

Public Performance Report 2020-21



Contents

Our corporate plan	01
More about us	02
A year like no other: our response to Covid-19	03
Recovery and renewal	04
Our people	06
Our place	12
Our future	16
Sustainability	20
Risks and opportunities	24
Showcasing our progress	26



Our corporate plan

Our corporate plan sets out our aims for Moray, and our vision, which is “a life of opportunity for all where people can thrive in vibrant communities and we work together to enrich our future.”

It details our four priorities: our people, our place, our future, and working towards creating a financially sustainable council. Within this public performance report, these priorities will be broken down into outcomes, actions, measures of success and next steps, to demonstrate progress towards achieving these.

Underpinning all of this are our values, which are the driver of everything we do.

We are:

- Fair – in tackling inequalities and tailoring services
- Ambitious – promoting Moray making it better for the most vulnerable
- Improving – driving improvement and investing in the future
- Responsive – involving and listening to communities.



More about us

Established in 1996 following a reorganisation of local government, we are today responsible for public service delivery to our population of 95,710 residents. This includes education, social care, waste, roads maintenance, housing, economic growth and development, and more.

We have around 4,500 valued colleagues delivering services across the region and, considering local data and demographics, we have a workforce representative of Moray as a whole. Turnover rate of staff remains fairly static and is consistent with the median rate of turnover for public sector services.

The council is led by a minority SNP administration of eight councillors. The remaining 18 elected members tasked with providing strategic direction for the council comprise of nine Conservative councillors; one Labour councillor; two independent non-aligned councillors; two independent councillors as part of the Moray Alliance Group; and four independent councillors as part of the Councillors Open Group. There were no by-elections during this reporting period, and the next local government election is scheduled to take place in May 2022.

In August 2020 the Accounts Commission published the Best Value Assurance Report for Moray Council. This outlined a number of challenges however, despite the pandemic response, the council has made significant progress in the areas identified for improvement, which will be set out in a follow-up report in early 2022.



A year like no other: our response to Covid-19

During 2020-21, like every other public sector organisation, we experienced significant and ongoing challenges as we responded to local needs during the pandemic.

In response to national lockdown measures, in March 2020 temporary governance arrangements were enacted which saw the Chief Executive assume his delegated powers under the council's Scheme of Delegation "to take such executive action as may be considered necessary to protect the community and the Council's property and to assist the emergency services and other partners in the response to and recovery from an emergency".

The existing committee structure was suspended, and a cross-party emergency cabinet of seven councillors was formed to authorise decisions normally taken by Full Council. Regular reviews were undertaken and in September the emergency cabinet disbanded and a streamlined structure of committees resumed. Throughout the reporting period both public and press were able to access livestreaming, and an archive of, council meetings.

During the year our focus moved constantly between Covid response – the nature of which changed as the pandemic progressed to include vaccination programme, community testing, return to online learning and the swathe of new grants and financial supports introduced – maintaining normal services as far as possible, and recovery.



We set up community hubs providing childcare for key workers; provided food vouchers to those who were entitled to free school meals; administered Scottish Government business grant schemes, paying out over £31 million in grants to local businesses. Education was delivered differently with a range of solutions to continuing to teach and learn, including drop-off materials for learning and fully blown digital learning. Waste management was rescheduled to incorporate social distancing. Environmental Health provided support for shops which were still open to comply with social distancing and additional hygiene measures, and delivered asymptomatic community testing.

Alongside balancing our commitments as a category one responder in the Local Resilience Partnership with continued demand for vital local services, we endeavoured to progress corporate plan priorities as well our Best Value Action Plan, as part of our improvement agenda.



Recovery and renewal

Recovery and renewal planning followed the council's immediate response to the pandemic in March - May 2020, aimed at supporting the transition to the 'new' council.

The Recovery and Renewal Strategic Framework (RRSF) was approved for consultation and engagement by the Council at its meeting on 24 June 2020, followed by the approval of the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan on 18 February 2021.

What we want to see:

A strong, agile and inclusive recovery; flexing and innovating to regenerate the area; a new Moray – more resilient with the council primed to deliver its priorities. Key focus areas are identified as economic, educational, social and health.

To achieve this, we've:

- Undertaken community engagement to understand the impact of Covid19 in Moray. Almost 80% of the respondents to the initial engagement on the RRSF either strongly agreed or agreed with its contents.
- Facilitated virtual engagements with the community alongside an online survey during the second phase of engagement, generating 1,480 responses and representation from every data zone in Moray, with responses from all age categories, to inform planning.



Economic

- Approved an economic recovery plan including initiatives for business grants and start-up support; small business support; town centre funding; recruitment of a Community Wealth Building Officer.
- Progressed employability and skills activities such as Kickstart, Youth Guarantee Scheme, Parental Employability Support.
- Supported businesses through checking and paying supplier relief claims, working to increase provision of employment land, and provision, development or expansion of industrial units.



