REPORT TO: **EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE REPORT (HUMAN RESOURCES, INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) – PERIOD TO MARCH 2021**

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to March 2021.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance (para 9 of the minute refers).

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 2021; and**

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

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

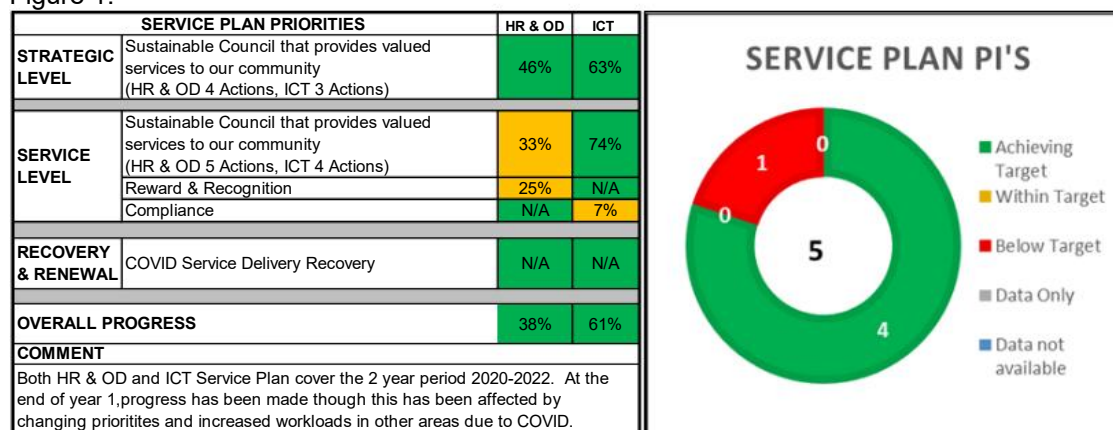## 4. SERVICE PLANNING

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.   Committee is invited to review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

4.2   The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Plan Actions and Service Plan Performance Indicators are provided.

Figure 1:

SERVICE PLAN PRIORITIES		HR & OD	ICT
STRATEGIC LEVEL	Sustainable Council that provides valued services to our community (HR & OD 4 Actions, ICT 3 Actions)	46%	63%
SERVICE LEVEL	Sustainable Council that provides valued services to our community (HR & OD 5 Actions, ICT 4 Actions)	33%	74%
	Reward & Recognition	25%	N/A
	Compliance	N/A	7%
RECOVERY & RENEWAL	COVID Service Delivery Recovery	N/A	N/A
OVERALL PROGRESS		38%	61%
COMMENT			
Both HR & OD and ICT Service Plan cover the 2 year period 2020-2022. At the end of year 1,progress has been made though this has been affected by changing prioritites and increased workloads in other areas due to COVID.			

SERVICE PLAN PI'S
- Achieving Target
- Within Target
- Below Target
- Data Only
- Data not available

Strategic Outcomes - successes

4.3   Working with the North East Learning Collaborative (NELC), delivery of two virtual training workshops on outcome based planning was trialled with council and community planning officers to refine Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) delivery framework documents for each of the priority areas. Further enhancements to the training are planned in the period to June 2021. Leadership development training is under redesign and the current blended learning model is being translated into digitally accessible courses in the interim. Additional functionality on the e-learning platform is required for the re-design to work effectively, this is being pursued with Procurement within the context of the current learning management system provision. (Action HR&OD20-22.Strat 4.3, 4.3a, 4.3b)

4.4   In addressing the findings of the Best Value audit, implementation of the elected member development strategy to support strategic and corporate roles has progressed. One to one elected member sessions are complete and a calendar of activity has been developed and awaiting sign-off. Implementation of elected member training on effective scrutiny of performance is in the design stage and incorporates a blend of external development activity and in-house workshops. (Action HR&OD20-22.Strat 4.4, 4.4a)

### Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.5   Work to extend the availability of online services for Children's Social Work Services and provide improved access to services via the council website and customer portal, expected to complete in March 2021, is 80% complete. ICT have submitted a business case and testing of the NHS 'Near Me (Attend Anywhere)' application was undertaken. Progress has faltered as a result of restructuring within Children's Services and completion of this project is dependent on resources being in place to collaborate with ICT. (Action ICT 20-22.Strat 4.5)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

