



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 3 MARCH 2020

SUBJECT: CORPORATE PLAN 2019-2024

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Council approval for the Corporate Plan for 2019 to 2024, following engagement with community representatives in December 2019.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Council in terms of Section II (12) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the preparation of a plan that is of a corporate nature.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- i) reviews and notes the feedback from the engagement with community representatives (Appendix 3);**
- ii) approves the Corporate Plan for 2019 to 2024 (Appendix 1) and notes that the plan and delivery framework (Appendix 2) will continue to be developed and that a report on progress be submitted after 6 months; and**
- iii) notes that the community engagement implementation will proceed to the next stages, subject to more detailed plans being prepared and reported to the Council for approval.**

3. BACKGROUND

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

- 3.2 As reported to the Council in October, given the increasing criticality and complexity of financial strategy, this element of corporate planning is now reflected in a separate document. The short term financial strategy is set out in the Financial Planning report which was considered by the council on 12 February 2020. The draft Medium to Long term Financial strategy to support the corporate plan, and in particular the priority of a sustainable council for the future, was agreed at the Council meeting on 27 November 2019 (paragraph 17 of the minute refers) and approval of the final version is a separate item on the agenda of this Council meeting.
- 3.3 The Council's approach to improvement and modernisation is set out in the corporate plan and is a further critical and developing area of work.
- 3.4 There is now a set of documents that have been developed to cover the elements of the corporate planning process required to enable the delivery of council priorities:

Corporate Planning Suite

- Corporate Plan (including the Improvement and Modernisation approach)
- Corporate Plan Delivery Framework
- Financial Strategy – short, medium and long term

Development of Draft Corporate Plan 2019-2024

- 3.5 The report to the Council on 2 October 2019, noted the issues that had been taken into account in developing the second iteration of the plan. In particular, the statistical profile of Moray had not changed and the long term nature of many of the indicators requires consistent sustained focus on the priorities. Therefore, there was little change proposed to the highest level priorities which were re-expressed into priorities of Our Place, Our Future and Our People, with continued focus on financial sustainability.
- 3.6 However, the revised plan identified the need for greater emphasis on equalities, the environment and being more empowering and enterprising through new approaches to the way we do our business. This change in emphasis was carried through into the actions, outcomes and the measures in the delivery framework, which is cascaded to service plans and actions through the Council's approved Performance Management Framework (PMF).

Corporate Plan Delivery Framework

- 3.7 **Appendix 2** sets out the actions and outcomes planned for the implementation of the corporate plan. To avoid confusion with the PMF policy itself, the name of the document in **Appendix 2** has been changed to the Corporate Plan Delivery Framework (referred to as Corporate Plan Performance Management Framework in the October Council report). The delivery framework will enable implementation and monitoring of the Corporate Plan using the revised PMF. However, the PMF now has greater emphasis on outcome measurement and this is an area of the Corporate Plan that will require continued attention as this approach is developed.

- 3.8 It should also be noted that as the Corporate Plan is updated and other priorities change (e.g. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) or national priorities), that relevant strategy documents and plans will be updated to reflect these, so that references remain relevant and any necessary adjustments to work can be considered. In particular the development of new plans in relation to children's services and climate change is nearing conclusion and there will come forward for approval over the next few months. It will be necessary to incorporate the detail from these into the Corporate Plan to support delivery of the strategic priorities in these areas. These enhancements will be included in the planned 6 month progress report and approved changes will be incorporated for monitoring and reporting in the annual review provided to the council.

Engagement Strategy

- 3.9 One of the areas of changing emphasis in this corporate plan is empowering by collaborating and working to engage and involve people (partners, businesses and communities). The Engagement Strategy for corporate planning was approved by the Council on 2 October 2019 (paragraph 9 of the minute refers) and stage 1 was to undertake development activity with the public on the future of council services to improve mutual understanding, generate interest establish connections.
- 3.10 To take this forward, an event was held in Elgin Town Hall on 26 November 2019. To share information on the draft Council Corporate Plan and to seek views on the priorities and how the community could work with the council on these in future taking account of the challenging context of reducing finances and increasing demands. The event was arranged by invitation to community groups and representatives. A feedback report from the event is available **(Appendix 3)**
- 3.11 In summary, the conclusions from the event were that there is a willingness from communities, with support, to work with the Council to meet the challenges ahead. To facilitate the partnership working required to do this, communities are seeking more opportunities to engage with council officers in open and transparent discussion to build trust, with more proactive communication so that experiences of local people could influence future solutions. Participatory Budgeting was highlighted in several areas as being a good way in which the Council and communities could work together. It was also suggested that by working with existing networks a targeted or wider audience can be reached.
- 3.12 The communities identified the Moray they want to see in five years' time as: Sustainable, Forward-Thinking and Thriving.
- 3.13 Based on the success of the community event, a similar session was held with the senior managers on the Council's Leadership Forum. This was also well received and ensured that the senior leadership of the council has had the opportunity to consider the priorities and how to proceed to take these forward.
- 3.14 The Leadership Forum (a group of the council's senior managers from service manager level up) identified the Moray they want to see in five years' time as:

Sustainable, Forward-Thinking and Resilient. The degree of similarity between the community and officer outcomes is of note. These themes are picked up throughout the Corporate Plan priorities and services will take them into account in reviewing implementation actions in service plans moving forward.

