



POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 18 APRIL 2013

CORPORATE SERVICES' SERVICE PLAN 2013-16 (ABERDEENSHIRE PERFORMS)

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Consider and approve the Service Plan and performance reporting arrangements as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.**
- 1.2 Instruct the Director of Corporate Services to report to Committee quarterly on performance against service objectives and six-monthly on progress in delivering all aspects of the Service Plan.**

2 Background/Discussion

- 2.1 The Corporate Services' 2013-2016 Service Plan is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Service Plan is intended to confirm the key objectives of Corporate Services and further clarify and strengthen connections between:
 - The Council Plan 2013-17.
 - Identified strengths and areas for improvement.
 - Performance reporting and performance improvement.
- 2.3 The Plan provides a strategic focus for Corporate Services addressing all functions and core activities within the Service. It forms the Service's contribution to the Council's "golden thread". The content of this Plan will also contribute directly to other Corporate Services' strategies, Business and Team/Operational Plans and those developed with our partners.
- 2.4 Five key objectives are identified for the Service. In order to demonstrate how well the Service is delivering these objectives, a range of key performance measures have been developed which will be reported regularly, by exception, (i.e. when performance is below or above agreed tolerances for the relevant indicator) to this Committee. Supporting the key objectives is a range of projects and actions which will also be monitored and progress reported six-monthly.
- 2.5 Committee will recall approving the 2012-2015 Service Plan in April 2012 and subsequently receiving exception monitoring reports quarterly. A final monitoring report for April 2012 to March 2013 will be provided to the next meeting of this Committee.
- 2.6 All Services have adopted three year service planning in line with budget setting and plans are reviewed and updated annually.

2.7 The Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments have been incorporated.

3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

3.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the report is to inform committee on performance. There will be no differential impact, as a result of the report, on people with protected characteristics. Projects and actions supporting the delivery of the service plan, which have the potential to have a differential impact on different groups, will have an Equality Impact Assessment undertaken.

3.2 The Service Plan sets out the financial and staffing resources required to support Corporate Services' activities during 2013-16. There are no direct staffing implications arising from the Plan.

Christine Gore
Director of Corporate Services

Report prepared by Debbie McGilvray, Support Services Manager
1 April, 2013



CORPORATE SERVICES

2013 – 2016 SERVICE PLAN

(Some of the content at Section 5 of this Plan may be subject to change and approval by Full Council at its meeting on 25 April, 2013.)

1. Foreword/Introduction

Welcome to the Corporate Services' 2013-2016 Service Plan.

Corporate Services is the “engine room” of Aberdeenshire Council. We deliver a range of services and functions designed to support other front-line services of the Council and help them to achieve their aims and objectives within the framework of a modern and effective organisation. In addition, we are leading the implementation of a number of corporate efficiency projects.

Corporate Services comprises Central Procurement, Customer Communication & Improvement, Finance, Human Resources & Organisational Development, Information & Communications Technology, Internal Audit, Legal & Governance and Support Services.

The Service Plan shows how Corporate Services contributes to the Council's overall vision for Aberdeenshire and delivery of the three pillars of economic development, demography and early intervention. The Plan sets out what we intend to achieve based on the financial and other resources available to us. The Service Plan is the anchor to the Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) through the Council Plan 2013-17 to Business (Head of Service), Team and Individual Work Plans.

Corporate Services helps ensure the legal and financial probity of all Council activities and services, transforming operations through the delivery of effective and efficient services that make best use of our skills, resources and technology. The Service is also responsible for managing the reputation of the Council and providing the tools for delivering a safe, healthy and motivated workforce to contribute to the Council's vision to be the best. We also deliver a range of statutory functions and services direct to the public.

Christine Gore
Director

2. Vision

Corporate Services' vision supports the aspirations of the organisation to be the Best Council and states our role as:

Providing innovative, forward thinking and trusted advice and services to protect and promote the interests of Aberdeenshire Council.

We will do this by:

- ***engaging effectively with customers and residents to provide the best services;***
- ***enabling employees to fulfil their potential by equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools;***
- ***promoting good governance by ensuring the right things are done in the right way, by the right people, at the right time;***
- ***encouraging innovation to create a culture of improvement.***

3. Opportunities and Challenges

The coming year 2013/14 will be a challenging and exciting year for us. The Scottish Government will continue the pace of ambitious public sector reform. Corporate Services plays a key role in implementing reform within the Council, particularly in relation to developing the capabilities of the workforce and its leadership, embedding a performance culture to improve outcomes and supporting a shift towards preventative spending – preventing problems by intervening earlier.

