REPORT TO: **EDUCATION COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020**

SUBJECT: **EDUCATION COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICE PLANS 2020-22**

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To invite the Committee to consider the Education, Communities and Organisational Development services' Service Plans for 2020-22.

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 People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers)

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee consider and approve the Service Plans for services within Education, Communities and Organisational Development.

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. Typically, actions are more certain in the short term but work will continue beyond a 12 month period and will feature in plans for more than a single year. There has been a delay in presenting service plans due to the Covid-19 pandemic and so these plans cover the period to April 2022 in order to recover the April planning cycle.

3.2 The service planning process focuses on forward planning for medium-term activities supporting delivery of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP), the Corporate Plan and the Best Value action 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.

3.3   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 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.

3.4   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 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.

3.5   A summary of progress is given below based on the annual reviews carried out for each of the service areas.

3.6   For these service plans, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is also a factor. The Emergency Cabinet on 24 June 2020 (paragraph 3 of the minute refers) agreed a recovery and renewal framework setting out the vision and priorities for recovery of council services and how they can support wider recovery and renewal in Moray. This has been taken into account in preparing service plans, as far as the impact is currently known. An indicator has been added to the service plan format to show where there is a contribution to recovery from a previously planned action (that may have been adapted in light of covid experience). There is also a separate section in service plans for specific new recovery and renewal actions and these will be imported into the Council's Recovery and Renewal plan to provide a comprehensive corporate document.

2019/20 Annual Service Review Summaries

 Education

Progress on planned work (success)

3.7   There has been a series of Schools and Curriculum Development plans in place with identified priority areas for improvement. These have been evaluated on a yearly basis and officers' work and that of working groups aligned to this. Since the restructure of the Council Education now encompasses Early Years and a new plan has been developed for 2020-23 based on evaluations of the previous plan and national expectations.

3.8 Progress can be seen in the Q4 performance report which is a separate Committee Paper on this agenda. Key areas of improvement are within attainment measures, achievement of a level data and the revision and implementation of a new learning and teaching strategy as well as a review of child's planning approaches. Since March 2020 an Education Recovery Plan was initiated as a bridging plan through Covid. Areas of high satisfaction have been the work during the Covid lockdown including the establishment of a new service, Childcare Hubs for key workers, remote learning approaches and planning for schools reopening and the successful recovery of schools with no school closures to October 2020.

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

3.9 There was progress in nearly all areas in 2019-20. Vacancies within the Central Team hampered progress in the reviewing of the leadership strategy and framework, aspects of health and wellbeing and in programmes to support learning and teaching. A Quality Improvement officer vacancy which still exists has hampered planned work on the refreshed curriculum narrative across the Broad General Education.

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

3.10 The new plan provides a key focus moving forwards with a clear desire to improve outcomes for children and young people. The main areas of focus are
- *Improving outcomes for all children and young people*
- *Learning, Teaching and Assessment*
- *Curriculum*
- *Supporting all Learners*
- *Leadership*

Education Resources and Communities

Progress on planned work (success)

3.11 The Education Resources & Communities Service is a new service formed following the Management Restructure and therefore does not have a previous service plan to refer back to. Progress has been made in a number of different areas over the last 11 months including the development of the Learning Estate Strategy (approved by Council on 9 October), agreement on a planned future model for the Sport & Leisure Service, and the development of a management structure for a new 'Communities' Service. The service also played a role in the response to Covid by supporting the work of the Grampian Covid Assistance Hub, establishing and managing the Community Resilience Team and providing support to vulnerable children, young people and their families through the Connect model and MASH processes, and the establishment of childcare hubs for children and young people with severe and complex needs.

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

3.12 There are a number of areas where progress has slowed due to pressures on officers' time as a result of Covid. These include the review of ASN services and the review of School Business Administration Support.

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

3.13 The first service plan for Education Resources & Communities focusses on major transformational programmes that will deliver against a number of our Corporate Plan objectives. The Plan also looks to build on the successful initiatives and inspiring responses to the Covid pandemic, in particular the community response, by supporting communities to build on their strengths and assets to lead their own social and economic recovery and to further develop their resilience to any future crises.

3.14 The main areas of focus in the plan are:

- Learning Estate – implementation of Learning Estate Strategy
- Additional Support Needs Services – Service Review
- Sport & Leisure Services – developing an innovative, responsive and sustainable service
- Empowering and supporting communities to build capacity
- Embracing digital service delivery

Human Resources, ICT and Organisational Development

Progress on planned work (success)

3.15 Human Resources and Organisational Development progress has been in two parts since last reported in October 2019. From October to March 2020 progress has been seen on: the senior management review and subsequent organisational restructure; senior recruitment; 2019 employee survey; establishing a collaborative leadership and management development programme; developing the elected member development strategy was and initial arrangements for the Chief Executive Appraisal were agreed. Since March 2020 the focus has been on providing advice and guidance to the council on its response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic both from an HR and health and safety perspective.

3.16 For ICT Services a number of areas were progressed between October 2019 and March 2020: the schools' infrastructure rollout (Year 4) completed on time and within budget (£30k saving); external IT Health Checks completed; Windows 10 project well advanced; telephony and contact centre upgrade progressed; and various Infrastructure upgrades and solutions implemented. Work has also continued to ensure that key systems are up to date and secure and where possible, systems have been improved to allow the transformation of the way staff work.

3.17 ICT services were a priority during the Council's COVID response and under considerable pressure. Work included: configuring schools' laptops for home use to support virtual learning; a waste booking system; multiple eforms for Government Grants and other services; and enabling Contact Centre to work

from home. As much of this work was time critical, certain planned work inevitably slipped and is now being re-prioritised.