Educational

- Planned for and facilitated a phased return to school from 22 February for learners, based on national guidance, while continuing remote learning and in-school learning for children of keyworkers and vulnerable families.
- Responded to changes in advice for school and ELC recovery while managing the impact of staff and learner absence.
- Maintained a focus on learner attainment through supporting the alternative certification model in the senior phase, and literacy and numeracy across the Broad General Education.
- Fully implemented legislative requirement of 1140 hours of early learning and childcare.
- Supported and safeguarded children's health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social

- Formed a working group to progress resilience plans in communities within Moray.
- Brought forward a budget option for investment in strategic leadership and direction to tackle the poverty agenda, including the impact of and recovery from the pandemic.
- Delivered Spaces for People action plan allowing flexible interventions for greater space for pedestrians to physically distance, and infrastructure to encourage cycling.

Health

- Adapted and reprioritised services to meet new demands of Covid-19 and Brexit with prioritisation on Public Health impacts and protecting the economy through Environmental Health and Trading Standards services.

Our people

Provide opportunities where young people can achieve their potential and be the best they can be throughout their lives, with a strong and sustained focus on those individual and groups in our society who experience the most disadvantage and discrimination.



Corporate Plan Priority

1. Children and families: Provide opportunities where young people can achieve their potential and be the best they can be

What we want to see:

The attainment gap between most and least disadvantaged children will reduce.

To achieve this, we've worked to reduce the impact of poverty:

- Supported children and young people, particularly those most affected by poverty, in closing the attainment gap through targeted improvements in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing
- Supported our youngest learners across the Early Level with access to developmentally appropriate play opportunities. This directly correlates to supporting health and wellbeing.

How can we tell it's working?

Education performance data over the last couple of years has been impacted by Covid-19 however, in spite of the pandemic, there has continued to be a focus on education attainment. Figures using the latest reported data demonstrates that whilst the gap between the most and least disadvantaged in the percentage of P1, P4 and P7 (combined) pupils in literacy and numeracy has widened slightly since 2018/19, the gap between the most and least disadvantaged in relation to average tariff scores has closed considerably.

The overall average tariff score for leavers has fluctuated over the last four years, with Moray (800) continuing to perform below the national average (929). Average tariff scores have improved for most deprived pupils based on SIMD (quintiles 1 and 2), according to figures from 2019-20.

The percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or higher has improved over the last four years (up to 2019-20), increasing to 61.9%. Moray performs below both the virtual comparator (64.7%) and nationally (67.5%).

In 2019-20, 63.1% of Looked After children leaving education achieved 1+ award at Level 4, an increase on previous year (60%). Nationally, 72% attained – up from 70% on previous year. 94.6% of all Moray leavers attained 1+ award at Level 4, down on 95.9% previous year – nationally 95.8% attained, in line with the previous year.



No data was collected in 2019-20 in relation to the poverty-related attainment gap due to the early closure of schools as a result of Covid-19. The 2020-21 results show an increase in the poverty-attainment gap from 2018-19, with the literacy and numeracy gap up to 20% and 18% respectively, based on P1, P4 and P7 combined. While Covid-19 has had an impact on education across the country, there is a range of more detailed performance information for Moray that demonstrates positive progress over time underlying the high level figures above, and where the Covid-19 impact can be seen. This is the result of schools continuing to track and monitor progress of learners in order to mitigate attainment gaps arising as a result of national lockdowns, with universal and targeted interventions.

What's next?

Learner, parent and pupil surveys continue to provide key evidence to support school recovery. In order to reduce attainment gaps, schools are using Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) funding as well as Covid-19 Recovery funding to provide a range of targeted interventions and supports.

Schools also continue to develop approaches to wellbeing and family engagement, strengthening knowledge and developing interventions.

What we want to see:

Improved attainment at both the Broad General Education and senior phase

To achieve this, we've taken action to improve attainment including:

- Continued delivering our revised education plan and raising attainment strategy, increasing the digital learning of practitioners through a sharpened focus on digital due to the pandemic
- Analysed and disseminated early indication data from Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence, and agreed follow-up actions with schools
- Ensured effective tracking and monitoring of attainment at senior phase continued through lockdowns to enable valid and quality-assured data was submitted to the Scottish Qualifications Agency.
- Appointed an additional two Quality Improvement Officers to strengthen drive and pace of change in educational attainment
- Continued development of school and local authority level data analysis and interrogation approaches, strengthening support and scrutiny activities for improved outcomes for our children and young people

How can we tell it's working?

The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 in literacy and numeracy is improving, at 24% and 56% respectively; however there has been a reduction in S3 pupils achieving Level 3, at 83% and 92% respectively for literacy and numeracy.

NB. This data relates to 2018-19, as no ACEL data has been collected for S3 pupils for 2019-20 or 2020-21.

What we want to see:

Young people are better prepared for life beyond school and for the workplace

To achieve this, we've targeted action to Improve employability skills and sustain positive school leaver destinations for all people:

- Provided a single framework, supported by four key partners, offering opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes required for the workplace.
- Increased student and business participation in Career Ready, a programme designed to connect young people with employers.
- Strengthened links between schools and colleges to support the most vulnerable and disengaged young people in pathway planning

How can we tell it's working?

