scotland NRS)	DIABETES PREVALENCE 2015/16 (ISD Scotland Quality & Outcomes Framework)	OBESITY 2016-19 (Scottish Government Scottish Health Survey)	ALCOHOL SPECIFIC DEATHS 2017-21 (National Records of Scotland NRS)
82.4yrs Females (Scotland = 80.8yrs) **78.3yrs Males** (Scotland = 76.5yrs)	**5.7%** (Scotland = 4.97%) **5,258** registered with Diabetes (up from **4,110** in 2010)	ₚ**33%** of Moray's adult population are classed as obese (BMI>30) (ranked 10 of 32 local authorities where 1 is highest levels of obesity) (Scotland = 29%)	**13.8 per 100,000 population** (Scotland= 20.8)

Community and Environment

NEIGHBOURHOOD COMPLAINTS TO COMMUNITY SAFETY 2021/22	CRIME AND DISORDER 2021/22 (Scottish Government Recorded Crime in Scotland)	RECYCLING 2020/21 (Local Government Benchmarking Framework LGBF)	OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS 2019 (Scottish Household Survey)
15% Neighbour disputes **7% Abandoned vehicles** **42% Noise** **6% Dog fouling**	**401 crimes recorded** per 10,000 population (Scotland= 524) **2019** (Scottish Household Survey) **23%** of residents have experienced some form of **anti-social behaviour crimes or offences** (Scotland = 28%)	**55% of all waste arising is recycled** (Scotland= 42%) **VOLUNTEERING 2019** (Scottish Household Survey) **30%** of adults involved in **voluntary work** in the last 12 months (Scotland= 26%)	**95%** rate their **neighbourhood as very/fairly good** (Scotland = 94%) **CLIMATE CHANGE 2018** (Scottish Household Survey) **88%** of adults agreed they understood what they could do to tackle climate change (Scotland 74%)

Public Services

PUBLIC SPENDING 2020-21 (Annual Accounts)	KEY ISSUES FOR MORAY RESIDENTS	INFLUENCE/INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR 2019 (Scottish Household Survey)
£456m + **Moray Council (£000)** **£296,937** **Moray College (£000)** **£14,066** **Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB)(£000)** **£145,402**	• high number of older people • low wage economy and lack of economic diversity • outward migration of young people • variation in attainment and post-school destination • variation in outcome for smaller communities • delivery of and access to services; and social isolation	**15%** agree that they **"can influence decisions affecting my local area"** (Scotland= 18%) **35%** agree that their **"council does the best it can with the money available"** (Scotland= 40%)

BUDGET ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

This paper sets out how the Council will engage on its future priorities and delivery of services within a reduced budget of over £27m (or over 10% of total budget). Of that £27m, £19m of savings have still to be identified and the vast majority of that must be removed from budgets during 2024/25.

With savings of £58m since 2010/11 and significant elements of our budget that are pre-determined and cannot be reduced, that represents an unprecedented level of savings over a very short timeframe. It's likely that services will have to be reduced and that we may have to target them to meet greatest need. We will have to think very differently about what and how we can provide services that are financially sustainable and we want to engage our community in what Moray Council of the future should be like.

Aim

To build understanding and relationships between the council and the community helping both to understand and take action on the needs or issues that communities experience in a way we can afford.

We want our engagement and consultation to lead to decisions that make the best we can of our resources to:

- deliver efficient and effective value for money services
- better align services to meet essential needs
- better reflect community values and improve outcomes
- have a greater likelihood of effective implementation

Approach

Our engagement with Moray's communities will flow through a number of stages as the issues develop and become clearer. There will be some urgency in some of the measures we need to consider, especially for 2024/25 but there are also some

longer term changes and transformation that we can work together on. We will be clear at each stage and with each topic under consideration whether we are:

- ➢ Engaging – where there is scope for the community to influence and be involved so that we can work together on how the issue progresses
- ➢ Consulting – where we have proposals and are inviting views on these so that we understand the impact, views and any further options before deciding upon the final solution
- ➢ Informing – where we are clear how we plan to act but want to communicate effectively to ensure that people are informed about what we plan to do

Outcomes

This engagement is taking place during a time of increasing needs and declining financial resources. Delivering priorities and services in that context will mean that the Council can do less than it does now, that standards may have to reduce and that we have to focus services on the most vulnerable: targeted to those experiencing greatest inequalities or with the highest needs. It is also likely that charges such as council tax will have to go up by more than in the past. Whilst this is not a welcome position, it is one that the Council wants to hear views on to ensure that community perspective and the experience of service users is built into how these difficult decisions are taken and implemented within the time and budget we have.

