



REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 15 MARCH 2022

SUBJECT: EDUCATION AND EDUCATION RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES SERVICE PLANS 2022-23

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To invite the Committee to consider the Human Resources, ICT and Communications and Strategy Governance and Performance services' Service Plans for 2022-23.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (50) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to ensuring that the organisation, administrative and management processes of the Council are designed to make the most effective contribution to achieving the Council's objectives and to keep these procedures under review.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Committee consider and approve the Service Plans for services within Human Resources, ICT and Communications and Governance, Strategy and Performance.**

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.
- 3.2 The service planning process focuses on forward planning for medium-term activities supporting delivery of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (Loip) and Corporate 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.
- 3.7 Reference is also made to the report to the Council on 19 January 2022 on the preparations for the review and update of the Corporate Plan following the local government elections in May 2022. The report noted that in addition to the election, there were emerging issues from the Covid pandemic that will influence future actions and service requirements and that the Scottish Government programme for government contains a number of commitments that will require action by council services that needs to be considered in the context of the Corporate Plan and Service Plans. Taking this into account, the Council agreed that Service Plans be prepared taking account of the known national and service driven issues and that they be further reviewed in 12 months to take account of the direction from the new Council in the revised Corporate Plan (para 14 of the minute refers). Therefore, these plans focus on the period from April 2022 to April 2023.

2020/22 Updates

3.8 Human Resources, ICT and Organisational Development

Progress on planned work (success)

3.8.1 ICT

- Implementation and promotion of video-conferencing – MS Teams now available to all members of staff with a flexible/mobile workstyle, circa 1300 in total.
- Flexible and Mobile Working progressing to include hybrid working and suitable for the new ways of working required by the Council.
- Essential upgrades work has ensured all systems remain at a supported level.
- Parents Portal is available to all schools with uptake sitting at around 50% with further promotion planned through the Schools Business Admin Project.

3.8.2 HR

- Regular strategic Trades Union and Officer meetings have been reinstated during this period in addition to the frequent Covid related meetings.
- Normal business workforce change and absence management activity has continued.
- Vacancy management has increased significantly with resources diverted to focus on the quick release of vacancies to cover emergent need within services.
- Living Wage consolidation progressed with a joint set of proposals developed for formal consultation.

3.8.3 OD

- Digital champions initiative underway and digital skills audit completed.
- MS Teams support, hybrid working resourced and guidance, monthly Managers' Forum.
- Interim Leadership Development programme refreshed through blended approach including development of outcome based planning.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey completed with actions being finalised with services.
- Kickstart programme implemented.
- Flu vaccination pilot introduced.
- Elected Member Development Strategy launched.
- Policy review and development work progressed.
- Risk Assessments reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis, with particular emphasis on Covid-19 and the changes in guidance, mitigations throughout the year.

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

3.8.4 ICT

- Implementation and promotion of Video Conferencing – work has still to be done to implement MS Teams for fixed users. Although this is a much smaller proportion of the workforce, it will be far more challenging than the rollout to the flexible / mobile staff.
- Cyber Resilience – although a lot of effort has gone into business as usual cyber security work (e.g. responding to the ever increasing number of incidents and upgrades / renewals for the security infrastructure), work on the Cyber Essentials and PSN accreditation is behind schedule. Accreditation work will be a priority for Quarter 4.
- Online services for Children’s Services – due to lack of capacity in service.
- Schools ICT Strategy – beginning to move forward with Transformation support – also impacted by service resources.

3.8.5 OD

- Leadership Development future requirements.
- Information Management - enhanced use of management information and information systems – impacted by volume of processing work by Payroll and HR Admin teams and resource issues.
- Elected Member scrutiny workshop and developing relationships activity - timeframe impacted by the re-scheduled consideration of the Scrutiny Charter by elected members.
- Responsibility for leading the work on managing challenging behaviour in schools has been passed to the Head of Education Resources and Communities. This work is now combined with the overall ASN review development work and being monitored via updates to the Central Health and Safety Committee.

