



## **ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL – 25 APRIL 2013**

### **COUNCIL PLAN 2013-2017**

#### **1. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that Council:**

- 1.1 Consider and approve the Council Plan as set out in Appendix 1;**
- 1.2 Instruct the Chief Executive to report to Council annually on progress in delivering all aspects of the Council Plan.**

#### **2. Discussion**

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2013-2017 is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Council Plan is intended to confirm the core priorities for the council until 2017 when the local elections next take place. It further clarifies and strengthens connections between:
  - Aberdeenshire Community Plan;
  - Single Outcome Agreement;
  - Community priorities;
  - Service Plans;
  - Key strategies and plans; and
  - Performance improvement.
- 2.3 The plan provides a strategic focus for the council based on local and national priorities.
- 2.4 An annual performance review of the plan identifying progress being made towards the delivery of the priorities will be reported to Council each June.
- 2.5 The Head of Finance and 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 has been carried out as part of the development of the Council Plan. It is included as Appendix 2 and no impact has been identified.

- 3.2 There are no direct financial or staffing implications arising from this report. There may, however, be such implications arising from specific actions as they are progressed. These will be the subject of reports to the relevant Committee as required.

**Colin Mackenzie**  
**Chief Executive**

Report prepared by: Amanda Roe, Performance Manager,  
2 April 2013  
CouncilPlanReport.doc

Appendix 1



# **Council Plan 2013-2017**

**Aberdeenshire  
the very best of Scotland**

**Inside Front/Back:**

Achievements and awards for 2012/13

- Cosla
- Young Local Authority of the Year
- Institute of Customer Services Awards
- UK Loo of the year
- Ellon Academy Enterprise and Employability Across Learning Award (Secondary)
- Longhaven School – TOTAL Green School Award
- Scottish Transport Authority of the Year
- Waste Team - Excellence in Resource Management
- Aberdeenshire – Fairtrade Zone
- Transportation Team - Most Effective Road Safety, Traffic Management & Enforcement Project
- Outstanding Commitment to Jazz Education Award
- B.E.A.T Green Apple Award
- Keep Scotland Beautiful - Seaside Awards for 8 beaches
- Green Flag Award – Aden Country Park

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## Foreword

We are constantly striving to make Aberdeenshire the best area and the best council. Our Council Plan 2013-2017 describes our ambitions for the next four years and outlines how we are working towards these. It is important that our residents, employees, partners and outside scrutiny bodies have a clear view of our vision.

This is a challenging time for local government with continued pressure on budgets. However it is also an exciting time with public sector reform offering opportunities for councils to become more innovative in their approaches to service delivery and through enabling communities to become more involved and responsible for shaping local services.

Having our area identified again as providing the best quality of life in Scotland and hosting events such as the Olympic torch relay, the Olympians parade and Diamond Jubilee celebrations shows Aberdeenshire at its very best. There have been challenges as well – the severe storms and flooding in December 2012 had a significant impact on many of our communities and we will continue to work with those communities and our partners to support recovery and identify ways to reduce future risks.

Achieving our vision means a focus on growing Aberdeenshire's economy, managing demographic change and ensuring early intervention.

We are confident that by focusing on these three pillars we can help our communities to fully realise their potential and continue to manage our resources well, providing value for money.

Chief Executive, Leader  
Photos

## **Aberdeenshire – from mountain to sea, the very best of Scotland.**

Aberdeenshire is a place of extremes – from the natural beauty of our mountain ranges and coastal areas, to the thriving businesses anchored in the oil and gas industry, fishing, agriculture and food production. Aberdeenshire has a strong cultural heritage which underpins the place, with thriving market towns and villages, vibrant and passionate communities who embrace the diversity of the area.

Tourism is an important economic driver, as people are attracted to our many castles, world-class salmon fishing, golfing, skiing, mountain walking and miles of sandy beaches and rugged coastlines, attracting some of the best wildlife in the UK.

Aberdeenshire has a buoyant economy based on a proud past and with an ambitious vision for the future.

The council covers the fourth largest geographic area in Scotland and has the sixth largest population in Scotland. The population has seen significant growth over recent years and is predicted to increase by 22% by 2033 to 295,350. The biggest increases will be for those aged over 75 and by 2023, the population aged 75 or older will have increased by 75% to 30,165.