The impact of this can be seen in 91.3% of 16-19 year olds participating in education, training and employment, approaching the national average of 93.4%.

What we want to see:

An affordable, sustainable Learning Estate

To achieve this, we've progressed our review and transformation of the learning estate:

- Secured investment funding for Findrassie Primary School
- Continued development of a business case

How can we tell it's working?

In December 2020 councillors approved the new, long-term approach to the learning estate, following consultation with parents.

What's next?

Consultation on the new Findrassie Primary School and engagement on the different options for the three priority Associated School Groups (ASG) of Buckie, Forres and Elgin will accelerate in the coming year.



What we want to see:

More children live with their families and are cared for in strong, safe communities in Moray

To achieve this, we've worked with families as partners to give their children the kind of lives they want them to lead so that their children grow up to be strong and resilient:

- Targeted those with an interest in fostering with courses based on their preferences at the point of initial contact: provision of respite, teenagers, siblings, additional support needs; so that flexibility of provision and placements can be maximised.
- Created a new viability assessment which helps identify alternative, family-based, care when it's needed.
- Introduced a duty and advice line to offer support to our field Social Workers.
- Carried out kinship care 'test of change' [what is this in Plain English?] with social workers making referrals for those on the 'edge of care' to the kinship team, so targeted support to the family can begin.

How can we tell it's working?

The number of children in family-based kinship care has increased significantly. In 2018/19 the number of looked after children was 18.3%, in 2020/21 this climbed to 30.5%.

Latest LGBF data available for this indicator (2019/20) is based on the annual social work return as of 31 July 2019. While showing an improving trend from 79.05% (2018/19) to 81.38%, Moray is placed 31st out of Scotland's 32 Local Authority areas and bottom of our comparator authority group.

Local data from end of quarter 4 (31 March 2021) shows that 82.5% of children are cared for in a community setting, an improving trend compared with the March 2019 figure of 77.9%.

What we want to see:

Improve life chances and outcomes for care experienced children and young people

To achieve this, we've improved identification and monitoring in the youth and criminal justice systems and worked to reduce over representation of care leavers and care experienced young people:

- Increased our use of business intelligence reporting to identify and monitor care leavers and care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems. This has ensured plans are responsive to each young person's needs, while in the service or for onward referral to other support agencies.

How can we tell it's working?

As at March 2021, 13% of care experienced young people were in the youth and criminal justice systems. This is a new measure, having been recorded locally for the first time in Q4 of 2020/21. National evidence shows there is a higher proportion of care experienced young people, per capita, in the Criminal and Youth Justice systems in comparison with mainstream young people, and the aim is to reduce this.

Corporate Plan priority

2. Improve health and wellbeing for the people of Moray

What we want to see:

Improved outcomes for our more vulnerable young people and families

To achieve this, we've made improvements in children and young people's health and wellbeing:

- Launched a 'neglect' toolkit and locality planning model, allowing families to get early help in the right way when they need it, through early intervention to minimise the impact on children and young people of parental substance use on family wellbeing and domestic abuse against children.
- Commenced 'safe and together' training to enable practitioner access to training - both internally and in a multi-agency context – to be able to deliver a new model of support to families experiencing domestic violence.

How do we know if it's working?

The number of children on the child protection register has decreased to 1.6 per 1,000 of the 0-15 population.

The number of looked after children per 1,000 population has also decreased. At the end of Q4 2018/19 the rate stood at 11.6 per 1,000 of 0-17 population, by the end of Q4 2020/21 the rate had decreased to 9.7. Latest national data (2019/20) shows that Moray compares well nationally with the seventh lowest rate of 32 local authorities, and within our comparator authority group with the second lowest rate.

What's next?

There will be continued representation on the Violence against Women strategic group, with ongoing development of practitioner skills. Work will also continue to make better links with the Moray Alcohol & Drug Partnership and adult drug and alcohol services, with Social Work Access and Area Teams providing support to children where there are issues around parental substance misuse.

Corporate Plan priority

3. Optimise outcomes for adults and older people by enhancing choice in the context of a home first approach delivered through the IJB

What we want to see:

People will be able to look after and improve their own health and well-being and live in good health for longer in home environments that support independent living

To achieve this, we've enabled people to have greater opportunity to remain independent within their communities by working with partners to deliver appropriate housing, adaptations and technology enabled care options.

How can we tell it's working?

94% of adults are able to look after their health very well or quite well; this aligns with the national figure also at 94%. (Scottish Health and Care Experience survey)

To date a total of 77 patients completed the Pulmonary Rehab and Physical Exercise programme, which aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of those individuals with respiratory conditions, through the promotion of self-management strategies and tools.



What we want to see:

People are able to live independently at home or in a homely setting in their community

To achieve this, we've ensured that people are supported at home or in a homely setting as far as possible.