The Council continues to face a substantial reduction in budget over the coming year and beyond. Corporate Services needs to support all Council services through the provision of timely and accurate information. It also needs to continue to model the impact of government decisions on local authority budgets and spending plans. Corporate Services itself needs to manage its budget within the available resources, which will continue to be a challenge for a Service whose main cost is staffing.

The Council's activities in the coming years will be largely influenced by the economic challenges facing the organisation. With the significant financial pressures that are facing the Council, the need for clear, consistent communications to residents and employees is critical. We strive to increase understanding about the implications of budget reductions to residents, employees and partners, who need regular information about the changes to services which may affect them. All this activity plays a significant role in how the Council is viewed by customers, partners and the business community in the future and effective communications are critical to our long term reputation.

All public authorities now have a legal requirement to produce and publish a set of equality outcomes by 30 April, 2013. These are the results we aim to achieve over 2013 – 2017 in promoting equality, tackling discrimination and fostering good relations. The Council has developed six equality outcomes identified in the [Council Plan 2013-2017](#) which are:

- Aberdeenshire Council staff and Councillors have an increased understanding about the challenges facing people from different groups and will respond to their requirements;
- Members of the public are able to access our services with ease and confidence;
- Aberdeenshire Council is an inclusive workplace where staff are respected and have an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential;
- Communities and businesses understand, welcome and respect diversity;
- Everyone enjoys equal access to education, training and employment;
- Access to life opportunities are enhanced by reducing barriers.

Corporate Services is contributing to the delivery of these outcomes through the delivery of the key objectives identified in this Plan as well as other key plans, policies and strategies and supporting plans and strategies.

The Council will regularly monitor the progress being made towards achieving the equality outcomes and reports will be available on the Council's website. The first report will be published no later than April 2015.

Every activity that is identified to support the delivery of objectives outlined in this Plan, which has the potential to have a differential impact on different groups, will have an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken. An EIA aims to assess the impact of the Council's policies, procedures and functions on those who have [Protected Characteristics](#). It allows us to make balanced judgements in all decisions including difficult ones. When we carry out an EIA and find certain groups to not have access to our services, are under represented, or are not receiving as good a service as they should, we must take action to resolve the situation. All EIA's are available on our [website](#).

A review of the terms and conditions of service has been undertaken for all groups of employees. A separate exercise was undertaken in relation to teaching staff. These reviews are focussed on ensuring that the Council has a modern and competitive framework in place which ensures that it can compete with external service providers in the future. The aim is to negotiate with trade unions to reach a collective agreement which is acceptable to employees and also meets the needs of the Council in the future.

Corporate Services will also play a leading role in delivering a significant programme of efficiencies, to increase the pace of change and deliver a more modern and flexible workforce ready to tackle future challenges. As part of the budget setting exercise in February 2012 the Council agreed that these projects should deliver financial savings of £10 million over the two year period 2013-15.

The importance of these programmes has been recognised by the establishment of a new governance structure supported in large part by Corporate Services, and consisting of two boards to oversee progress, and ensure crossover between projects is managed and supported and the predicted savings are captured, monitored and reported back to Committee.

The Business Transformation Board, chaired by the Director of Corporate Services, is responsible for delivering a range of projects including: workSPACE (incorporating Worksmart); Improving the Customer Experience (iCE); Infosmart; Employee Relationship Management (ERM) Options4Admin; and Arcadia development.

The Improvement Programme Board supports this work by identifying the areas for improvement activity and prioritises the deployment of continuous improvement resources to ensure the projects achieve their objectives and realise maximum savings.

The Service has carried out a self-assessment using the 'How Good is Our Service?' framework in order to evaluate how well it is performing. Although this exercise identified a number of areas of good practice, it also highlighted a number of areas for improvement. These include:

- Develop mechanisms that can be used consistently across the Service to seek stakeholder feedback and satisfaction levels;
- Develop a Corporate Services policy framework that reflects national, partnership, corporate, service and area priorities and delivery;
- Mainstreaming the equality function and promoting equalities throughout the Council;
- Develop and embed Corporate Services' vision and values.

The summary evaluation report, including improvement activity required, is available to view [here](#).

The Council's shared risk assessment last year identified no significant scrutiny risks. However, there are areas of uncertainty in relation to how we manage performance, equalities and workforce which were the subject of focussed scrutiny (Best Value 2 Audit) by Audit Scotland. Overall the audit was positive and found: a strong senior management team is developing; effective performance management; an established improvement culture and a strategic approach to workforce planning. The most recent shared risk assessment is also positive confirming continued progress and improvement at both corporate level and across Services. The Council's areas of activity are now assessed as 'not requiring scrutiny'. The findings of the audit are available here and a copy of the current Assurance and Improvement Plan associated with the shared risk assessment is available [here](#).

