



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 2 OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT: CORPORATE PLAN

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To invite the Council to review progress on the 2018-23 corporate plan, approve the Corporate Plan for 2019 to 2024 and to agree the associated community engagement strategy which launches the plan and supports delivery of the priorities.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee 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. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Council:-

- i) considers and notes the progress made against the 2018-23 corporate plan as set out in Appendix 1;**
- ii) approves the draft Corporate Plan for 2019 to 2024 (Appendix 2) and notes that the plan will be further developed as set out in the report and taking account of the outcome public engagement;**
- iii) approves the engagement strategy which launches the plan and supports delivery of the priorities;**
- iv) agrees that a report will be brought back to the Council with a final version of the Corporate Plan; and**
- v) notes and agrees 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 as necessary so that references remain relevant.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The 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.
- 3.2 The plan provides the context for implementation, the constraints within which the Council must operate, the challenges and pressures and the organisational change required to successfully deliver the priorities. It provides a link between the national priorities, the Moray community planning partnership's plans and the Council's own plans and priorities so that these can be cascaded into actions and delivery within service plans.
- 3.3 While the corporate plan provides focus, it is not intended to encompass each and every Council service that contributes directly or indirectly to the priorities or indeed those aspects of services which are lower priority. The detail on these services and how they will contribute is contained in the service planning process.
- 3.4 In setting future priorities and direction for the Corporate Plan, the Council must consider a range of factors and influences, including: statutory requirements; policies and priorities from the national and Scottish governments; community planning priorities; Moray local circumstances and political priorities; external pressures and requirements (e.g. demographic issues) and all within the increasingly challenging financial environment.
- 3.5 There is a range of strategies and plans that support the delivery of the priorities in the Corporate Plan and these are linked in the performance monitoring table set out in **Appendix 3**, which will be a supporting document to the corporate plan.
- 3.6 In August 2016, the Council agreed to the incorporation of financial planning into future corporate plans given the intrinsic part that finance plays in the delivery of the Council's priorities. However, given the increasing criticality and complexity of financial strategy, a greater degree of detail and scenario planning is being developed to support this element of corporate planning, which warrants a separate document. Therefore, a revised financial strategy to support the corporate plan, and in particular the priority of a sustainable Council for the future, will come forward to the next meeting of the Council. Although this will be a separate document to the corporate plan it remains an intrinsic element of the corporate planning process that is required to enable the delivery of Council priorities.

Review of progress with Corporate Plan 2018-2023

- 3.7 The Council's current Corporate Plan (2018-23) was approved by the Council at its meeting on 14 February 2018 (para 7 refers). The Corporate Plan set out the Council's priorities and vision over the 5 year period and how the Council planned to progress these, including the financial strategy aimed at progressing towards financial stability. In approving the plan, the Council recognised that it was the first iteration of a developing plan to achieve the Council's priorities.

3.8 **Appendix 1** provides an update on progress against the priorities in the current corporate plan. As is noted below, there have been challenges in setting and monitoring specific outcomes and so this update provides a narrative reflection on progress. This is an area of improvement identified in the revised plan. However, from the information set out in the appendix it can be seen that there has been an extensive range of activity to progress the priorities that were identified in the 2018-23 Corporate Plan and that this provides a strong foundation from which to move forward.

3.9 Of particular note are:

- curricular offer in our schools has been improved and extended through partnership work
- improvements in early stage literacy
- improvements in school inspections, with several ranking leadership as “very good”
- successful involvement of communities in work to develop the Moray Local Development Plan 2020
- development of locality plans in New Elgin East and Buckie Central East
- community asset transfers, including work with town halls and community centres
- delivery of over 500 housing units since 2011
- progress made with the Moray Skills Investment Plan that aims to align course provision and skills pathways to local employer needs
- improvements in wage levels and gross weekly pay for female workers
- confirmation that the Moray Growth Deal would see an investment of £65m to fund targeted economic development activity
- recurring savings of £9.7m were identified and planned use of Council reserves was reduced
- more than 80 Council services now available for residents to access 24/7 online, including school registration and payments, garden waste permits and Council house offers

Development of Draft Corporate Plan 2019-2024

3.10 Taking account of the progress made, the acknowledgement that the 2018/23 corporate plan was a first iteration of the corporate plan and the change in the Council administration, a review of the corporate plan has been undertaken to consider how areas of priority can be further defined and advanced and to reflect the approach that the current administration wish to take.