4.6   In establishing a digital culture, all trial ICT work in relation to the review of LEAN management software is complete and a number of benefits have been identified. An investment proposal has been prepared and opportunities confirmed for when software is made available and resourcing issues resolved. The Digital Champions remit has now been passed to the OD team to finalise in the coming year. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.2)

4.7   Expansion and enhancement to the provision of flexible and mobile working now recognises the 'Flexible by Default' approach as the norm with the rollout of dedicated laptops to corporate staff complete. 75% of all users are now classed as flexible (compared to just 30% at the end of the previous transformation programme Designing Better Services). The focus on flexibility will continue, ensuring that the vision and requirements of the Council post COVID will be met and that benefits achieved from the work undertaken during 2020 are not lost or reduced. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.3)

**Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support**

4.8   As part of the Service Level Compliance priority, it was anticipated that cyber essentials plus accreditation would be achieved for the corporate network by January 2021, progress is currently at 10%. The Cabinet Office has given latitude on timescales for Public Service Network (PSN) submissions due to the pandemic as they themselves have struggled with resources to complete the required assessments. The scope of the IT Health Check is being progressed with the supplier and remediation work will be actioned in the period to June 2021. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.1a)

4.9   Implementation and promotion of Video Conferencing is progressing (60%) albeit out with original target timescales (December 2020) as a result of underestimating the work required to implement MS Teams and the level of competing priorities. In the quarter to March 2021, significant progress has been made; integration of MS Teams with existing user accounts and outlook calendars is complete along with the process to create new users and assign appropriate licences. Work on the security aspects and roll-out plan continues. (Action ICT20-22.Serv 5.4)

4.10   The gender pay gap indicator provides a picture of the gap in pay between men and women. Latest Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) reported the gender pay gap in Moray for 2019/20 period as 6.4%, above the national average of 3.4%. The Council employs a high number of the workforce in service areas such as catering, cleaning, homecare and schools support staff. These areas are populated predominantly by a high number of part time female workers; often who may hold more than one part time position which contributes to the higher gender pay gap. The Councils' employment policies continue to reflect its commitment to equal opportunities and initial data for this year's gender pay gap indicates a further reduction to 6.14%.

What is the current gender pay gap for staff in my council?
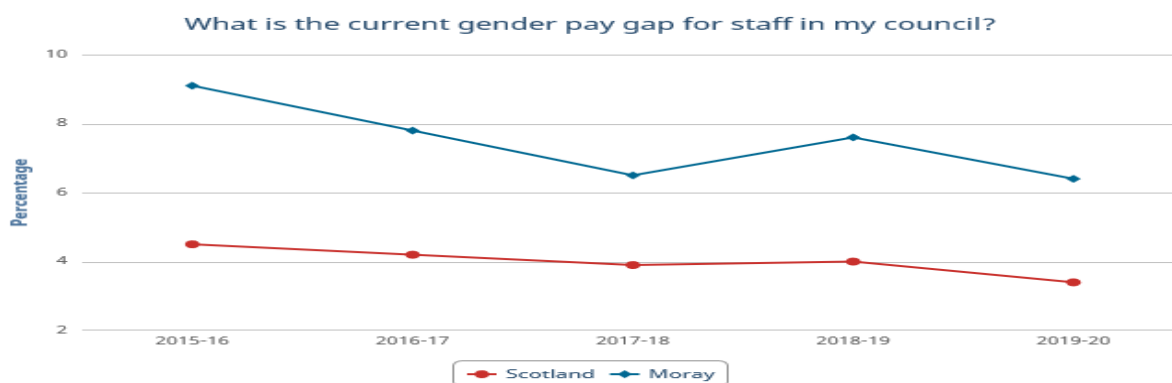
5. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

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 below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.

5.2 Initial publication of 2019/20 Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Indicators in February 2021 will be refreshed in early May. The full suite can be viewed using the My Local Council tool.