How can we tell it's working?

83% of adults are able to live as independently as possible; this is higher than the national figure of 81%.

91% of adults spent the last 6 months of life at home or in a community setting; this aligns with the national figures at 90%.

63% of older people with long-term needs are supported so they can remain at home. This is higher than the national figure of 62%.

Near Me Video consulting platform has been introduced across Health and Social care to enable access to people and their families to the services they need to aid management of symptoms and provide advice and support, arranging a face to face appointment if required. 2020/21 saw a full take-up and scale-up of Near Me video calling by all GP practices in Moray with a 915% increase in consultations from the previous year (459 to 4200) and a 1,173% rise in consultation hours delivered using the platform (58,000 to 690,200).

Vaccination centres and mobile testing units were deployed to enable people to be treated in their local communities. Nursing teams visited care homes and those unable to travel to administer vaccinations.

Grampian Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) was established to co-ordinate available resources from partners and the communities to provide support to those shielding from Covid-19.



What we want to see:

People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected

To achieve this, we've provided choices and control for service users over decisions affecting their care and support and have assessed and responded to housing needs of older people in partnership with the IJB.

How can we tell it's working?

81% of adults rated services in Moray as good or very good; this aligns with the national figures at 80%.

77% of adults had positive experiences at the GP in Moray; this is slightly lower than the national figure of 79%.

Adults are 80% positive that they have a say in how help, care or support is provided to them in Moray. This is higher than the national figure of 75%.

Pilot for Discharge to Assess - the targeted functional approach results in more people remaining independent after a hospital admission or attendance - had 48 participants, all who expressed high satisfaction with the service and showed improving gait, balance and mobility, with 88% patients agreeing their functional performance had improved

Self-Directed Support (SDS) intensively supported direct payment recipients throughout Covid-19, in particular those employing Personal Assistants in relation to employment law, Covid-19 guidance and Personal Protective Equipment.

[Next steps] What's next?

Building on the progress of the collaborative approach of "Home First" the MIJB has committed to scale up the Discharge to Assess team so all eligible patients will be supported.

Hospital at Home programme for Moray is at the scoping stage to establish a model to provide a level of acute hospital care in an individual's own home. This will be progressed during 2021/22

Following two tests of change Health and Social Care Moray, and Moray Council, have worked in partnership to launch a new respiratory programme dedicated to those living with or at risk of respiratory disease. Based on physical activity and behavioural change, healthcare professionals will refer patients to either the core pulmonary rehabilitation programme or to a new physical activity programme to support individuals within their own homes and local community.

Our place



Corporate Plan Priority

1. Empower and support communities to build capacity by becoming more informed, involved and influential in service design and delivery

What we want to see:

Our communities' ability to address their own needs and aspirations is improved

To achieve this, we've enhanced community participation in service delivery:

- Supported the group at Longmore Hall, Keith, to explore the best route for transfer as a Trust.
- Supported communities to achieve asset transfer of Forres Town Hall and land at Lesser Borough Briggs.
- Supported communities to have requests approved (awaiting transfer) for land at Coularbank Park, Lossiemouth, Cullen Community and Residential Centre, Findochty Town Hall and Alice Littler Park, Aberlour.

How can we tell it's working?

Two out of eight community asset transfers have been completed; however it should be noted this work has been significantly impacted due to Covid restrictions.

What's next?

Work going forward will be to support Lossiemouth Community Development Trust, having had a CAT lease agreed for land at Coularbank for the skate park project.

What we want to see:

1% of council budget allocated through PB by April 2021

To achieve this, we've made a start on developing and implementing Participatory Budgeting:

- Progressed a pilot project, £50k for Looked After Children to support raising attainment.
- Branding of "Our Communities, Our Choices" was agreed and the online citizen participation tool, CONSUL site developed, tested in the year to March 2021.

How can we tell it's working?

The pandemic significantly impacted on the development and implementation of Participatory Budgeting, to have indicatively at least 1% of Council budgets by March 2021, amounting to £1.7m.

What's next?

Participatory Budgeting opportunities will continue with budget approved for play areas in 2021/22.

Corporate Plan priority

2. Improve our understanding of the issues in our communities based on the experience of local people

What we want to see:

More of our activities, services and plans are influenced by the communities they serve

To achieve this, we've developed engagement with the public on the future of council services:

- Undertaken three significant consultation events in the reporting year:
 - Climate Change Strategy consultation centred around three key strands; a public consultation, online webinars and Children and Young People surveys generating just short of 250 responses.
 - The initial stage of the public engagement on the Recovery and Renewal Strategic Framework was undertaken in June 2020, the second stage over the summer involved virtual meetings with community organisations to learn about experiences at a community level. An online survey was also launched.
 - Public consultation on the Community Council Scheme Review ran from September to November, across two stages, to gain feedback on the current scheme and suggestions for improvement.

How can we tell it's working?