Unemployment in the area is around 1.3%, significantly lower than the Scottish average. The local economy consists mainly of service sector jobs, with manufacturing showing growth. Oil and gas remains critical to the economy, as do the more traditional sectors of farming, fishing and forestry. In 2010 40% of Scotland's top 25 companies had their headquarters in Aberdeen City and Shire. Average weekly earnings continue to be in the top quartile of local authority areas.

A significant proportion of Aberdeenshire's working residents commute to Aberdeen City, with the highest ratio of outbound long-distance commutes in Scotland. Just 10% of Aberdeenshire residents are within six minutes of a bus stop and a frequency of at least three buses an hour which is lower than other rural areas and less than 2% of the population commutes by rail.

Less than a quarter of all households never use the internet, lower than the Scottish average. Broadband connectivity speeds in the area is generally significantly slower than the UK average of 9Mbps and currently 17% of all addresses are unable to connect to broadband services.

Aberdeenshire has low levels of deprivation, representing 0.4% of the top 20 most deprived areas in Scotland and the lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals. It also has the lowest crime rate in mainland Scotland.

Over 90% of school leavers in Aberdeenshire move into positive destinations (further education, employment or training) with attainment for pupils in S4, S5

and S6 consistently better than the Scottish average however attainment rates are declining very slightly.

Life expectancy at birth is well above the Scottish average, while hospital admissions due to alcohol abuse and drug misuse are below the Scottish average. Aberdeenshire has the second highest level of participation in sport across Scotland.

**Our Vision:**



**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL

**Serving Aberdeenshire  
from mountain to sea –  
the very best of Scotland**

**The best area**

Helping to create and sustain the best quality of life for all through . . .

- happy, healthy and confident people
- safe, friendly and lively communities
- an enterprising and adaptable economy
- our special environment and diverse culture

**The best council**

Aiming to provide excellent services for all by . . .

- involving, responding and enabling
- finding new and more efficient ways of doing things
- providing elected leadership for our area
- working with our partners in the North East and beyond
- always looking to the future

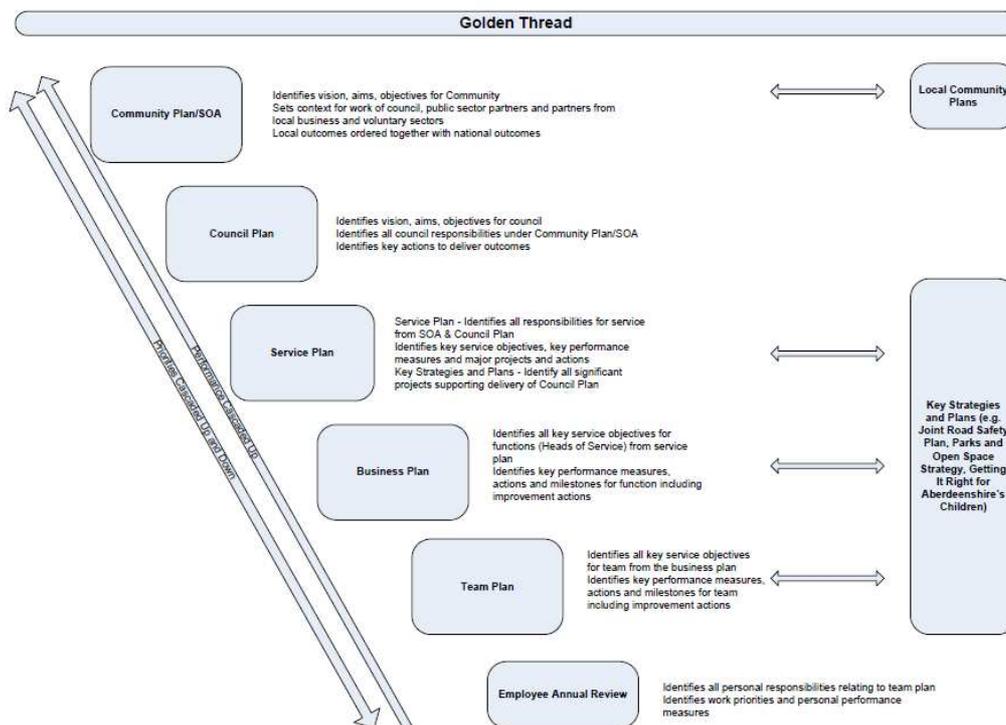
## Introduction

The Council Plan explains where we want to be as a Council and how we will achieve this. This plan is for the period 2013-2017.