5.3 Report is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service Performance Indicators is provided.

Figure 2:
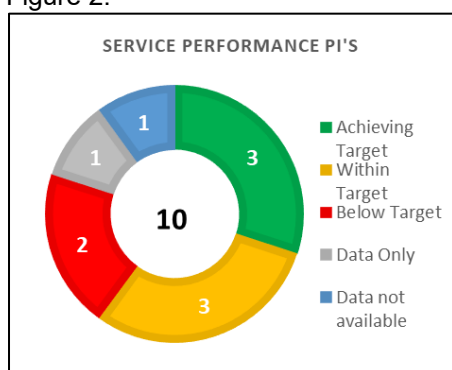
Operational Indicators - successes

5.4 Indicators consistently exceeding target over the last three years include payroll accuracy and availability of website. (PIs FS111, FS112, FICT174)

Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

5.5 Sickness Absence Rates (Teachers) and (All Other Employees) are Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators. An increasing absence trend is evident over the last four years for both indicators with performance above the national average in three and four of those years respectively. Depression/stress/anxiety continues to be the main reason for absence. Feedback from trade unions, managers and employees indicate the long term impact of successive savings resulting in staff reductions and increasing workloads as contributory factors. A planned review on how the workforce can be better supported has been delayed due to recent pandemic

pressures. Meantime, with the increasing number of people working remotely and the anticipated potential impact on mental health and wellbeing, guidance on how to better support and promote staff well-being is currently being refreshed. Reducing absence rates is a long term aim and any actions are likely to take 18-24 months to have a noticeable impact. Links with engagement are clear and the work to develop and improve both engagement and culture is a priority as the council moves into recovery following prolonged periods of lockdown. (PIs CS016B.1 and CS016B.2)
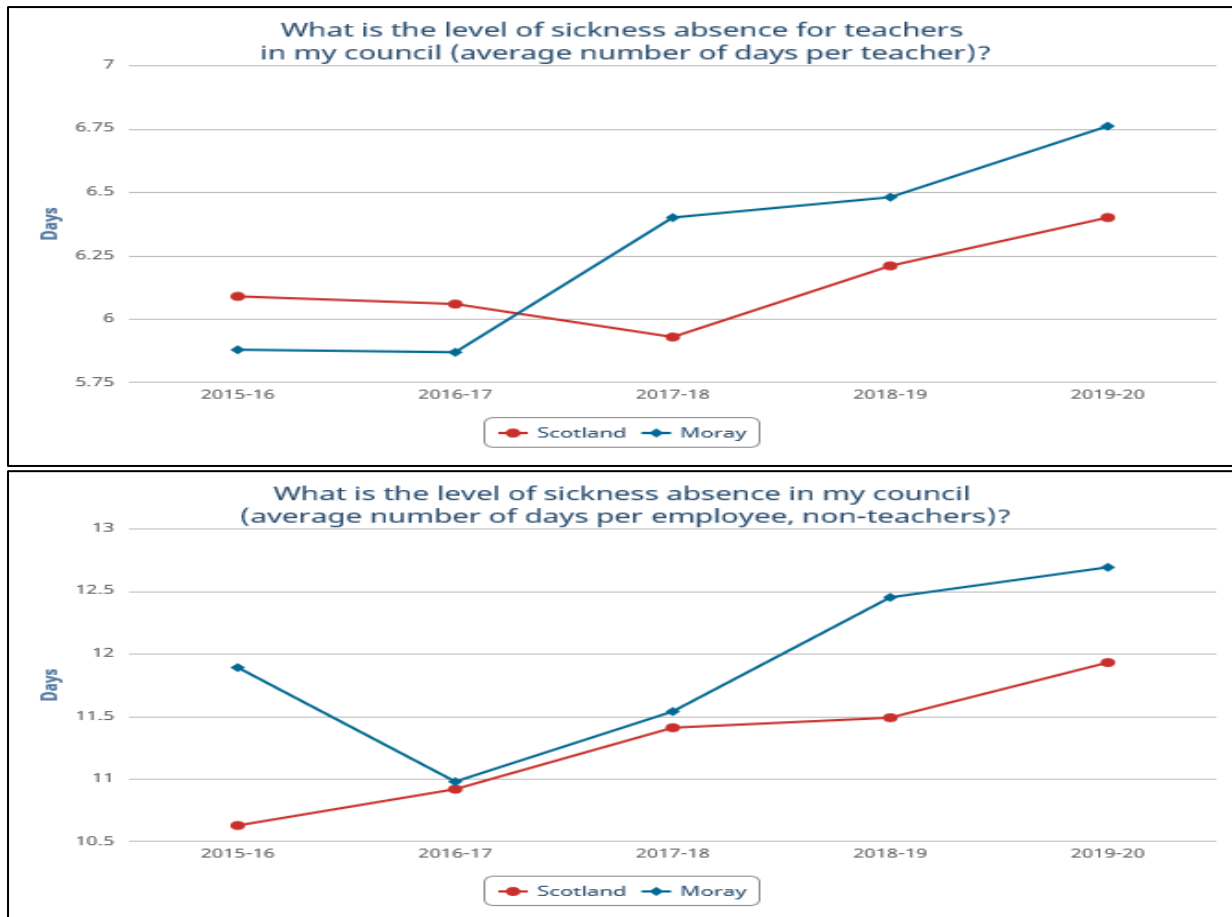
5.6   In 2020/21, 84% of ICT Help Desk calls were resolved within target timescale, below target (90%). Ongoing resourcing issues and competing priorities, such as the issuing devices to schools, account for the slight drop in performance from previous years. There has been significant improvement from the previous quarter (73%). Given the challenges in the reporting year, the service has done well to maintain performance at the level achieved. (PI CPS041)