Some 250 responses were generated by the climate change strategy consultation; while findings from nearly 1,500 responses were considered when compiling the Strategic Framework for Recovery and Renewal update to a special meeting of the council in February 2021.

An amended draft scheme for the Community Council Scheme Review was produced as a result of suggestions for improvement, which was then subject to further public consultation before approval in June 2021.

What we want to see:

We are more successful in developing a shared understanding between the council and communities that helps us to design the future together

To achieve this, we've developed locality engagement to ensure solutions are influenced by the experience of local people:

- Agreed to prioritise Forres, Lossiemouth and Keith in the next phase of locality planning, following agreement of an expanded approach to locality planning.
- Reported locality work in New Elgin East and Buckie Central East to the Community Learning and Development Strategy Group.

How can we tell it's working?

Continued working within these two communities (New Elgin East and Buckie Central East) ensured they were well-placed and quick to respond to the developing needs of their communities during the pandemic.

An extra note: Not all planned activity has been delivered as expected, largely due to the pandemic; however the role of communities and building up resilience throughout this period has ensured good foundations for acceleration going forward.

Examples of unplanned work which was reactive to support communities during the pandemic include Lossiemouth Resilience Plan and levels of participation in the areas of Buckie and Speyside. Deployment of staff to lead and co-ordinate in each area was welcomed by communities, has built and reinforced relationships which will reap future benefits.



Our future



Corporate Plan priority:

1. Create a step change in the regional economy to enable inclusive economic growth

What we want to see:

Better employment, skills and earnings, increase in higher-skilled jobs and wage levels through a reduction in the gender pay gap, and increasing apprenticeships in key sectors

To achieve this, we've developed a collaborative approach to employability and focussed on employability as part of Covid-19 recovery

- Set out employability actions relating to employability and skills within the Economic Recovery Plan.
 - Over 90 employers applied for Kickstart places.
- Secured funding for a new employability and training hub at Elgin Youth Café to support digital inclusion in an environment that will encourage the hardest to reach clients to access Moray pathway providers.
- Made pathway apprenticeship opportunities available across five frameworks: business skill (including digital); information technology digital software; information technology digital hardware; social services children and young people; and engineering.
- Developed a pre-apprenticeship scheme, which is under review by the Department for Work and Pensions commissioning team.
- Boosted support for start-up apprenticeships through funding from youth guarantee scheme, increasing the level of support to £5,000.
- Recruited four new Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Co-ordinators to support employer engagement in schools and deliver the young person's guarantee commitment.

How can we tell it's working?

There has been a decrease in the percentage of people earning less than the living wage, now sitting at 21.5%, down from 24% in the previous year.

Median gross weekly earnings have increased in the past year from £550.80 to £565.80. However, the rate of growth, at 2.8%, has been slower than that nationally at 4.5%.

The gender pay gap, which was showing signs of improvement, has also now increased as a result of the pandemic. This is likely influenced by the higher number of women in low-paid, part-time employment, in roles which were more likely placed on furlough. Year-on-year, the mean gender pay gap has grown from 14.8% to 17.1%. This equates to a pay gap of £96.75 mean gross weekly earnings. Given this is likely influenced by the pandemic, we should see this gap reduce as economic recovery progresses.

As of March 2021, the number of Modern Apprenticeship starts across the financial year was a total 341. This had declined from 399 in the previous year, and we will know measures are working when we see a reversal of this decline. Although, there was a 78% achievement rate for modern apprenticeships in Moray in 2020, which is an increase from 76% in the previous year.

Corporate plan priority:

2. Work to protect and enhance our environment, creating a more resilient and sustainable future

What we want to see:

Increased economic impact of tourism in Moray, and an increase in the level of 16-29 years living and working in Moray

To achieve this, we've:

- Progressed work on securing investment through the Moray Growth Deal. In the longer term, Growth Deal projects will contribute to the economic impact of tourism in Moray, as well as aiming to retain and attract young people to live and work in Moray. The Heads of Terms document was signed in August 2020, with Full Deal expected to happen during 2021.
- Applications opened for Moray Employer Recruitment Initiative (MERI) encouraging employers to recruit young people aged 16-24 years by offering up to £8,000 for employers providing a supporting placement

How can we tell it's working?

The economic impact of tourism in Moray had grown steadily over the 10 years to March 2020, when it reached £134m. However, as a result of the pandemic this had fallen by 57% to £57.63m at March 2021. Across the Cairngorm National Park, there was a 66% reduction in the economic impact of tourism from 2019 to 2020. Though, it is worth noting, that Visit Scotland have advised that data collection for a number of tourism monitors has been impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, affecting the reliability of the above statistics. As the region emerges from the pandemic and economic recovery gathers pace, we expect to see the economic impact improve.

Moray has an ageing population with the number of 16-24 year-olds within the Moray population on a declining trajectory. This number is estimated to have fallen by a further 2.7% year on year, in 2020. We will know the corporate plan measures are having a positive impact when we see the slowing of this trajectory, and ultimately an increase in this population.