3.18 During the pandemic, a priority has been to facilitate home working for Council Services. This has advanced the existing mobile and flexible working Service Plan project. Laptops have also been rolled out as part of the Scottish Government funded Digital Inclusion project, which will have provided over 1300 laptops for pupils experiencing digital exclusion. This will also provide for a pilot of Chromebooks and will help to inform the future strategy for the provision of devices in schools.

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

3.19 As a result of the council's emergency response to the pandemic, progress has been delayed in areas such as living wage/pay work, actions to respond to the 2019 Employee Survey results, progressing the pilots for a workload management toolkit, implementing mental health actions, HR-Payroll system developments and progressing with the Elected Member Development Strategy and Chief Executive Appraisal. While some of these feature in the new Service Plan, they are all also carried forward on to the HR Workforce Plan.

3.20 Within ICT, limited progress was made on work to support Health and Social Care Moray, options for cloud services, ICT Business Continuity Plan and review of ICT Security Policy. All of these are carried forward to the new ICT Service Plan.

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

3.21 The HR and OD Service will continue to support the improvement, modernisation and transformation work that was paused during the pandemic, with a greater emphasis on ensuring the workforce is equipped to work flexibly, including supporting and enabling flexible and homeworking. The HR&OD service will also take forward key elements of the Best Value action plan including leadership development and elected member development.

3.22 The nature of the ICT workload is unlikely to change significantly for the updated plan as the overall direction of travel is unchanged. Technology will continue to underpin much of the work in the Improvement & Modernisation agenda. This, together with the need to comply with new and emerging standards related to ICT, particularly cyber resilience, will be a major focus for the ICT Service and plans will need to be agile and responsive. Efforts will focus on building on the benefits of the cultural change around flexible and mobile working by making it as easy as possible for staff and the public to access the systems and services they require digitally and securely from wherever they need to.

3.23 The main areas of focus in the new plans are:

- Health and wellbeing – increased focus to cater for the heightened levels of anxiety, mental health support, ongoing risk assessments, etc.

- DigiSavvy – increased need to improve digisavviness and basic skills of the workforce to support and enhance flexible working
- Developing health and safety culture and managing risks well
- Actions arising from the 2019 survey – to be agreed with services.

All of these are reflected in the workforce and OD strategy also on this committee agenda, which has been adjusted from the previous iteration to give a re-balancing of emphasis.

Strategy, Governance and Performance

Progress on planned work (success)

3.24 The service managed to achieve the majority of goals which were identified. Notable achievements were: delivering most of the agreed budget savings within time; improving collection rates for Council Tax; improving turnaround times for benefits applications; and successful implementation of IT systems to improve efficiency including IDOX for licencing and CMIS for committee management.

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

3.25 Progress was made on encouraging digital self-service for Council Tax but there is still work to be done in this area which has been taken forward into next year's plan as part of the Transformation programme.

3.26 Some goals were not achieved as planned including digitisation of burial grounds and benchmarking for legal services, largely due to factors outwith our control. They have been taken forward onto this year's service plan.

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

3.27 The focus for the coming year is on the Corporate Plan Objective of a Sustainable Council that provides valuable services to our communities. In particular:

- looking at the Council's Governance arrangements to ensure they provide and efficient model for the future,
- continuing with the redesign of customer services with a "digital first" approach.

There will also be a focus on addressing performance management issues raised in the Council's Best Value Audit report, ensuring that the Council has clear indicators at a Community Planning and Corporate level and that these are reflected in service plans.

3.28 It should be noted that the Internal Audit function submits an annual plan and progress reports to Audit and Scrutiny Committee. The annual plan for 2020-21 was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however, the planned work to March 2021 was submitted to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 14 October 2020.

Service Plans for 2020/22

3.29   Looking forward it is anticipated that a significant amount of planned work will be on transformation and improvement and on implementing the best value assurance action plan. Operationally, the covid-19 pandemic is anticipated to continue to have a significant ongoing impact on service delivery and management of time and resources. It is, therefore, very likely to affect services' ability to focus on planned work as they are required to respond to the demands arising from the pandemic as first priority. It will be important to be realistic about what can be achieved in this environment as services continue to adapt to operating in the Covid-19 environment. However, these more focussed service plans will assist on ensuring that efforts can be concentrated on the goals that align with the Council's priorities or improve efficiency.

3.30   Given the pressures across all services and the need to prioritise resources to the council's priorities, services are focussing on essential service delivery and developments taking account of the direction in the new corporate plan. On this basis, the 4 service plans for Education Communities and Organisational Development Services are attached to this report as follows:

   Appendix 1:   Education (Schools and Early Years)
   Appendix 2:   Education Resources and Communities
   Appendix 3:   HR, ICT and OD Services
   Appendix 4:   Strategy Governance 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 updated Corporate Plan.

   (b)   **Policy and Legal**
         Statutory requirements and council policies are considered by managers when preparing service plans for the year ahead.

   (c)   **Financial implications**
         No additional financial resources are required to support the service plans.

   (d)   **Risk Implications**
         Up to date risk registers are maintained and considered as part of the service planning process.

         The covid-19 pandemic will have an ongoing impact on services as resources are directed to the priority of responding to and adapting to covid requirements. This will mean that resources may be diverted from the actions set out in the plan depending upon how the pandemic evolves.

(e) Staffing Implications

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

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities

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

(h) Consultations

Heads of Services in Education, Communities and Organisational Development have contributed to this report and they have prepared service plans with input from staff within the services and support from the Research and Information team.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Service plans have been prepared identifying the improvements targeted for the period up to April 2022. 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 outcomes. Consideration has also been given to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery that is required to respond to that. The service plans identify the resources allocated to each service and how these will be utilised to deliver core service requirements and improvements.