The purpose of the Plan is to set out our vision, core outcomes and key priorities so that they are clear to our communities, our employees, and to other public sector organisations, voluntary organisations and businesses.

Managing the needs and expectations of our residents against a backdrop of a growing and ageing population, reductions in available resources, and ensuring sustainable development, represent significant challenges. The plan confirms our need to work creatively and efficiently as part of our continued commitment to our communities and residents, with a focus on efficient public services with high levels of customer engagement and satisfaction.

The strategic direction of the plan is informed by the priorities of the Aberdeenshire Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement and in turn, the plan cascades these priorities into individual services – the ‘Golden Thread’:



## Principles

Delivering our vision will be underpinned by principles guiding what we do and how we do it. Click on any principle for more information:

- identifying and delivering services which **prevent** problems and ease future demand on services by **intervening early and enabling better outcomes and value for money**
- giving our communities more opportunities to **influence and control matters** which affect their lives and understanding **enhanced community engagement and participation**
- supporting our communities to **develop and sustain their own abilities** to face change and respond to opportunities and challenges – **building capacity and resilience**
- understanding that some of the best solutions to respond to local challenges come by **connecting people, communities, areas, organisations and ideas**
- **working together** with communities and local organisations (including other public sector, voluntary and private sectors) to **deliver efficient, improved services**
- ensuring we consider how we can positively **contribute to a more equal society** through **advancing equality and good relations** in our day-to-day business
- managing **and supporting environmental, social and economic demands** to meet the needs of communities **now without compromising their future**
- ensuring services meet the needs of communities in terms of **quality, competitiveness, efficiency, continuous improvement and accountability**.

## Opportunities

The next four years will continue to present diverse demands and challenges.

The Scottish Government will continue the pace of public sector reform. This reform is based on four key themes –

- **Place** - Integration of services through better partnership, collaboration and effective local delivery
- **People** - Developing the capabilities of the public service workforce and its leadership
- **Performance** - Embedding a performance culture to improve outcomes
- **Prevention** - Shifting towards preventative spending – preventing problems by intervening earlier.

This reform agenda will have a significant impact locally. There will be substantial work required by ourselves and our partners to support the proposals to integrate health and social care and the introduction of the Welfare Reform Bill. There will continue to be significant changes as a result of the recent introduction of a single Police Service and a single Fire and Recue Service across Scotland.

The outcomes of the recent Ministerial Review of Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements will further strengthen the duty on the council and its partners to work together to improve outcomes through participation in community planning. The council will need to demonstrate a long term plan for how it will support a shift towards preventative spending, supporting early intervention and show what will be different for communities ten years ahead and what will be done to improve outcomes on a rolling 3-year basis.

The council's activities in the coming years will be largely influenced by the continued economic challenges facing the organisation. With the significant financial pressures that are facing the council, the need for consistent engagement with residents, communities and partners is critical. How we do this will play a significant role in how the council is viewed by service users, partners and the business community and effective community partnership is critical.

There are many activities coming up in the future which will also have an impact on the council, including Aberdeen's bid for the City of Culture 2017, the Commonwealth Games and Homecoming in 2014, and the Independence Referendum. How each of these will impact the council over the coming years will be kept under review. There are also the unexpected events like flooding which can have a devastating impact on communities and we continue to work towards improvements to protect towns and villages, as well as supporting them to become more resilient.

## Our Core Outcomes

Our vision to be the best area and the best council is supported by three pillars - Early Intervention, Demography and Economic Development.

Through **early intervention**, we recognise the need to encourage future planning and allocation of resources at an early stage to avoid higher costs later.