These are all areas of challenge for the Service but are also opportunities for Corporate Services to support the Council to maintain its focus on the continued delivery of effective and efficient value for money services.

4. Achievements

Over the last 12 months, Corporate Services has been recognised externally across a range of functions including:

- The Council has once again achieved an unmodified Audit Certificate which reflects the robust financial administration of the Council.
- The Central Procurement Unit was ranked as the third highest performing Local Authority in the field of Procurement whilst having the lowest operational costs across all 32 councils.
- HR&OD's Workforce Strategy Team Workforce Planning Toolkit was adopted by numerous councils and voluntary organisations across Scotland.
- HR&OD's Health and Well Being Team achieved a Healthy Working Lives Bronze Award.
- The Council website was recently awarded 3 stars by SOCITM in the annual review of public sector websites. Overall, the Aberdeenshire Council website is ranked third in the UK for hits based on our population and remains top in Scotland.
- Major event planning and delivery of the 2012 Olympic torch relay and the celebration event for local Olympians, Paralympians, torch bearers and gamesmakers, resulting in recognition from a wide range of stakeholders.
- Targeted best value work carried out by Audit Scotland in November 2012 found: a strong senior management team is developing; effective performance management; an established improvement culture in the Council; and a strategic approach to workforce planning.

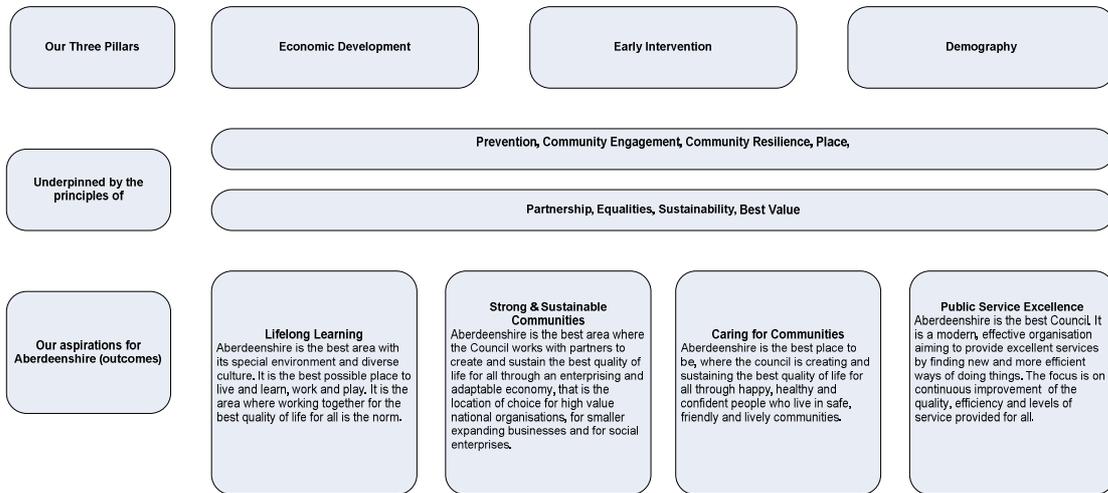
Internally the Service has undertaken a self assessment and evaluation using the 'How Good Is Our...?' framework. The performance of the service has been evaluated by drawing on evidence which provides answers to a range of performance questions such as: What key outcomes have we achieved?; How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?; and How good is our leadership?

The overall performance of the Service has been judged as **Good** - we have important strengths but there are also areas for improvement. The assessment and evaluation have informed this plan.

The summary evaluation report, including improvement activity required, can be viewed [here](#).

5. Key Service Objectives

Corporate Services' supports the Council's priorities which are:



Supporting these priorities are the Service's key objectives:

- Engaging effectively with customers and residents to provide the best services;
- Enabling employees to fulfil their potential by equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools;
- Promoting good governance by ensuring the right things are done in the right way, by the right people, at the right time;
- Encouraging innovation to create a culture of improvement.
- Ensuring all aspects of our service are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to people's needs

6. Priorities

The following priorities support delivery of the key service objectives:

- a) Ensure all frontline Council services are supported to deliver their objectives.
- b) Address areas for improvement identified through the 'How Good Is Our Council?' and 'How Good Is Our Service?' evaluations.
- c) Roll out phase 1 (pathfinder projects) of the Improving the Customer Experience (iCE) programme supporting all services to embrace channel shift.
- d) Embed Aberdeenshire Performs, the Council's performance improvement framework.
- e) Delivery and governance of transformational projects through the Business Transformation Programme Board. The board oversees a range of projects:
 - workSPACE (incorporating Worksmart) – Smart Provision of Accommodation and the Customer Experience is driven by the need for good customer service along with the delivery of a modern, flexible office portfolio to support service delivery, both now and in the future. It brings together a reduction in the number of offices the Council operates with smarter working and improved customer service
 - Employee Relationship Management - will transform the way the Council interacts with its employees and enable employees and managers to deal more easily and efficiently with transactions such as pay, overtime, expenses, attendance management, training, recruitment etc
 - Options4Admin – modernising and improving processes, procedures and ways of working across the Council
 - Arcadia – a review and refresh of the Council's intranet
 - Infosmart – redeveloping our information management and data architecture strategy, ensuring that the Council maximises the value of its information
 - Improving the Customer Experience (iCE) - a three year 'channel shift' programme of designed to transform the way we interact with customers and residents
- f) Support the Council wide preparation for the proposals to integrate health and social care and the significant changes as a result of the introduction of a single Police Service and Fire and Rescue Service across Scotland, as well as planning for the implications of Welfare Reform for both the Council and its customers many of whom will be amongst the most vulnerable people in our communities.

- g) Build on the Council's positive reputation through a high level of awareness and engagement about Council activities.
- h) Implementation of the Workforce Strategy and the Workforce Transformation programme.
- i) Enable Services to meet the Council's obligations under the Equalities Act (2010).
- j) Implement the findings of the ICT Service Review ensuring all Council Services maximise the potential for productivity and efficiency savings through the use of technology.
- k) Develop a new ICT Strategy that aligns with the National Local Government ICT Strategy in order to support the Council's overall vision for Aberdeenshire.
- l) Develop the Council's strategy to bring broadband to remote locations through the hilltop wireless project and align with the national broadband agenda.
- m) Ensure small and local businesses are provided support and equal opportunity to compete for Council business.

7. How Will We Know How We Are Doing?

The principles of continuous improvement are embedded into the management and operational functions of Corporate Services. We will continue to support the Council to achieve its aim of becoming the best Council in Scotland by setting challenging targets for our services to achieve and by benchmarking our performance against the best-performing local authorities in Scotland.

Our performance reporting arrangements cascade from the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement, through the Council Plan to this Service Plan. Each of these plans has complementary performance frameworks to demonstrate progress towards achieving our Service objectives and priorities. Performance is reported regularly to relevant Council committees and management teams. We routinely monitor trends in our own performance over time and against other comparable organisations. This, along with results from customer surveys, influences where we focus our improvement activity.

Corporate Services' managers routinely review local performance data on service delivery. Employees have opportunities to reflect on and improve their practice through learning and development and in future years this will be closely aligned to our strategic service objectives and priorities. Our Chief Officers' Annual Review (COAR) and Employee Annual Review Scheme (EAR) inform the Service's learning and development plan.

The Service continues to utilise the full range of improvement tools including self-evaluation, Kaizen for Daily Improvement and rapid improvement events.

SERVICE OBJECTIVE 1					
Engaging effectively with customers and residents to provide the best services.					
Key Performance Measures					
(N.B. Performance Achieved in 2012/13 will be reported in June 2013. Targets are based on performance in the first three quarters of 2012/13 as reported in February 2013.)					
	Targets & Achievements				
	Achieved in 2012/13	Target in 2013/14	Target in 2014/15	Target in 2015/16	Ranking against 32 LA's
1a. Council website – external rating by SOCITM	TBC	4*	4*	4*	
1b. First point of contact resolution for service requests by the Contact Centre	TBC	84% (75% National target)	85% (75% National target)	86% (75% National target)	
1c. Investigation responses fully resolved within 20 working days	TBC	95%	95%	95%	

1d. Percentage of staff who feel informed about Council activities that affect them (measured through employee survey)	69%	70%	75%	80%	
1e. Percentage of people who believe that the Council delivers value for money	71%	75%	78%	80%	
1f. Percentage of Occasional Licences processed within 6 weeks of receipt of completed application	95%	96%	97%	98%	
1g. Average customer satisfaction for ICT service provision	TBC	90%	92%	95%	

Key Projects/Actions

Action	Milestones	Responsibility
1.1 Deliver Improving the Customer Experience (iCE) programme 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathfinder projects implemented (Apr 2013) Year 1 projects delivered (Mar 2014) 	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement
1.2 Develop benchmarking for complaint handling in line with Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review once all Councils are using the new process 	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement
1.3 Continued promotion of the use of the Tell Us Once initiative in first point of contact with customers registering birth and deaths, with particular emphasis on registration of deaths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of death registrations utilising Tell Us Once will exceed 80% (Apr 2014) 	Head of Legal & Governance
1.4 Review the Registrars service to ensure it is responsive to changed local and national conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigative stage complete (June 2013) Consultation stage complete (Sept 2013) Service improvements proposed (Apr 2014) 	Head of Legal & Governance
1.5 Develop Information Management and Data Architecture Strategy to support Business Transformation projects and improve customer access to data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Strategy and Roadmap (Jul 2013) 	Head of ICT
1.6 Implementation of the hilltop wireless project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Phase 1 (Mar 2013) Complete Phase 2 (Oct 2013) 	Head of ICT

SERVICE OBJECTIVE 2

Enabling employees to fulfil their potential by equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools.

