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**REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 11 JUNE 2024**

**SUBJECT: HUMAN RESOURCES, ICT AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE SERVICES' SERVICE PLANS 2023-2024**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To invite the Committee to consider the Human Resources, ICT and Organisational Development and Strategy Governance and Performance services' Service Plans for 2024-2025.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (50) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to ensuring that the organisation, administrative and management processes of the Council are designed to make the most effective contribution to achieving the Council's objectives and to keep these procedures under review.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Committee consider and approve the Service Plans for services within Human Resources, ICT and Organisational Development and Governance, Strategy and Performance.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Service planning is a key aspect of the Council's Performance Management Framework and is undertaken annually to set out the strategic direction for services over the coming months.
- 3.2 It should be noted that actions from the Best Value Action Plan agreed by the Corporate Committee on 23 April 2024 (item 5a of the Agenda refers) will be monitored and reported out with the Service Plan process.
- 3.3 The service planning process focuses on forward planning for medium-term activities supporting delivery of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) and Corporate Plan. The Council planning process also includes team plans that focus on short term tactical and operational activities supporting delivery of the Service Plan and strategies and Employee Review and Development

Plans (ERDP) provide individual planning for employees' activities and development.

- 3.4 As well as identifying service developments and 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 such as Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) or other equivalent service improvement tool, and matching of resources to these priorities. Priority outcomes are those included in the Council's Corporate Plan that directly relate to the service or are influenced by the service and should be clearly identified.
- 3.5 Setting clear measurable outcomes and defining key indicators by which progress will be assessed is a recognised area for development within the Council and these Service Plans are part of the improvement journey to implement the Performance Management Framework. For some actions it can be difficult to identify a measurable outcome (e.g. a change in legislation that must be implemented, or updating a policy framework). It can also be challenging where there is currently no clear baseline or benchmarking from which informed targets and reasonable steps towards these can be developed. Therefore, as far as possible efforts have been made to set measurable outcomes for service plan actions but in some cases outputs or milestones have been used so that it is still possible to measure whether the action has been progressed as intended. In other areas, further work will be required to refine outcomes in future. So, for example, in some actions, strategic and delivery planning is not yet concluded and so performance indicators are not yet agreed. Where possible in such cases milestone are provided.
- 3.6 A summary of progress is given below based on the annual reviews carried out for each of the service areas.
- 3.7 Reference is also made to the report to Moray Council on 28 February 2024 when the Council agreed the Corporate Plan for 2024-2029 and that the approach to delivery and performance management through service and strategic plans, which contain specific actions that support the delivery of priority areas in the new council corporate plan. This plan focusses on the period from April 2024 to April 2025.

### **2023/24 Updates**

## **3.8 Human Resources, ICT and Organisational Development**

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

#### **3.8.1 ICT**

- digital approach has expanded this year with 105 services now available online, ranging from school and nursery registrations, benefits applications and corporate complaints forms
- the move to M365 is reported as 90% complete
- cyber resilience work including training
- connectivity is available for NHS staff within council offices and WiFi access in schools extended.

### 3.8.2 HR and OD

- review of Transform is complete with Change Management policies and guidance updated to accommodate the adoption of the No Compulsory Redundancies principle
- Smarter working project
- work to support the implementation of the council's Health and Work policy is complete
- Skills for Change workshops delivered in support of Transformation work

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

### 3.8.3 ICT

- it has not been possible to undertake all ERDPs within the service however a revised timetable has been put in place to ensure all remaining ERDPs are completed by the end of Q1.

### 3.8.4 HR and OD

- sickness absence levels across the Council have increased. This is a national trend but will be identified for action in the workforce plan and has been highlighted across services as an area for attention
- it has not been possible to undertake all ERDPs within the service and a revised timetable has been put in place to ensure all remaining ERDPs are completed by the end of Q1.
- incidents of violence and aggression against Moray Council employees continue to exceed target. There is specific ongoing work in place aimed at improving this, including the ASN review work.