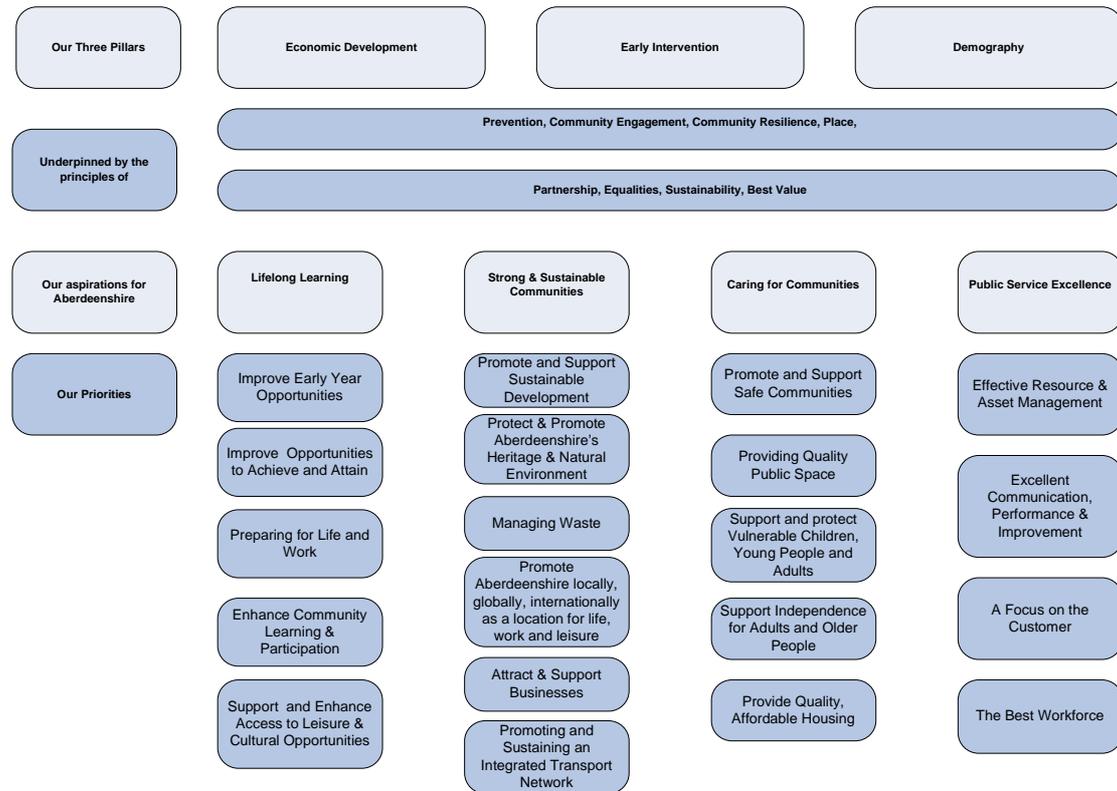
**Population** projections, particularly in the number of older people, indicate growth rates in the Aberdeenshire area that are significantly higher than the Scottish average. Whilst older people will bring skills, wisdom and experience to our communities, it will also present us with a challenge in the planning and delivery of services in the future.

**Growing the economy** is key to the future prosperity of the North East of Scotland. We recognise the important role it can and does play in supporting the business community, and helping this area meet current and future economic challenges.

Delivery of the vision is based on delivering four outcomes for Aberdeenshire:

1. Lifelong Learning - Aberdeenshire is the best place to live and learn, work and play. It is an area where we are working together for the **best quality of life**, supporting healthy, successful, inclusive communities.
2. Strong & Sustainable Communities - Aberdeenshire is the best area where the council works with **partners** and communities to create and sustain the **best quality of life** for all through **an enterprising and adaptable economy**, that is the location of choice for high value national organisations, for smaller expanding businesses and for social enterprises.
3. Caring for Communities - Aberdeenshire is the best place to be, where the council is creating and sustaining the best quality of life for all through **involving and enabling happy, healthy and confident people** who live in **safe, friendly and lively communities**.
4. Public Service Excellence - Aberdeenshire is the best council. It is a dynamic, effective organisation aiming to provide excellent services by finding **new and more efficient** ways of doing things. The focus is on continuous improvement of the quality and efficiency of service provided with strong **leadership** and motivated employees.