Key Performance Measures

(N.B. Performance Achieved in 2012/13 will be reported in June 2013. Ranking for 2a. and 2b. will be available in November 2013. Targets are based on performance in the first three quarters of 2012/13 as reported in February 2013.)

	Targets & Achievements				
	Achieved in 2012/13	Target in 2013/14	Target in 2014/15	Target in 2015/16	Ranking against 32 LA's
2a. Average number of days lost through sickness absence for teachers (SPI)	TBC	5.1	4.9	4.8	TBC
2b. Average number of days lost through sickness absence for all other Local Government Employees (SPI)	TBC	9.4	9.1	9.0	TBC
2c. Percentage delivery of the equality outcomes as stated in the Single Equality Scheme.	N/A	66%	100%	100%	
2d. Percentage ICT Service Desk incident calls resolved within timescale	TBC	86%	88%	90%	

Key Projects/Actions

Action	Milestones	Responsibility
2.1 Health, Safety and Well-Being Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve the Healthy Working Lives Silver Award and Mental Health Commendation (Jun 2013) • Look into extending the attendance management pathfinder (Sept 2013) • Implement actions from the result of the employee stress and wellbeing survey (Mar 2014) • Extend the comprehensive programme of training and engagements events (Mar 2014) 	Head of HR&OD

<p>2.2 Learning and Development Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review learning and development expenditure across the Council with a view to improving efficiency of commissioning and procurement (Jun 2013) • Integrate the Aberdeenshire Learning and Development Online (ALDO) learning management system with the corporate Midland HR employee relationship management system. (Mar 2014) • Revise and publish the Learning and Development Strategy (incorporating leadership and management development) (Dec 2013) • Implement Councillor 360 feedback and CPD processes (Sept 2013) 	<p>Head of HR&OD</p>
<p>2.3 Implement Employee Relationship Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement EMIS replacement application (Jul 2014) • Progression of detailed planning for Employee Service Desk and associated functions (Dec 2012 – Jun 2013) • Implementation to follow Jul 2013 onwards 	<p>Head of HR&OD</p>
<p>2.4 Workforce Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Talent and Career Management Framework and Future Leaders Programme (Sept 2014) • Act on the review of the EAR and COA processes (Apr 2013) • Workforce planning to be incorporated into the service review process (Ongoing through period of plan) 	<p>Head of HR&OD</p>

2.5 Implement the findings of the recent review of ICT Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop business case and obtain approval for the replacement of Council collaboration tools (Apr 2013) Implement Microsoft Enterprise Agreement toolset (Apr 2015) 	Head of ICT
2.6 Embed an improved approach to equalities across the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular self-assessment being undertaken against the standards (Mar 2013) Quarterly monitoring of the Council's equality outcomes 	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement
2.7 E-Committee Project - Review of the software that supports the committee administration function to replace the failing solution and achieve a robust, effective and efficient software package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information gathering/identification of additional requirements (Mar 2013) Technical specification drafted (Apr 2013) Procurement (minimum 6 months – Oct 2013) Implementation of new system (Feb 2014) 	Head of Legal and Governance
2.8 Review and redevelopment of Arcadia the Council's intranet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business requirements identified (Dec 2013) Content reviewed and refreshed (Dec 2013) 	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement

SERVICE OBJECTIVE 3

Promoting good governance by ensuring the right things are done in the right way, by the right people, at the right time.

Key Performance Measures

(N.B. Performance Achieved in 2012/13 will be reported in June 2013. Targets are based on performance in the first three quarters of 2012/13 as reported in February 2013.)