What we want to see:

Achievement of targets, indicators and outcomes identified in climate change action plan

To achieve this, we've prepared a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan which:

- Ensured the strategy has taken account of the environmental, economic and social aspects of climate change and sustainability to provide a strategic direction for the council to follow for the next decade.
- Set our 57 actions within the action plan, and report progress against these.
- Secured representation at both elected member and officer level at the launch of Moray's Climate Assembly in February 2021 arranged by tsimORAY, aimed at stimulating new activity in Moray to tackle climate change.

How can we tell it's working?

- Council agreed the climate change strategy and action plan in March 2021, setting a goal of being carbon neutral by 2030. In 2020/21 the council's carbon emissions reduced by 11.7% compared to reporting year 2019/20. While some of this reduction is due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some is due to changes to waste management arrangements as well as other operational changes.



What we want to see:

Increased provision and use of electric vehicles and plant, with supporting infrastructure

To achieve this, we've promoted and developed active and green travel:

- Added two electric vehicle charging points to council car parks
- Facilitated Bikeability within schools

How can we tell it's working?

Although delivery of Bikeability was impacted by Covid-19, we have growing participation with over 50% of primary schools already delivering the training.

The network of electric car charging points in Moray has increased to 25, with new chargers installed in Elgin, Buckie and Keith for both public use and to enable the council to introduce more electric vehicles. From 2020 we aim to increase this by 3% each year.

The latest stats available show a reduction in fuel carbon output by 339 tonnes, or 7.9%, when comparing the climate change return for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

What we want to see:

Implement surface water infrastructure improvements in vulnerable flood risk areas

To achieve this, we've developed Surface Water Management Plans:

- Identified risk of surface water flooding through surface water management plans
- Prioritised new schemes within plans to reduce future risk to properties
- Continued work on a strategy, due to be published by December 2021

How can we tell it's working?

Plans demonstrate reduced risk to approximately 100 properties over the next 10 years.

Sustainability

Create a sustainable council that provides valued services to our communities.



Corporate Plan priority:

1. Council's Financial strategy

What we want to see:

Financial planning set in longer-term context, and a longer agreed lead-in time for capital projects.

To achieve this, we've reviewed and developed the council's financial strategy:

- A medium to long-term financial strategy setting out how we will realign finances to fit with corporate plan priorities.

How can we tell it's working?

We have been reducing our reliance on the use of reserves to fund core expenditure. In 2020/21 we budgeted £2.348m, with actual spend of £2.114m. This equates to 1% of recurring expenditure, compared with 2.3% and 1.9% as reported in 2017/18 and 2018/19 respectively.

Corporate Plan priority:

2. Transformation to achieve through our modernisation and improvement programme.

What we want to see:

Our modernisation and improvement transformation to deliver an ICT strategy taking account of council priorities and requirements; implementation of online services for staff and services users for improved outcomes; a single service point of contact; and cultural change in customer service which delivers an enabling approach for most, with support for those who need it.

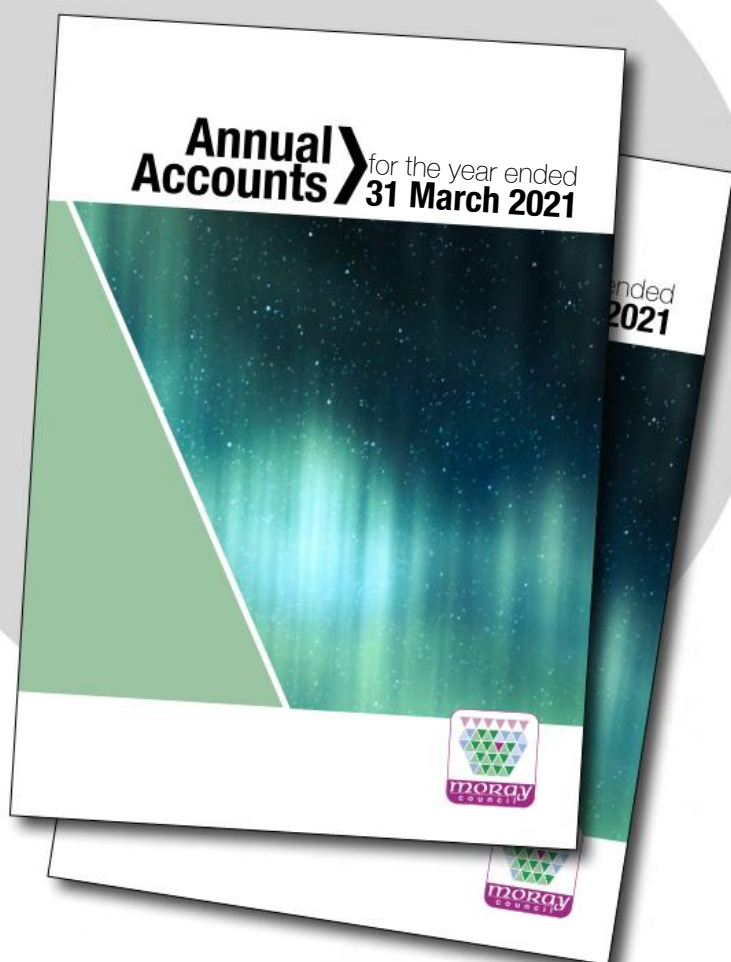
To achieve this, we've reviewed and developed the ICT and Digital Strategy, extended the availability of online services and redesigned customer services:

- Reviewed our ICT and Digital Strategy to reflect the impact of Covid-19, including increased homeworking, learning and teaching, digital communications and video conferencing.
 - This was informed through ICT actions in responding to the first stages of the emergency – most notably school closures and the working from home directive: providing equipment for critical staff to enable homeworking; extension of the VPN to enable greater homeworking for non-critical services; exploring options to address the rapidly-escalated demand in video conferencing; provision of technology to support remote learning; eform development to support pandemic-related requirements such as childcare hub applications and equipment loan requests
- Successfully rolled out a parent portal to all Moray primary schools.
- Submitted a business case for children's social work to extend online services to improve access.

Progress has been limited in customer service redesign due to pandemic-related closure of access points in March 2020. As pandemic restrictions are lifted it is planned to deliver a revised model for face-to-face contact for library information hubs.

How can we tell it's working:

Families have signed up to the parent portal, with around 38% of pupil records now matched to parental accounts on the system. Schools are beginning to use advanced features extending the availability of online services to absence reporting, report cards, parent evening bookings, permission slips and notification and timetables.



What we want to see:

Development of our workforce, including workforce planning taking account of council priorities and requirements, and effective and timely employee relations associated with change management at service and corporate level

To achieve this, we've reviewed and developed the workforce strategy and managed workforce changes:

- Agreed an interim workforce plan for 2020-2022 which sets out how workforce planning will support the delivery of council services. For this reporting period, most work was dominated by pandemic-related response to national and clinical advice.
- Resumed strategic trade union/officer group meetings along with frequent and regular Covid-19 related trade union/officer meetings throughout the period.
- Held service-based meetings to manage specific change management exercises.

How can we tell it's working:

The latest data shows that 34% of employees who were experiencing change were satisfied with the way the change management process was handed. There is no updated figure for this as there wasn't an employee survey undertaken during the reporting period to enable measurement on the progress of this indicator.





£39.2m

Invested in Moray during the year



• £20.0m

New schools, improvements to existing schools and facilities for early learning and childcare



• £10.0m

Waste management facilities, including a joint project with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils to build an energy from waste plant