Stakeholders

We recognise that this will be a difficult time of change for our workforce, partners and communities and we are committed to communicating effectively with all stakeholders over the period of change. Where our workforce is affected, we will make every effort to ensure that this is handled sensitively and confidentially with those directly affected ahead of any wider communication and we will fully involve trade unions in this process.

Timing of workforce communications is cross referenced in this plan but there is a separate parallel plan to deal with workforce engagement and consultation.

Workforce	Partners	Community	Poss Dates	Issues to Cover	Audience	Purpose and Points to test	Feedback focus	Approach/ Tools
STAGE 1: Awareness & Understanding			Late Aug/Sept					
		Engagement	Late Aug/ Sept	Corp plan - transition from old to new - priorities - Vision and values - Future focus as £ shrinks Financial Planning - Awareness - Income appetite - Savings preferences ensure key services specifically included	Public – all Community councils and groups	Awareness & Understanding of financial situation Views on what priorities should transition/ remove from current plans so can narrow focus Create appetite for future involvement Test tolerance for increased charges Test tolerance for service reductions	Council Tax – views on max increase Charges Reduced services waste, roads, leisure	Online tools
		Engagement (Other)		*Learning Estate – Forres ASG engagement*		*Already planned and outcomes available will be used to inform Stage 2*		
		Engagement (Other)		*Local Development Plan*		*Already planned and outcomes available will be used to inform Stage 2*		
STAGE 2: Involvement and Influence			Timing tbc					

Workforce	Partners	Community	Poss Dates	Issues to Cover	Audience	Purpose and Points to test	Feedback focus	Approach/ Tools
			Late Oct/ Nov/Dec?					
		Engagement	Late Oct/ Nov/Dec	Transformation: Place based?				
		Engt or cons?	Late Oct/ Nov?Dec	Future Planning Big Conversation on Big Change services: topics to be confirmed as budget work progresses but examples could be i. Learning Estate (all asgs?) ii. Leisure and Culture iii. Waste? Roads?	Public – all Interest groups	Understanding and views of need to focus resources and shrink commitments for specific services Contribution to service design for the future Understanding and views/contributions to options for lower cost future services Feedback on priorities for these services – what want to see within future budget parameters Scope for community transfers/involvement/ delivery Options to increase community self-service, resilience Increased or structured charging	Priorities for future services Strengths to retain Where reductions are tolerable How income can increase Views on significant change	Online informatio n and survey Citizens Panel? Focus groups
		Consultation	Late Oct/ Nov	Consultation on Specific Service proposals: tbc	Service Users and interest groups	Understand impact of proposals, consider mitigations	Response to specifc proposals	Online informatio

Workforce	Partners	Community	Poss Dates	Issues to Cover	Audience	Purpose and Points to test	Feedback focus	Approach/ Tools
				Equalities: on specific proposals		Identify/consider alternatives Soundings and input on delivery method	Information on mitigations and impacts Alternatives for in service savings Points to address in implementation	n and surveys Directed comms to specific groups/us ers In person service led
		Information		Charges?	Service users	Awareness of changes to charges and when will commence	None	Online Point of Service Informatio n
STAGE 3: Implementation and Developing Future			Maybe Dec 23 or Jan/Feb 24					
		Engagement		Transformation and change development – how to proceed, develop specifics	Public – all Service users and interest groups			
		Consultation		Consultation (if ready/required) on developments/propos	Service users and interest groups	You said, we decided Any further points or feedback on impacts,	Further points in implementation,	Online informatio

Workforce	Partners	Community	Poss Dates	Issues to Cover	Audience	Purpose and Points to test	Feedback focus	Approach/ Tools
				als from Big Conversation Big Changes service redesign engagement Decisions/significant changes/development /expansion of earlier proposals		adjustments, mitigations, etc Understand impact of proposals, consider mitigations Identify/consider alternatives Soundings and input on delivery method	mitigations, alternatives, etc Response to specific proposals Information on mitigations and impacts Alternatives for in service savings Points to address in implementation	n and surveys Directed comms to specific groups/us ers In person service led
		Information		Decisions on earlier proposals Implementation plans	Service Users and interest groups	Awareness of changes to services and when will commence Any specifics re implementation	None	Online Service led with users Point of Service info

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