5.7   As at March 2021, the ICT Action Plan achieved 50% completion, against a target of 90%. Pandemic response and recovery work took priority over the reporting period. Essential upgrade work has continued and efforts to complete the Plan will progress as priorities allow. (PI FICT173 ICT)

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 backing tables for all [Service Complaints](#) are provided.

6.2   Between January and March 2021, the service received two complaints. Three complaints were closed during the same period; two at frontline and one at investigative. One complaint was partially upheld and two were not upheld.

6.3   During the same period, two MP/MSP enquiries were received and responded to.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

6.4   The HR service has dealt with significant increases in workload this year. Temporary changes were necessary for a number of Policies and Procedures while guidance has been provided on many evolving employment related matters. Weekly meetings have also been held with trade unions to ensure continuous workforce engagement.

6.5   Likewise the focus of ICT work changed rapidly in response to the pandemic with supporting Education and increased home working taking priority. To facilitate this, a roll out of equipment was undertaken across the organisation and the ICT infrastructure upgraded. As a result, all members of staff who have been designated as flexible workers can now be supported. In the last 12 months, the number of staff accessing the system remotely has increased from 30 - 40 per day to in excess of 700 per day.

Case Studies

6.6   During the COVID recovery phase, ICT have been involved in several projects that contributed positively to the local community. To allow the Household Waste Recycling Centres to reopen safely and ensure compliance with requirements, development and roll out of a Waste Booking System was undertaken. E-forms allowing public access to various government grants were also created and made available on the council's website.

Consultation and Engagement

6.7   Engagement with staff and acknowledging the effort made every day by colleagues throughout the pandemic was assisted by the Employee Appreciation Scheme as a temporary measure instead of STAR Awards during lockdown. This scheme recognises the contribution made by individuals and teams to both keeping services going and bringing services back during these challenging times. It has been well received by staff with messages of appreciation shared on the dedicated interchange page from services across the council.

6.8   Regular staff updates have provided consistent and 'in the moment' communication to the workforce since early in the pandemic. With frequency adjusted as required from twice weekly to once weekly and now fortnightly, the staff update has aimed to pass on critical corporate information and messages in a timely manner. Feedback has been positive and there are plans to trial continuing with this channel of communication as a more permanent arrangement.

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 HR, ICT & Organisational Development, Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities & OD), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8. **CONCLUSION**

8.1 **As at March 2021, four Service Plan actions have been completed, with progress made on in all other areas. Overall, the HR & OD plan is 38% complete and the ICT Service Plan 61% complete.**

8.2 **COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the planned work of the service this year. Dealing with the pandemic has been and remains an unprecedented evolving situation resulting in changing priorities and increasing workloads. The service has responded well and work on many key areas has progressed albeit perhaps out with original target timescales. The focus for the year ahead will be on delivering the remaining service plan outcomes.**

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Background Papers: Held by Author SPMAN-1656699058-24