REPORT TO: EDUCATION CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 9 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 Education and Education Resources and Communities services' Service Plans for 2022-23.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (A) (40) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to ensuring a suitable framework is in place for performance management across Council Services.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee consider and approve the Service Plans for services within Education (Schools and Early Years) and Education Resources and Communities.

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

<u>**Education**</u>

Progress on planned work (success)

3.8   The Education Recovery Plan provided a strategic bridge through the initial lockdown to recovery in April 2021 with a move to the Education Plan 20-23 providing focus for further improvements. The Early Years' expansion programme to deliver 1140 hours continued to be rolled out with a flexible offer available to families across Moray from Council run nurseries and private providers. Moray was one of a few Councils to progress with consultation on a sustainable rate and also progress a new leasing agreement and contract arrangements with partner providers.

3.9   Across secondary schools a key area of satisfaction was the successful implementation of an initial Alternative Certification Model (ACM) with robust moderation and internal verification processes resulting in improved performance across a number of measures for young people in August 2020. This early work provided a foundation for a further ACM as examination diet 2021 was cancelled in the autumn of 2020. Although Covid-19 oubreaks saw positive case numbers rising locally, the service has continued to provide continuity in Education with few partcal or full closures and remote learning initiated where necessary. Additional staffing due to Covid-19 funding has supported this situation. Improved approaches to remote learning from January 2021 to March of the same year, provided improved engagement and participation of learners and targeted approaches for learners returnin from March. Work has progressed in all areas of the plan particularly in approaches to raising attainment.

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

3.10   Due to vacancies across the central Education Team, work was not able to be fully progressed in learning, teaching and assessment or the curriculum. Schools and ELC settings were restricted in their ability to advance strategic priorities due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on staffing levels and time needed to continually plan for those learners who were self-isolating requiring remote learning materials. Changes to mitigations and updated guidance necessitated updated risk assessments and changes to approaches to meeting and delivering Education.

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

3.11   Key areas of focus in the new service plan are:
- continue to raise attainment with the implementation of an Insight Strategy, additional accreditation opportunities and collaborative approaches where necessary. This includes improving data literacy, analysis and interrogation across the system;
- develop and implement the post Covid Parental Engagement Strategy, review the Professional Learning Strategy and implement a Supporting all Learners Strategy;
- further implement the Moray Play Strategy and play pedagogy;
- further develop transition approaches;
- further develop Moray learner pathways;

- develop collaborative approaches to pedagogical practice while strengthening approaches to moderation and assessment and enhancing digital approaches;
- implement any recommendations from any national Education reviews; and
- continue to review, develop and implement approaches to self-evaluation to support improvement.

All of these actions will depend on capacity and any further impact of Covid-19 absence.

Education Resources & Communities

Progress on planned work (success)

3.12 The Education Resources & Communities Service was a new service formed following the senior management restructure. A number of change management plans were required to support a new permanent third tier structure and these are now complete, with the exception of ASN services.

3.13 Despite Covid restrictions, continuing progress was made in the development of locality plans in Buckie and New Elgin, with the widening of the geographical area having a positive impact in both localities. Work is ongoing to strengthen social capital and connections and develop and sustain community anchor organisations. The community anchor organisations have been the focus of support in Forres and Lossiemouth, with a revised locality planning process taking account of the strengthening of community organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic, with Community Support Officers working alongside these organisations to help communities articulate their needs and identify their priorities for the future. Community Planning Board partners have agreed to work with the Council to support the development of locality plans in Forres, Lossimouth and Keith where capacity and resources allow.

3.14 Community Asset Transfers have progressed, with the team supporting successful transfers of the West Dunes Toilets at Findhorn and the Fisherman's Hall in Buckie.

3.15 The Sport & Leisure Business Plan has provided a focus for sport and leisure activity with positive progress being made across a number of workstreams, and a strong desire from the workforce to develop service offers that fulfil national and local policy objectives and meet community needs. The Review of Sport and Leisure Services has now concluded.

3.16 The Learning Estate Programme has progressed well, with a number of workstreams now established to deliver across the Learning Estate Strategy priorities, including estate rationalisation, design and construction and asset management. The ASN Review has progressed, with workstreams identified and a governance structure established.

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

3.17 The challenges of Covid impacted on all teams in different ways, with Covid restrictions limiting service delivery across sport and leisure and library services in particular, and restrictions on face to face activities requiring changes in approach to community engagement, adult learning, youth work and music instruction. However, the challenges also presented opportunities with the teams developing new digital processes that can support more efficient ways of working in the future.

3.18 A number of projects were impacted by capacity issues as result of additional Covid related workload, and challenges of recruitment, including the review of Business Administration in schools, and the review of ASN Services. The allocation of budget through Participatory Budgeting (PB) processes has been delayed due to the capacity of other services to engage with the team and consider how PB can be used to allocate budget across their different teams.

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

3.19 The focus of the new plan is to bring together all elements of the new Education Resources and Communities Service into a single plan where each team can see their contribution to wider corporate and service priorities. There will be a clear focus on pushing forward programmes and projects that have been delayed or slowed by Covid (Learning Estate, ASN Review, Business Administration) and on driving forward service improvement across all our teams. Service Improvement Priorities fall under four key headings:
- managing our Assets – taking a strategic approach to managing our learning estate, including sport and leisure assets;
- service transformation and improvement;
- Communities and Place – supporting our communities to build capacity and influence decision making that impacts on them and their local area; and
- working in partnership to achieve positive outcomes – for children and young people, families and the wider community.

Service Plans for 2022/23

3.20 There has been a significant impact across services from the Covid pandemic and continuing service pressures from covid 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.

3.21 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 two Service Plans are attached to this report as follows:

Appendix 1: Education (Schools and Early Years)
Appendix 2: Education Resource and Communities

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**
None.

(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**

insepctions 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.

Author of Report:	Denise Whitworth
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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