## Our Priorities



### Core Outcome 1 - Lifelong Learning

We will ensure our children have the best start in life, **improving early year opportunities** for families and children. This means ensuring children are supported and able to develop the skills and knowledge that will allow them to become resilient and effective learners.

By **improving opportunities** for our young people **to achieve and attain**, we let them fulfil their personal ambitions.

Supporting our young people to be **prepared for life and work by** helping them gain the knowledge and skills that mean they can make the most of every opportunity.

Through **enhancing community learning and participation** we can help our residents and communities be successful, achieving and inclusive with the confidence to tackle what matters to them.

**Enhancing and supporting access to leisure and cultural opportunities** will support our residents and visitors enjoy the best of Aberdeenshire and encourage active and healthy communities.

## **Core Outcome 2 - Strong and Sustainable Communities**

By **promoting Aberdeenshire locally, nationally and globally as a location for life, work and leisure**, it will be recognised as a great place to be and to invest.

We will **attract and support businesses** – small and large – growing a vibrant economy, helping to keep unemployment low, even in areas of deprivation

**Promoting and sustaining an integrated transport network** will connect businesses and individuals locally and internationally.

**Sustainable development** enables residents to live, work, play and access services all within local communities and we will **promote and support** this through effective land use planning and by ensuring sustainable construction

We will **manage waste** through a commitment to prevention and encouraging households and businesses to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, working towards Zero Waste.

**Our protection and promotion Aberdeenshire's heritage and natural environment** will enable our unique culture to be enjoyed now and by future generations.

### **Core Outcome 3 - Caring for Communities**

Keeping our **communities** vibrant by **supporting and promoting** community **safety** and delivering protective services such as environmental health and consumer protection.

**Providing quality public spaces**, helping communities be proud of their environment.

By ensuring there is a **provision of quality, affordable housing** for all, we support economic growth and help communities thrive.

We will ensure that **vulnerable children, young people and adults are supported and protected, at the earliest opportunity**, and feel involved in the decisions affecting themselves and their communities, able to influence the services that support them.

We will empower and **support adults and older people to retain their independence**, continuing to be able to be involved and engaged in their community.

## **Core Outcome 4 – Public Service Excellence**

**Focusing on the customer**, putting our residents and communities at the heart of everything we do, we will provide services that are inclusive, empowering and make a difference.

We will **effectively manage** our **resources and assets** to ensure we are financially robust and our buildings, technology, roads, bridges, harbours, beaches and streets are in the condition they should be.

Having the right people, with the right skills, results in **the best workforce**.

With a commitment to **excellent communication, performance and improvement**, our approach to business is being transformed.

## Organised to Deliver

### Political Leadership

68 councillors represent Aberdeenshire in 19 multi-member wards, each with either three or four elected members. The councillors were democratically elected in May 2012 and are responsible for providing community leadership, setting the strategic direction, priorities and policies of the Council; scrutinising the performance of services; representing the interests of local communities; and promoting effective partnerships.

Councillors fulfil these responsibilities through the decision-making processes of the Council and its Committees. The Council and the Policy and Resources Committee deal with strategic and corporate issues that impact across the whole Council. There are three policy committees which provide opportunity for debate and decision making in relation to the core services of Social Work & Housing, Education, Learning & Leisure and Infrastructure. Six Area Committees enable councillors to take decisions on local issues.

The council's administration is led by the Aberdeenshire Alliance, the Administration of Aberdeenshire Council. The Alliance has identified a programme of priorities that it wants to deliver by 2017 and these can be viewed [here](#). These priorities have been taken into account when developing this plan.

### Services

Council services are managed and delivered through five directorates (click on each service to find out more about it):

- [Chief Executive's Service](#)
- [Corporate Services](#)
- [Education, Learning & Leisure Service](#)
- [Housing & Social Work Service](#)
- [Infrastructure Service](#)

Each directorate prepares a service plan that supports the delivery of the priorities in the Council Plan, identifying key projects and actions as well as key performance measures. Each service plan can be accessed by clicking on the images below.