3.11 In carrying out the review, consideration has been given to the statistical profile of Moray and it is of note that given the long term nature of many of these indicators, there has not been significant change in the underlying issues. This means that there is little change proposed to the highest level priorities and that the existing priorities of Communities, Economy and Education continue to feature in the re-expressed priorities of Our Place, Our Future and Our People, which has been broadened beyond education to cover adults, children and families but continues work on the previous education elements. Creating a sustainable Council that provides valued services to our communities by addressing financial stability is also an

ongoing theme that will underpin all of the work in the corporate plan. The priorities proposed for this revised iteration of the Corporate Plan are:

- **Our People** : Provide opportunities for people to be the best they can be throughout their lives with a strong and sustained focus on those individuals and groups in our society who experience the most disadvantage and discrimination
- **Our Place**: Empower and support communities to build capacity
- **Our Future**: Drive economic development to create a vibrant economy for the future

3.12 However, although the main themes are consistent, and work will continue to develop on these, there is a change in emphasis in this iteration of the Corporate Plan that reflects greater emphasis on:

- Equalities - providing opportunities for everyone to be their best and addressing gaps in outcomes between the most and least disadvantaged
- Empowering - collaborating and working to engage and involve people (partners, businesses and communities)
- Environment - looking after the environment to protect it for the future
- Enterprising - consider new approaches to the way we do our business to increase our income and make services more sustainable for the future

This change in emphasis is carried through into the revision of the actions and outcomes and the measures that will be put in place to monitor these.

3.13 There has also been reflection on the practical implementation and monitoring of the corporate plan, including ensuring an effective performance monitoring framework and cascading priorities into service and other plans. In the past, the Council has found it challenging to set clear, measurable outcomes and to manage the array of actions and priorities that emerge from the extensive, complex plans across services and the community planning partnership. Therefore, this corporate plan focuses on setting priorities and giving leadership and direction for services and strategies rather than creating another layer of distinct additional actions and measures. Instead, the actions and outcomes proposed in this corporate plan are directly linked to supporting plans and strategies which will be relied upon to deliver the priorities. Where necessary, current plans will be adjusted to reflect the priority and direction in the revised corporate plan. In relation to service plans, work has been scheduled to enable direction to be taken from the revised corporate plan and work is underway so that updated service plans come before committees in the next few months.

3.14 The aim is that this approach will provide consistent overarching direction and leadership for Council services to prioritise their work and that the direction provided can be cascaded through relevant plans and actions. It will also ensure consistent setting of outcomes, targets and performance monitoring,

which should streamline current arrangements in line with the Performance Management Framework recently approved by the Council.

- 3.15 Taking account of the learning from previous corporate plans, work is advancing to prepare a Performance Management Framework for the corporate plan. This aims to ensure clarity about the actions, outcomes, how they will be measured and the plans and strategies that will support each of the priorities. The current draft is attached as **Appendix 3**. This follows the guidance of the revised Council Performance Management Framework. It requires outcome and performance measures to be further developed and this will be progressed as a priority by CMT/SMT.
- 3.16 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.

Engagement Strategy

- 3.17 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). This is also reflected in the Our Place priority which is to empower and support communities to build capacity and contains actions to develop engagement with the public on the future of Council services, develop locality engagement and implement participatory budgeting. In order to progress this, it is proposed to commence a programme of community engagement, beginning with the launch of the revised Corporate Plan.
- 3.18 The aim of the engagement work would be to create a cohesive engagement plan that links together the main corporate issues that the Council wants to engage the public on under the umbrella of the corporate plan. Initial work would be on the corporate plan, potentially October to December aimed at developing an improved mutual understanding and having a conversation about the future of Council services. This would lead into work in specific communities, most likely geographic and based on inequality of outcomes with any required budget consultation taking place in parallel with this. The third stage would be to undertake participatory budgeting work linked to the community feedback and as identified by services. 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 is attached at **Appendix 4**.
- 3.19 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 plan will be required to fulfil these objectives. Therefore, at this stage, the Council is being asked to approve the overarching priorities and to agree the plan as a draft that will be further

developed and enhanced. This will also enable the feedback from the community engagement to be taken into account in preparing a final version of the corporate plan for consideration at a future meeting of the Council.

- 3.20 Meantime preparation of Service Plans for 19/20 has been delayed to allow the core aspects of the revised draft Corporate Plan as set out at paragraph 3.10 above to be developed and for the revised Performance Management Framework to be approved. To avoid any further delay it is proposed that Service Plans for 19/20 are submitted to relevant Service Committees based on the current draft Corporate Plan as soon as the performance measures at Appendix 3 have been completed 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 2** 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 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 will be reflected in the financial strategy that will come to a future 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 and preparation of the review of the 2018-23 plan.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Council has 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 2. However, this requires further development and refinement, especially in relation to specific measurable outcomes. Therefore, the Council is asked to approve the plan as a draft at this stage.

5.2 In order to advance the implementation of the plan, it is proposed to instigate a programme of community engagement, beginning with the launch of the draft 2019-24 corporate plan.

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