	Targets & Achievements				
	Achieved in 2012/13	Target in 2013/14	Target in 2014/15	Target in 2015/16	Ranking against 32 LA's
3a. Percentage of Council expenditure with local suppliers	37%	40%	43%	45%	
3b. Percentage of Internal Audit recommendations accepted by management	TBC	95%	95%	95%	

3c. Percentage by which actual outturn differs from budgeted outturn at year end	TBC	1% variance either way	1% variance either way	1% variance either way	
3d. Percentage of income due from Council Tax for year received by year end (SPI)	TBC	96%	96%	96%	
Key Projects/Actions					
Action		Milestones		Responsibility	
3.1 Complete the Confident Governance Project and initiate Confident Governance 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationalise representation on ALEO's and Outside Bodies (by April 2013) Consultation exercise re Confident Governance 2 (by August 2013) Scope Confident Governance 2 Project (by October 2013) 		Head of Legal & Governance	
3.2 To support the Reform Agenda by providing new Governance arrangements for the Council's responsibilities in relation to the Scottish Police Authority, the Police Service of Scotland; the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; and Health and Social Care Integration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of new governance arrangements re Police Authority; Police Services; and Fire and Rescue Service (Apr 2013) Establishment of new governance arrangements re Health and Social Care Integration (timescale dependent on forthcoming Act of the Scottish Parliament) 		Head of Legal & Governance and Head of Finance	
3.3 Support the Council by continuing to develop the suite of constitutional documents that underpin the Governance of the Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the review of Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation and provide accompanying Guidance (Dec 2013) 		Head of Legal & Governance	
3.4 Develop an ICT Strategy for the Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New ICT Strategy that aligns with the National Local Government ICT Strategy, developed, consulted on and approved (Dec 2013) 		Head of ICT	

SERVICE OBJECTIVE 4

Encouraging innovation to create a culture of improvement.

Key Performance Measures

(N.B. Performance Achieved in 2012/13 will be reported in June 2013. Targets are based on performance in the first three quarters of 2012/13 as reported in February 2013.)

	Targets & Achievements				
	Achieved in 2012/13	Target in 2013/14	Target in 2014/15	Target in 2015/16	Ranking against 32 LA's
4a. Number of employees engaged in the Worksmart initiative – defined by the workSPACE programme	TBC	2300 cumulative	2900 cumulative	3400 cumulative	
4b. Achieving the savings identified under 'continuous improvement' on the efficiencies agenda	TBC	Cumulative by 2014/15	£1m (agreed by Council on 9/2/12)	TBC	

Key Projects/Actions

Action	Milestones	Responsibility
4.1 Embed a performance Improvement culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with all management teams to support and improve performance and improvement (Dec 2013) Further develop corporate performance management system to support self assessment and evaluation, risk management and local community planning priorities (Mar 2014) 	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement
4.2 Supporting the organisation on external audits and inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'HGIOC?' 2013/14 (Nov 2013) Annual report on the 2012/13 audit (Oct 2013) Shared Risk Assessment Assurance and Improvement Plan update 2013/14 (Jan 2014) 	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement

<p>4.3 Support staff in working differently in order for them to embrace the workSPACE programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realign the Worksmart business case to support the implementation period of workSPACE (May 2013) • Achieve implementation plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stonehaven/Portlethen (Aug 2013) ○ Fraserburgh (Mar 2013 + TBA) ○ Kintore (Apr 2012) ○ Turriff (Nov 2012) ○ Aboyne (Oct 2014) ○ Ellon (Jun 2013) ○ Banff (Jul 2014) ○ Inverurie (Jul 2015) ○ Banchory (Oct 2014) ○ Woodhill House (Apr 2013) ○ Peterhead (Jul 2014) 	<p>Head of Customer Communications & Improvement</p>
<p>4.4 Implementation of Corporate Procurement Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure full usage compliance for all central contracts (Mar 2014) • Continue to develop an annual improvement plan based on the results of the National Procurement Capability Assessment (Apr 2013) • Deliver savings in line with corporate budgeting processes and the Programme of Efficiency Savings (Mar 2013) • Develop supplier relationship management and contract management strategies (Sept 2013) • In specifying every contract, consider the use of Community Benefit clauses to establish if quantifiable and achievable outcomes can be set (Apr 13 – Mar 14) 	<p>Head of Procurement</p>

4.5 Implement the ICT Structure Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement staff rota for service desk hours cover (Jun 2013) • Embed the new ICT structure to provide a proactive innovative service to the entire Council (Dec 2013) • Integrate curricular and corporate support to ensure cohesive and efficient level of ICT support across the Council (Dec 2013) 	Head of ICT
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SERVICE OBJECTIVE 5

Ensure all aspects of our Service are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to people's needs.

Key Performance Measures
(N.B. Performance Achieved in 2012/13 will be reported in June 2013. Targets are based on performance in the first three quarters of 2012/13 as reported in February 2013.)

