



REPORT TO: ECONOMIC GROWTH, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2020

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT (ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES) – HALF YEAR TO MARCH 2020

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period from 1 October 2019 to 31 March 2020.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability 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 Economic Development and Infrastructure, Community Services (Housing and Property) and Finance (budget, capital and revenue monitoring) (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) scrutinises performance of the Service Plan, Operational Performance Indicators and Complaints to the end of March 2020;**
- (ii) welcomes good performance;**
- (iii) notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At a meeting of the Moray Council on 7 August 2019, a revised Performance Management Framework was approved (para 5 of the minute refers). A key part of this framework covers the Managing, Delivering and Reporting of Performance. This was intended to increase focus on priority areas and reduce the detailed narrative around lower priority indicators in order to ensure that debate, scrutiny and challenge was directed at the areas of strategic importance to the council rather than routine operational performance. Whilst the latter is clearly deserving of scrutiny if trends

develop, consideration at committee should focus on the ability to deliver priorities in the LOIP, Corporate Plan and Service Plan. This half yearly performance report allows the Service Plan priorities, any relevant Operational Performance Indicators and Complaints Data for Environmental and Commercial Services, to be monitored by committee as outlined in this section of the framework.

- 3.2 The Performance Monitoring Statements document was developed to support the Performance Management Framework. This half-yearly performance report refers to this document. The document includes tabular updates on actions, indicators relating to Service Plan priorities as well as complaints data, and can be found at:

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_92321.html

4. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 At a meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee on 5 November 2019, approval was given for the Environmental and Commercial Services Service Plan covering the period 2019-2022 (para 6 of the minute refers). As per the Performance Management Framework, this Service Plan consists of two distinct sections;

- Strategic Outcomes - locked down against commitments in National Outcomes, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and the Corporate Plan.
- Service Level Outcomes – reflecting service priorities not covered in higher level plans.

- 4.2 A total of 15 actions were included in the Service Plan; 7 were due for completion by the end of 2019/20 with 3 completed as planned. All 4 actions that have not met the target timescales have recorded progress at over 70%.

Level of Action	Number of Actions	Expected completion by end of 2019/20	Actual completion by end 2019/20
Strategic Outcome	5	2	1
Service Level Outcomes	10	5	2

Strategic Outcomes - successes

- 4.3 Contributing to the Corporate Plan priority ‘Our Future: Drive economic development to create a vibrant economy for the future’, and in particular achieving targets identified in the Climate Change Action Plan, 55% of all registered vehicles have been fitted with vehicle fuel telematics systems improving driver styles and reducing carbon emissions exceeding the target of 30% by March 2020. Sample fuel reports show the anticipated fuel savings of 7% have also been realised ECS19-22 (Yr1) - Section 4(a)i.
- 4.4 In addition, a reduction in single use plastics in school meals catering to 10% has been achieved by the end of March, a month earlier than expected. Single use plastic is on track to be fully eliminated as planned by August 2020 reducing the carbon footprint ECS19-22 (Yr1) – Section 4(a)ii.

Service Level Outcomes - successes

- 4.5 Operational continuity and improved performance of winter maintenance provision has been achieved following a review of the winter maintenance programme that reduced the number of priority 1 routes from 17 to 13. This resulted in improved efficiency and routes still being completed within the planned 2.5 hours ECS19-22 (Yr 1) - Section 5(h).
- 4.6 The chemical review for building cleaning was completed successfully with an alternative chemical, with higher antibacterial properties, identified that can deliver potential savings of 39%. This chemical has been introduced into the cleaning of schools and will be phased into all office cleaning by the end of the March 2021 ECS19-22 (Yr 1) - Section 5(l).

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

- 4.7 Within the Corporate Plan priority ‘Our Future: Drive economic development to create a vibrant economy for the future’ is the planned outcome to increase provision and use of electric vehicles and plant with supporting infrastructure. Promoting and developing active and green travel as sustainable transport modes has ensured a number of measures are now in place including path upgrades and the installation of E-bike shelters by March 2020. Progress is currently at 70% complete due to a delay with a substation upgrade by SSE that has affected the installation of EV Chargers and the ability to introduce e-car and e-bike clubs. Completion is now expected by December 2020 ECS19-22 (Yr1) – Section 4(b).