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

3.8.6 ICT

- Cyber Resilience (Raising Awareness) – solution for raising awareness on cyber security, is particularly relevant given the increased number of phishing emails that are currently being sent to Council staff.
- Cyber Resilience (Monitoring) –the implementation of enhanced monitoring tools will increase the capability to detect and respond to threats.
- Delivery of M365 suite of tools to allow full communication and collaboration opportunities to support hybrid working.
- Working with Transformation and Education to deliver technical solutions for the Business Admin review, Transformation projects, Early Years project and Schools Digital Strategy.
- Continued focus on essential upgrades.

3.8.7 HR

- Supporting workforce change and transformation.
- Management of attendance to improve sickness absence levels.
- Systems/information management development.
- Corporate recruitment approach reviewed to address current challenges and identify effective deployment strategies.

3.8.8 OD

- Employee Engagement and Workforce Culture activity to be progressed incorporating workload management and mental health survey actions.
- Review and development of the Council's Workforce and OD Strategy and Plan.
- Future leadership development programme.
- Health and safety culture - review rolling programme, identify priority areas for policy review.
- Preparing the workforce for future requirements with regard to digital skills including cyber security awareness.
- Embedding hybrid working as part of the updated flexible working approach.
- Communications strategy and plan to be developed and implemented.

3.9 **Strategy, Governance and Performance**

3.9.1 **Progress on planned work (success)**

- Governance review substantially completed.
- Full cycle of revised Loip/Corporate Plan, Service Plan reporting in place.
- Complaints process was reviewed and agreed.
- Equality Outcomes were reviewed and agreed.

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

- Progress has been made on outcome measures for the Loip but they would benefit from further refinement.
- Limited progress made on re-design of face to face customer contact due to Covid-19 restrictions although these restrictions have helped bring about an increased take up of digital customer contact.

3.9.3 A number of unplanned services have been successfully delivered, taking up a considerable amount of staff resource:

- Business grants;
- Food fund/Low income pandemic payments;
- Taxi grants;
- Operation of the humanitarian assistance phone service; and
- Online committees.

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

- Roll out of Information Hubs through libraries and review Customer Charter.
- Review Loip and Corporate Plan priorities to take account of Covid-19.
- Enable hybrid meeting capability.
- Business continuity – establish staffing, do baseline review and ensure BC plans across services are up to date.
- Review of second tier governance documents.
- Look at options for future funding of Money advice Service.

Service Plans for 2022/23

- 3.10 There has been a significant impact across services from the Covid-19 pandemic and continuing service pressures from Covid-19 have given limited capacity for the development of new Service Plans. Therefore, a number of Service Plan actions are being carried forward and there has been a focus on essential changes and new actions given the planned review of the Corporate Plan. However, there are some significant emerging areas of work, for example, linked to legislation or the programme for government that have had to be incorporated to ensure that the Council delivers on new commitments, e.g. universal free school meals. Looking forward it is anticipated that a significant amount of time will be spent on Covid recovery, that there will be constraints from the financial planning process and that there will be a period of induction for new members. Account has also been taken of these in order to be realistic about what can be achieved over the next 12 months and to concentrate service efforts on goals which align with the Council's priorities or improve efficiency.
- 3.11 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 and taking account of the planned review of the Corporate Plan to take a relatively light touch to service planning. On this basis, the three Service Plans are attached to this report as follows:

Appendix 1: Human Resources and Organisational Development

Appendix 1a: ICT

Appendix 2: Governance, Strategy 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 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 and maintained and considered as part of the service planning process.
- (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) **Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**
There are no climate change and biodiversity impacts from this report.
- (i) **Consultations**
Heads of Service have worked with their management teams to prepare the Services Plans attached as appendices and have contributed to the updates in this report.

5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 **Service Plans have been prepared identifying the improvements targeted for the period up to April 2023. 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 and inspection 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.**

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Background Papers: Report to Council on 19 January: Corporate Plan Preparation
Ref: H:\Management\Acting Director\Reports\ECLS\Service Plan 2022-23 (09-03-22).docx
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