	Targets & Achievements				
	Achieved in 2012/13	Target in 2013/14	Target in 2014/15	Target in 2015/16	Ranking against 32 LA's
5a. Annual Procurement Capability Assessment Score	62%	65%	70%	75%	3rd
5b. Percentage of design and print jobs comparable in price to average price in the local market	TBC	95%	95%	95%	
5c. Annual accuracy rate in Registration	TBC	98%	98%	98%	
5d. Average speed of processing new Benefits claims (SPI)	TBC	21 days	21 days	21 days	
5e. Average speed of processing changed Benefits claims (SPI)	TBC	9 days	9 days	9 days	

Key Projects/Actions

Action	Milestones	Responsibility
5.1 Annual Improvement Plans generated from National Procurement Capability Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move performance up to "superior" (by 2015/16) 	Head of Procurement and all Council Services
5.2 Develop and support cohesive improvement processes through the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly reports to Improvement Programme Board 	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement

5.3 Undertake annual benchmarking exercise to determine competitiveness of print prices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementation of Print Management System (Mar 2013)• Annual benchmark exercise	Head of Customer Communications & Improvement
5.4 Support the initiatives identified under the National Local Government ICT Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake Benchmarking exercises with SOCITM to demonstrate effectiveness (Sept 2013)• Actively engage in the deliverables of the National Strategy (on-going)	Head of ICT

8. Resources

8.1 Revenue Budget 2013-16

The Revenue Budget for Corporate Services for 2013-16 can be broken down as follows:-

Budget	Financial Year 2013/14 (£'000)	Financial Year 2014/15 (£'000)	Financial Year 2015/16 (£'000)
Directorate & Support Services	768	775	782
Central Procurement Unit	606	612	618
Customer Communications & Improvement	2,204	2,174	2,174
Finance	6,872	7,582	7,989
Human Resources & Organisational Development	5,052	5,097	5,145
ICT	9,716	9,808	9,900
Internal Audit	417	421	425
Legal & Governance	4,167	4,171	4,175
Total for Service	29,802	30,640	31,208

8.2 Capital Budget 2013-16

ICT has Capital funding of £7.398m for 2013-16. This funding is governed by the ICT Steering Group and aligned to Council priorities for spend on new ICT initiatives.

8.3 Workforce Development

The headcount for Corporate Services shows the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) posts budgeted for across the Service.

Division/Team	Total FTE
Directorate & Support Services	24
Central Procurement Unit	0
Customer Communications & Improvement	96
Finance	215
Human Resources & Organisational Development	128
ICT	174
Internal Audit	11
Legal & Governance	89
Total for Service	737

8.4 Risk Management

On a day to day basis the Council is required to manage risks that impact on its corporate and operational objectives. To help do this the Council has developed a Risk Management Strategy. This Strategy requires that Risk Registers be maintained at a Service level and that these are updated on a six monthly basis.

Reports are submitted to Directorate Management Team and Policy & Resources Committee to report on progress in managing categories of risk across the Council.

8.5 ICT Resources

Corporate Services has a range of ICT systems supporting its various business needs. The Service acknowledges that regular review and development of these systems is essential to ensure operational efficiency, continuous improvement, modernisation and the need to continue to adapt to the changing requirements of customers.

9. Glossary

Aberdeenshire Community Plan	Identifies how the Aberdeenshire Community Partnership will work together and identifies the outcomes the partnership wants to achieve with communities. The latest community plan for 2011-15 was published in January 2011 and is available at www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/images/communityplan.pdf
Aberdeenshire Performs	The council's performance management framework. It encompasses all our key strategies and plans whether at partnership, corporate, service, team or individual level. It includes our key improvement tools such as KDI, our self assessment approach and our customer feedback mechanisms such as our resident and employee surveys.
Assurance and Improvement Plan	During the annual Shared Risk Assessment (SRA), the network of scrutiny bodies will consider information supplied by each member of the network and agrees a single, shared assessment of risk for the Council. An Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) is then prepared. The AIP gives a description of the Council's context, including the challenges it faces and what it's trying to achieve. The AIP makes an assessment of the challenges likely to be faced by the Council in achieving good outcomes for local people. The AIP also sets out any areas of concern about the way the Council is run. A scrutiny plan is prepared showing what scrutiny activity will be undertaken in the coming three years to make sure the Council keeps on track with what it is trying to do and any improvements it needs to make.
Best Value	Best Value was introduced in 1997, with the main purpose being to guarantee that local authorities will seek to deliver continuous improvement in all its services while taking care to consider economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity and the environment. Best Value also requires councils to: challenge whether and how they should provide a service; compare their services with those provided by others; consult with service users, local residents and the business community and assess the competitiveness of the performance of their services with other provider.
Best Value 2 (BV2) Audit	Best Value 2 (BV2) is the next phase of Best Value audit. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 introduced Best Value and between 2004 and 2009 the Accounts Commission undertook audits of Best Value and Community Planning across all 32 councils. Conducted under the same legislative framework, BV2 takes a different approach to the baseline Best Value audits. Specifically BV2 audits should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More proportionate and risk based, focusing on the particular issues faced by the individual council and its partners • Founded on the Shared Risk Assessment and associated Assurance and Improvement Plans (AIP) • Focussed on impacts and outcomes and the difference the Council and its partners are making for local communities