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

### 3.8.5 ICT

- Cyber security – development and implementation of enhanced measures to manage cyber security and resilience risks including completion of the Cyber Resilience Action Plan.
- Digital development – development of the Council's approach to expanding the use of digital technology across services and to support efficiency and Transformation.

### 3.8.6 HR and OD

- Leadership development – programme of development established that ensures leaders are developed to lead the response to the challenging agenda so that the Council is prepared for the future and progressing improvement and transformation work.
- Recruitment – to ensure the Council attracts high calibre candidates and that services are well resourced to enable key corporate projects to be progressed and outcomes achieved.
- Support for change (including budget) and transformation – develop initiatives that prepare employees for change through encouraging flexibility, adaptability and are empowered and enabled to embrace change.

## **3.9 Strategy, Governance and Performance**

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

- Tendering and initial roll out of the Corporate printing/copying contract.
- Completion of a business case for a digital assistant for the contact centre.

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

- The Benefits eform has been a recurring action for the past 3 years. It proven more complicated than originally anticipated due to involvement of a number of sections. Good progress has been made and it is expected that it will be brought to a conclusion this coming year.
- The transfer of burial ground administration from Registrars to Lands and Parks was not achieved due to staffing and budget pressures. It is expected that this action will complete in the coming year.
- The review of second tier governance documents has commenced but has slipped due to intervening corporate pressures.
- The service level agreement for Moray Citizens Advice Bureau stalled due to budget setting issues which are linked to the funding.

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

- Governance improvements identified in the Council's Best Value Action plan including timely performance reporting and clarity on the function of Audit and Scrutiny Committee.
- Digital improvement and transformation projects identified in Transformation Strategy.
- Finalising a service level agreement with Moray Citizens Advice Bureau in conjunction with budget setting process.

### Service Plans for 2024/25

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

**Appendix 1:** Human Resources and Organisational Development

**Appendix 1a:** ICT

**Appendix 2:** Governance, Strategy and Performance

## 4 SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

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

### (b) Policy and Legal

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

**(c) Financial implications**

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

**(d) Risk Implications**

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

**(e) Staffing Implications**

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

However, there are a number of areas for development that have been identified where there are concerns about the availability of resources to deliver the required outcomes within an acceptable period of time. For example, leadership development, absence management, central capacity to support services and developments in ICT including the capacity for digital development that supports transformation. It may be necessary to report back to committee to consider resources or re-prioritisation of work to ensure adequate progress on these key priorities.

Workforce Planning takes place with service management teams and includes review of workforce data such as turnover and absence, identification of key posts for planning, recruitment issues and plans, training and development requirements in the context of council and service priorities. As a result, the following points are noted as issues for the services to address and are included in the service workforce plans.

HR, ICT&OD

- Ensure training and development opportunities support staff to improve their performance and do their jobs better.
- Staff employees to consider range of development opportunities including both formal and informal.
- Ensure workload issues are addressed to ensure sustainability and resilience.
- Ensure links with corporate priorities and transformation work are clear to teams.
- Apply LEAN processes across the service to help create capacity for value adding service development activities.

Governance Strategy and Policy

- Difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates for vacancies in professional posts, particularly acute within Legal Services
- Managing workload with planned and unplanned absence within small teams.
- Limited training budgets.
- Age profile of workforce giving longer term resilience issues.

It is also of note that the services are carefully prioritising work to reflect the restricted capacity of their teams. This is exacerbated by hard to fill vacancies, absence, and pressing operational work that cannot be re-prioritised (e.g. processing peaks of employee contractual work and payments; legal cases). Legal services have an arrangement with an external Legal provider to assist in accommodating work, however, this requires contract and case management activity to ensure it is as effective as possible.

**(f) Property**

There are no property implications arising from this report.

**(g) Equalities**

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

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

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

**(i) Consultations**

Heads of Service have worked with their management teams to prepare the Services Plans attached as appendices and have contributed to the updates in this report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

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

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Background Papers:

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