Next Steps

Engagement

- 3.15 The next stage of engagement work set out in the plan, is work in specific communities, most likely geographic and based on inequality of outcomes. With the approval of the Council's Participatory Budgeting Framework, this can also commence as pieces of work are identified and agreed by Policy and Resources committee. In addition, there will be service specific engagement work and where possible this will be identified in advance and, if appropriate, linked with the planned corporate engagement work. As well as being consistent with the approach set out in the revised Corporate Plan, this will support the council in its responsibilities under the Community Empowerment Act 2015. An overview of the proposed programme was included in the report to the Council on 2 October 2019. A more detailed plan will now be prepared and reported to the Council for agreement.

Delivery of the Corporate Plan

- 3.16 As is noted above, this Corporate Plan has set out to build on previous experience and improve links with other plans and action, and the focus on outcomes and clear measurable performance indicators. This has proven challenging and further refinement of the Corporate Plan Delivery Framework will be required to fulfil these objectives.
- 3.17 Service Plans for 19/20 and beyond have begun to be prepared taking account of the core aspects of the revised draft Corporate Plan and a number have already been submitted to relevant Service Committees on the understanding that changes emerging through the engagement on the draft Plan will be reflected in the Service Plans for 20/21, preparation of which will begin when the budget for that year has been agreed.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

The proposed Corporate Plan at **Appendix 1** will replace the previous plan if approved. The new plan has had to consider providing clear focus in challenging circumstances and builds on the work of the previous iteration of the corporate plan (Moray 2023).

(b) Policy and Legal

Consideration has been given to relevant policy and legislative requirements and direction in the preparation of the plan (reference PESTLE reference document) and to statistical evidence associated with life in Moray. The Plan sets out direction for the council which

may influence the development of future policy and this will be reported where appropriate.

(c) Financial implications

The Corporate Plan should provide direction and focus for financial planning and the alignment of resources to priorities. This is reflected in the financial strategy report that is also on the agenda for this meeting of the council.

(d) Risk Implications

The current operating environment has increasing levels of risk, as explained previous in the financial planning and monitoring reports to the council. These are not repeated in full below but there is a clear potential for these risks to impact on the delivery of the priorities in the corporate plan.

The risks referred to include:

- the council is unable to achieve financial stability
- services pressures cannot be accommodated
- policy and legislative requirements constrain future options for our school estate
- local government funding is lower or costs increase by more than predicted
- the plans for improvement and modernisation and improvement do not develop at the required speed or provide the necessary level of savings and efficiency.

Robust risk management procedures are being applied to all decision making processes and will be used in the management and monitoring of projects. In this environment it will also be increasingly important that there is strong political leadership, direction and resilience in the pursuit of the corporate agenda.

(e) Staffing Implications

None directly arising, however, the realignment of resources as the council's business is reviewed may lead to workforce implications in future which will be reported in due course.

(f) Property

There is a clear need to review the council's asset base for the future, and work is underway on this as part of the improvement and modernisation programme which is identified in the plan. There are no specific proposals or implications at present but this will be reported for consideration and approval once the review work is complete.

(g) Equalities/Socio-economic impact

There are no equalities impacts from the corporate plan. However, as projects and actions develop equalities considerations will be taken into account and reported through Equality Impact Assessments as required.

The Council's ongoing commitment to equalities is reflected in the plan.

(h) Consultations

The Administration Group, the Corporate Management Team and Senior Management Team have been involved in the development of the Corporate Plan.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Council made considerable progress against the four priorities set out in the 2018-23 Corporate Plan. However, there are also a number of lessons to be learned in terms of the complex planning and performance management arrangements that council business requires. Account has been taken of these and the direction and approach of the new council administration in preparing the next iteration of the council's corporate plan, which is proposed in Appendix 1. Work will continue on the further development and refinement of specific actions and measurable outcomes, particularly related to developing plans in children's services and on climate change. Therefore, the council is asked to approve the plan and to receive a further monitoring report in 6 months.

5.2 In order to advance the implementation of the plan, it is proposed to instigate a programme of community engagement. This began with the launch of the draft 2019-24 corporate plan and will now move on to specific work in selected communities, proposals for which will be reported to the council for agreement.

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Background Papers:
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