<p>Committees</p>	<p>Aberdeenshire Council has a system of committees consisting of a local Area Committee for each of the Council's six Areas, along with five policy committees: Education, Learning & Leisure (schools, community centres, pools, recreation sports, heritage, the arts, and parks); Social Work and Housing (Council housing, homeless, criminal justice, support for vulnerable adults, children and families); Infrastructure Services (planning, roads, public transport, waste management, economic development, consumer protection and building control); Policy and Resources (co-ordinating other services, setting policy, providing internal support services, budget monitoring and control) and Scrutiny and Audit (reviews Council performance and ensures effective audit systems are in place). At these committees, Councillors will take decisions about policy, monitor strategies and budgets and check the effectiveness of the Council in delivering services.</p>
<p>Community Asset Transfer</p>	<p>Community Asset Transfer allows voluntary and community groups to acquire assets owned by the Council in order to develop and deliver services and generate benefits for their local communities. Further information about Community Asset Transfer is available at http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/CAT/CAT_Guide_for_groups.pdf</p>
<p>Community Planning</p>	<p>A process through which the Council comes together with other organisations to plan, provide for and promote the future wellbeing of the area. There are twelve organisations in the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership including the Council, NHS Grampian, Grampian Police, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Enterprise, Community Councils, North East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership, Local Rural Partnerships, Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action, Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future, Aberdeenshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership and Skills Development Scotland. These organisations are committed to working together to meet the needs and priorities of communities across Aberdeenshire.</p>
<p>How Good Is Our...?</p>	<p>How Good Is Our...? is a self-assessment toolkit modelled on the 'How Good Is Our...' frameworks developed by HMIE and partners over a 16 year period to develop and support the quality culture throughout Scottish Education. The 'toolkit' is designed to support the self-assessment and evaluation process and assist Services and the Council as a whole evaluate how well it is doing in a rigorous, robust, systematic and consistent way.</p>
<p>Improving the Customer Experience (iCE)</p>	<p>Improving the Customer Experience, (iCE) is the Council's Customer Services Strategy which commences April 2013. The programme aims to improve customer choice, accessibility to services and satisfaction through a better understanding of customer need. iCE will make it easy for customers to access services at a time and in a way that meets their needs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivering the top Council transactions through the website ▪ Managing telephone queries at initial contact ▪ Providing customer service points in each of the main settlements <p>Channel shift away from face to face contact approaches towards digital channels such as customer self service via the website and mobile</p>

	devices will underpin the project.
KDI	Kaizen for Daily Improvement – Kaizen is a Japanese word and roughly translated means “Making something as good as it can be”. KDI enables sustainable improvement through Empowerment, involvement and engagement
Performance Measure	A metric used to quantify the efficiency and/or effectiveness of an objective or action.
Risk Register	Management tool that identifies risks to the service, likelihood of risk, impact and what actions would reduce or prevent the risk happening
Objective	An objective is statement of what the Council will do in order to achieve its vision. Objectives within the Council are established at a number of levels from strategic objectives at Council and service level, down to team objectives and individual objectives that create a framework for service delivery.
Self Assessment	The systematic and regular review of the Council's activities, performance and outcomes referenced against a model of excellence.
Shared Risk Assessment	An approach to external scrutiny whereby the main scrutiny bodies for local government work together through the Local Government Scrutiny Coordination Strategic Group to identify and agree the key risks in each individual council and to develop a plan of scrutiny activity to respond to those specific risks. It is designed to ensure proportionate and focused scrutiny and reduce the overall amount of external scrutiny activity in local government
Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)	Aberdeenshire community planning partnership's Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government builds on the Council's strategic priorities and community plan. It sets out how the Council and the Aberdeenshire community planning partnership will contribute to the government's national outcomes. It arises from the Concordat signed between the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and the Scottish Government.
Strategic Priorities	The Council's strategic priorities provide the strategic framework for service delivery. The priorities set a clear direction for the Council for the next four years, guiding policy development, ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately and effectively, and promoting continuous improvement.
Vision	Defines the Council's desired future direction
workSPACE and WorkSmart	Aberdeenshire Council's office accommodation and flexible working programmes bringing together a reduction in the number of offices the Council operates with smarter working and improved customer service.