*Thumbnails of the covers of each service plan with hyperlinks to plans*

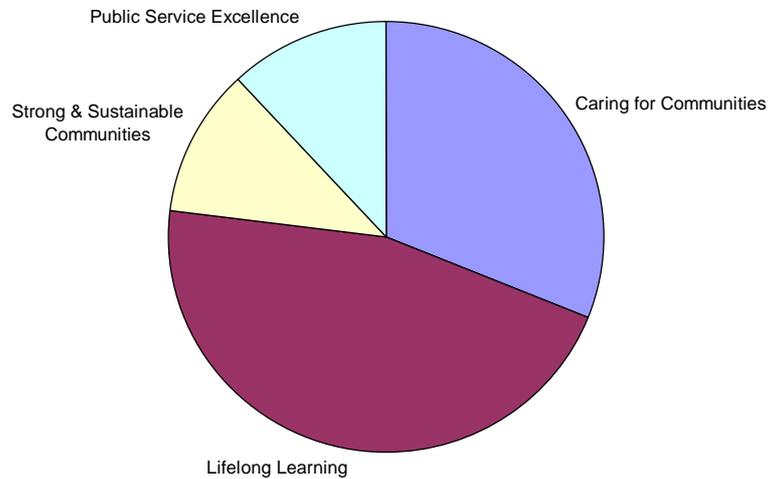
## Money

### a. Revenue Budget

The revenue budget is used to pay for the daily running of services including staffing costs. The total revenue budget for 2013-2017 has been approved as:

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
£512million	£515million	£516million	£517million

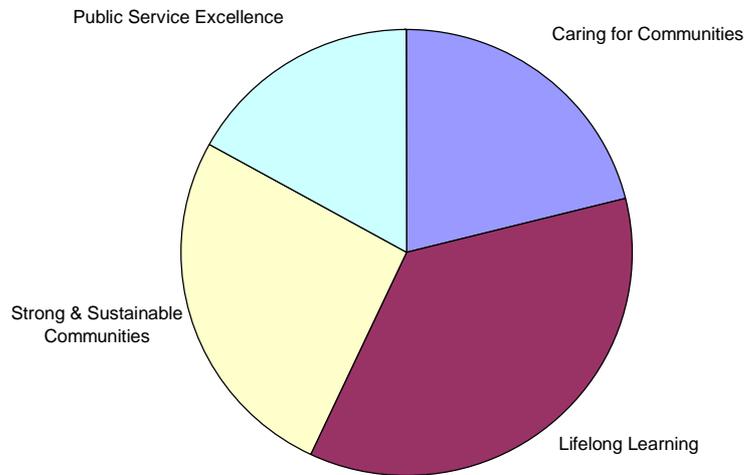
The budget has been developed to target resources towards our priorities:



60% of the budget is met from the Revenue Support Grant (from Central Government), 18% of the budget is funded through Business Rates and the remainder from Council Tax.

**b. Capital Budget**

The capital budget covers spending on fixed assets such as roads, bridges, and street lighting, new builds such as schools, swimming pools and care homes, as well as burial grounds, landfill and waste recycling centres, harbours, council buildings and vehicles. It also covers essential repairs that might increase the market value of the asset or lengthen its useful life. The budget supports the Capital Plan which is a rolling programme of work reflecting our priorities, area needs and capital funding available to spend on fixed assets.

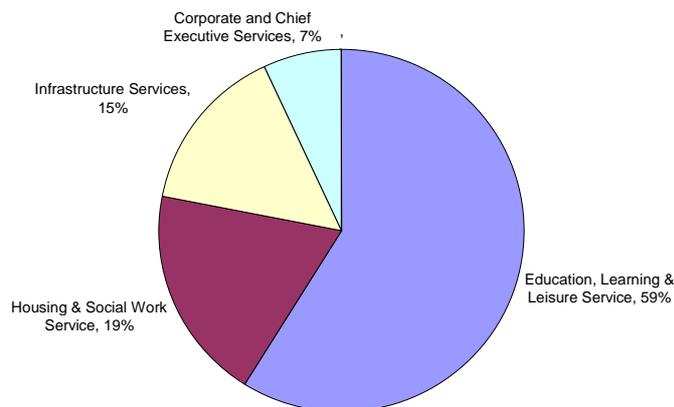


62% of the capital budget is funded through borrowing, 35% comes from Capital Grants and 3% from Capital Receipts.