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

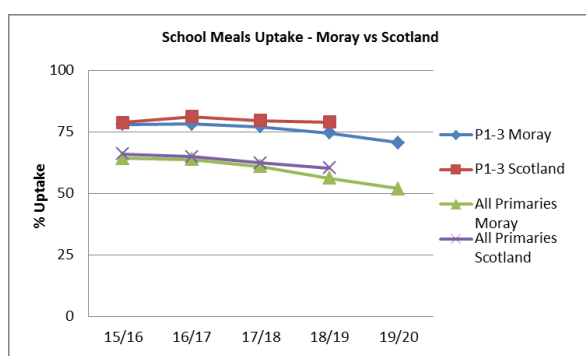
- 4.8 At the end of March 2020, the improved waste facility is 85% complete. Delays with the completion of external work at the site including, resurfacing of the car park and signage led to staff relocation being postponed. This is now expected to take place by the end of October 2020 ECS19-22 (Yr1) – Section 5(f).
- 4.9 Improvements within Engineering Design are 75% complete with two new projects assigned as planned (the design of a new waste transfer station and the design of new cemeteries). Job descriptions have been drafted but work to clarify the various roles within the section is yet to be finalised. ECS19-22 (Yr 1) - Section 5(j).
- 4.10 Improving the customer focus within waste management aims to reduce the number of complaints to the department by 10%. At 75% complete, a significant amount of work has been undertaken including development of new procedures, increased communication within the waste team and with contact centre staff and improved access to Moray Council’s Service Disruption Page ensuring residents are notified quickly of any issues. Enhanced training to complete this action will be provided when pandemic restrictions allow. Looking at the types of complaints received during the half year to March 2020, 55 complaints related to household collections and recycling, 39 (41%) less than the same period last year which would suggest the work highlighted above may already have had an impact. Complaints will be monitored over the coming months to establish if this is an ongoing trend. ECS19-22 (Yr 1) - Section 5(k).

Operational Indicators - successes

- 4.11 In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management (DMT). Since March the normal DMT reporting process has been disrupted with the main focus of work being the response and early recovery of services. With many services now fully recovered, the reporting process will be reinstated. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance is below comparators, will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.
- 4.12 In this reporting period, of particular note are the costs associated with Building Cleaning falling 12% compared to last year, the Net Savings for Pool Cars increasing by 21% to £268,044 and the Net income from Elgin Pay & Display car parks exceeding target by £157,133 (27%).

Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

- 4.13 Throughout 2019/20, uptake rates for school meals have been below target. Across all primaries, quarter 4 was particularly low at 49.8%, although high absence rates in the weeks prior to school closures due to COVID-19 will have negatively impacted rates in March.
- 4.14 Annual uptake for primary school meals in Moray has declined in recent years. Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, uptake of free school meals (P1-3) fell by 6.6% while uptake across all primaries fell by 9%. Data from the annual national Healthy Living Survey shows uptake of primary school meals across Scotland has followed a similar trend to Moray. In February 2016, 66% of all pupils present during the survey day took a school meal. In 2019, this had fallen to 60.4%.



- 4.15 Prior to COVID-19, plans were being made for a campaign to raise the profile of School Meals. This included; a survey to identify areas for improvement, new promotional material, work with Moray Foodbank, Citizens Advice and Moray School Bank, promotion of free school meal eligibility at point of school registration and engagement with parents and pupils through school visits and cooking classes. Work to finalise these plans will begin as soon as workload capacity allows.
- 4.16 Costs associated with passengers per trip of both school transport and the Dial M Service exceed target. Annual school transportation costs have recorded a slight decline in 2019/20 to £4.13 however this figure has been affected by the early school closures in March and remains well above the

£3.60 target. With the Dial M Service, costs have increased during the second half of 2019/20 from £4.68 in quarter 3 to a high of £5.99 in quarter 4; £2.74 (84%) above target.

- 4.17 School transportation is tendered every 5 years and was last undertaken approximately 2 years ago. The costs reported against this performance indicator reflect a division of the annual cost for transport agreed during the last tendering process by the number of pupils travelling. Given the fixed nature of the costs and Transportation having no direct impact on pupil numbers, it is recommended this target be reviewed and amended to data only.
- 4.18 Passenger numbers on the Dial M services were significantly reduced from early March due to concerns around COVID-19 and the subsequent restrictions on travel. The net subsidy figure during March alone was £7.99 per passenger. Prior to this, income has been tracking consistently during the last 4 years however the cost base has increased, largely related to an increased number of vehicle hires to substitute vehicles awaiting maintenance parts. Work is ongoing on vehicle reliability to address this. Annual data will also be reviewed and the target for this performance indicator amended.

Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

- 4.19 Between October and March 2020, Environmental and Commercial Services received 136 complaints; a fall of 6% compared to the same period last year. March recorded the largest decline, with complaints falling by 47% compared to March 2019; suggesting complaints were affected by COVID-19.
- 4.20 134 complaints were closed with 126 (94%) dealt with as frontline, 7 investigated further with 1 escalated. A total of 37 complaints (28%) were upheld, a similar figure to that during quarter 3 and 4 last year. In addition to the complaints received, 87 MP/MSP enquiries covering a variety of issues were dealt with in the same period.

5 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 needed because the report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(h) Consultations

The Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Service Managers, Legal Services Manager, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 At the end of 2019/20, 3 Service Plan outcomes have been completed on time. The remaining 4 that have not met target timescales are all over 70% complete and work will continue to ensure these are achieved. Environmental and Commercial Services have delivered a number of financial savings with plans in place to address issues highlighted with the uptake of school meals and the costs associated with Dial M Services.

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Background Papers: Held by Author
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