• £2.7m

Vehicles and electric car chargers



• £2.2m

Road improvements, road safety measures and sustainable travel



• £1.9m

ICT and other equipment



• £0.9m

Various works at harbours



• £0.6m

Bridge renovations



• £0.6m

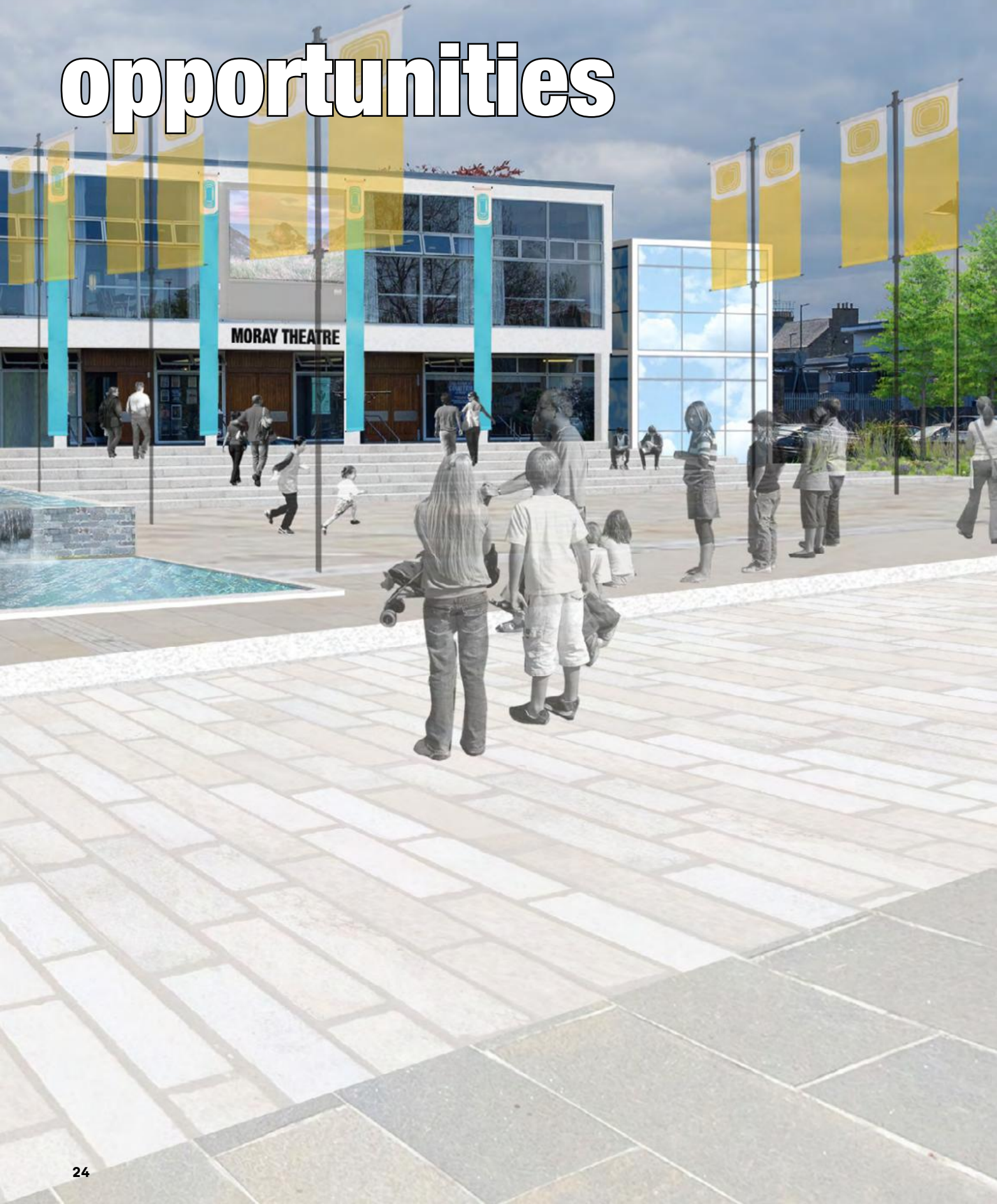
Other land and buildings



• £0.3m

Street lighting

Risks and opportunities



Future risks

We maintain and keep under review a Corporate Risk Register, with risks grouped under nine themes. This section of the management commentary identifies the Council's main concerns for financial risk and also areas of planned development.

We expect to need to make savings over the next two years in order to balance our budget without relying on reserves. However, there is considerable lack of clarity about our future financial position.

Our main risks are:

- Uncertainty as to the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council's finances, the local economy, the national economy and what this will mean for public spending generally and our grant settlement in particular.
- The impact of Brexit.
- A combination of the above is already showing in shortages of some materials (eg timber) and significantly increased costs of construction are forecast as well as delays.
- We also recognise risk from the social impact of the pandemic which may result in increased demand for Council services.
- Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) is overcommitted against its budget and we will have to fund our share of any overspend. The long-term impact of the pandemic on MIJB services is as yet unknown.
- Our school estate requires significant investment to bring facilities up to the Scottish Government's recommended 'B-B' standard.

How we are managing these risks:

- Rigorous financial monitoring and review.
- Working within Moray Economic Partnership to support the local economy.
- Developing Community Wealth Building.
- Assessing vulnerability issues regarding Brexit.
- Reviewing our capital programme for areas of increased risk of slippage and / or costs increase.
- Engaging with local communities; ASN review; schools well-being investment.
- Joint monitoring reviews with MIJB officers and officers and Board members from NHS Grampian.
- We have commenced a comprehensive Learning Estate Review.

... and potential opportunities:

- The Moray Growth Deal, which will see in excess of £100m investment in Moray's economy.
- Our Improvement and Modernisation Programme, redesigning how we deliver services in today's world, learning lessons from the pandemic, building on our accelerated investment in ICT for flexible working and investing in Council priorities.
- Our Learning Estate Review, looking at how we can improve the learning experience by enhancing the environment in which it takes place.
- Our Climate Change Strategy, looking to become carbon neutral by 2030.



Showcasing our progress

Despite the challenges the year brought, we were able to demonstrate the achievements of our colleagues, partners and communities against our corporate plan priorities.

1 May 2020

Our people



School catering staff volunteer with Moray Food Plus to help feed local families

15 May 2020

Our future



Multi-million pound Growth Deal for Moray gets thumbs-up from UK and Scottish parliaments

6 July 2020

Our place



Buckie community groups praised in Education Scotland report

17 July 2020

Our people



New £2 million Pilmuir Nursery handed over to Council for August return for children

22 July 2020

Our place



Work begins on new £43k play park in Buckie

3 August 2020

Our future



Moray's 10-year local development plan signed off

17 September 2020

Our people



Devices delivered to digitally-disconnected 'shielders' in Moray

6 October 2020

Our place



Community Asset Transfers in Aberlour, Lossiemouth and Findochty given go-ahead

28 October 2020

Our people



Dedicated employability support for young people, and low-income parents, in development

14 January 2021

Our people



£12.8 million Linkwood Primary School opens

4 February 2021

Our people



Moray Council offers free on-site Coronavirus testing to businesses

10 March 2021

Our future



Action plan to secure carbon neutral status for Moray Council approved



223847