### People

Our 14,000 employees are ambassadors for the council and essential to delivering successful services. We have one of the lowest staffing rates per population in Scotland with approximately 36.7 full time equivalent staff per 1,000 of Aberdeenshire residents.

### People by Service:



More detailed information about our budgets and people can be found in the latest Facts and Figures booklet available [here](#).

## Demonstrating Success

Progress towards achieving the priorities identified in this Council Plan will be monitored within 'Aberdeenshire Performs', our performance improvement framework.

Performance reporting cascades from the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement, through the Council Plan to Service, Business and Team Plans. There is regular reporting to committee and Directorate Management Teams against all these plans. The most up to date performance reports are available on the council's website within the [performance pages](#).

The Community Plan is monitored through the Single Outcome Agreement on an annual basis through the Community Planning Partnership Board and the Scottish Government. Local Community Plans are regularly monitored through the Local Community Planning Groups and Area Committees.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements are supported by a programme of [Citizens' Panel surveys](#) that enable community planning, at all levels, to target community improvement. We make good use of our [Reputation Tracker](#) and Employee surveys as well as the Citizen's Panel and Youth Council to inform and report on progress, particularly around satisfaction with our services and routinely monitor trends in performance over time and against other comparable organisations to help focus future improvement activity.

We also publish an annual Public Performance Report which is designed to give an overview of our performance each year. The latest Public Performance Report is available [here](#).

Self assessment is an important part of our performance improvement framework helping us evaluate how well we are performing. Each year the council undertakes a 'How Good Is Our Council?' evaluation which identifies areas of good practice as well as highlighting areas for improvement. The most recent 'How Good Is Our Council?' summary evaluation report, including improvement activity required, can be viewed [here](#).

The council is regularly scrutinised by external agencies such as Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate and Audit Scotland. In addition, external auditors, appointed by Audit Scotland, audit the council's governance and financial procedures annually. In November 2012, Audit Scotland undertook Best Value 2 (BV2) scrutiny work focusing on leadership (specifically the impact of senior management reorganisation), challenge and improvement (including self-evaluation, performance management and competitiveness/benchmarking) and managing people (specifically managing the workforce reductions). The findings of the audit are available [here](#) along with the improvement plan that confirms the activity we are undertaking to address the areas for improvement identified. In summary the scrutiny confirmed that a

strong senior management team is developing, there is effective performance management, and an established improvement culture in the council as well as a strategic approach to workforce planning.

The Local Area Network of external scrutiny agencies also undertakes a shared risk assessment of the council every year. Our most recent shared risk assessment (published April 2013) was positive and identified no significant scrutiny risks. A copy of the current Assurance and Improvement Plan associated with the shared risk assessment is available [here](#).

Our improvement focus will be maintained on the continued delivery of quality services. A business transformation programme has been put in place to enable us to deliver improved customer access and a modern working environment fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The workstreams in the programme are:

- Working Smarter - bringing together a reduction in the number of offices the council operates with smarter working and improved customer service. As well as saving the council approximately £1m per year this will also create a better working environment for many employees.
- Customer Services – making significant changes to modernise our approach to customer services, reducing the reliance on face to face contact over time and where appropriate, delivering more services through the internet and other digital media. This is the most cost effective way for us to deliver services with self-service available 24/7. We are also identifying more innovative ways to deliver face to face contact in our communities, whether that is in offices, libraries or together with our public sector partners.
- Supporting Employees – a range of efficiency programmes are in progress or planned to modernise and improve processes, procedures and ways of working across the council focusing on increased automation, improved internal controls and business processing, information recording and management to ensure standardised, consistent and high quality service provision.

An improvement programme has been developed to complement and support the business transformation programme. It oversees our approach to delivering improvement and monitors and reports on efficiencies and benefits realised. The main elements of the programme are:

- Continuous improvement – delivering improvement activity to make us as efficient as possible and enhance service delivery.
- Self assessment/evaluation – embedding self assessment into the Council and targeting improvement resources on the areas that are a priority for us and our communities.
- Corporate performance – developing a performance culture throughout the organisation and using the information to target those areas where improvement activity is required.

- Stakeholder feedback – engagement with residents, customers, employees and others, taking account of needs and views when developing and reviewing services
- External scrutiny –responding to the areas for improvement identified by the BV2 audit and annual shared risk assessments will be a priority.

Together these programmes will help ensure we are innovative, efficient and able to respond to the challenges ahead.

### **Get Involved**

We hope you have found the Council Plan 2013-2017 interesting. We would welcome your comments on the plan. Please leave feedback here.

If you would like to help shape the future direction of the council please get involved in our consultations and engagement events. Find out more about future [engagement events](#) on our website, sign up to be notified about consultations [here](#) and follow us on [twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Appendix 2

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Corporate Services
Section	Customer Communications & Improvement
Title of the activity etc.	Council Plan 2013-2017
Aims of the activity	The Council Plan 2013-2017 sets a strategic direction for the council for the next four years guiding service development and delivery
Author(s) & Title(s)	Amanda Roe, Performance Manager , ,
Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Reputation Tracker Citizen Panel Surveys Resident Survey 2010 Service Plans Aberdeenshire Community Plan SOA
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	Priorities and Outcomes identified in plan were developed in consultation with Management Team Directorate Management Teams Aberdeenshire Alliance Group Leaders. Policy Committee Chairs & Provost Aberdeenshire Alliance Members Elected Members
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	Consideration was given to: Scottish Government Performance Framework Community Planning Partnership and member partners plans Plans developed by Aberdeen City Council, Moray Council, Angus Council
External data (census, available statistics).	Census data Scottish Government data sets ACSEF data sets
Other (general information as appropriate).	SOA Strategic Assessment

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	No

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger	Yes			
Age – Older	Yes			
Disability	Yes			
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)	Yes			
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Gender – male/female			Yes	
Pregnancy and maternity			Yes	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			Yes	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			Yes	
Marriage and Civil Partnership			Yes	

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
<p>Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.</p>	<p>All the core outcomes have been identified with the intention of having positive impacts for the residents and communities of Aberdeenshire. In addition a number of the aligned priorities are specific to the protected characteristics including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Early Year Opportunities</li> <li>• Enhance Community Learning &amp; Participation</li> <li>• Support and protect Vulnerable Children, Young People and Adults</li> <li>• Support Independence for Adults and Older People</li> </ul>	
	<p>The plan identifies equalities as a specific principle that will guide what the council will do and how it will do it - Ensuring we consider how we can positively <b>contribute to a more equal society</b> through <b>advancing equality and good relations</b> in our day-to-day business.</p>	
Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?		
<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>The affected groups have not been specifically consulted.</p>	

Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?		
These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.	Mitigating Steps	Timescale
	The Council Plan is supported by and supports Service Plans and other key strategies and plans. Projects and actions identified in these plans will, where appropriate, have an Equality Impact Assessment undertaken.	Ongoing
Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?		
These should be included in the action plan.	The Council Plan will be available via the website and libraries. Groups will have access to existing mechanisms used for consultation, engagement and feedback We will publish a Public Performance Report annually which will incorporate updates on our Equality Outcomes	
Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?		
The Council Plan provides strategic direction for the council and has placed equalities as a cross cutting principle as part of providing guidance on what we do and how we do it.		
Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?		
These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	The council plan will be performance reviewed annually. A public performance report is also published annually. Our progress towards delivering our Equalities Outcomes will be reported through our public performance reporting framework.	
Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	There are no negative impacts because the purpose of the Council Plan 2013-2017 is to provide strategic direction to the council on how it can deliver quality, efficient services for the residents and communities of Aberdeenshire.	
	2	Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.
	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen

\* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team	Corporate Services, Customer Communication & Improvement	
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	(if appropriate)	
	3) <b>Authors:</b> I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Amanda Roe Position: Performance Manager Date: 2 April 2013 Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
		Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
	4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Mark Baker Date:	
	5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Kate Bond Position: Head of Customer Communications & Improvement Date:	Name: Position: Date:
	6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.	Date:	
	7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire	Date:	
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO			Date:

