

REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE - 17 JUNE 2021

ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2020 - 2021

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 In adopting the Scheme of Governance in 2017, it was agreed that each Committee be provided with an annual report, outlining its scrutiny activity. This report contains the activity for 2020 – 2021 for the Infrastructure Services Committee.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 **consider and comment on the activities detailed in the report; and**
- 2.2 **identify any future scrutiny requirements as part of an annual programme of activity.**

3 Purpose and Decision-Making Route

- 3.1 The Scheme of Governance provides that each Area and Policy Committee and Audit Committee should receive and review an annual report of the Committee's scrutiny activity. This report provides an opportunity for Members of the Infrastructure Services Committee to consider their scrutiny activity in the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

4 Discussion

- 4.1 The annual scrutiny report is part of the monitoring process allowing committees to keep track of progress and ensure any agreed actions have been implemented. The report also provides an opportunity to reflect on scrutiny undertaken and identify any future scrutiny requirements as part of an annual programme of activity.
- 4.2 The Scheme of Governance explains that Scrutiny or challenge and review is fundamental to transparent, accountable decision making and performance improvement. Scrutiny is about assessing the impact of the Council's strategic policy and planning on communities and residents.
- 4.3 Members are undertaking scrutiny continually whether when considering performance reports, approving new policies, plans and strategies, or considering regular budget monitoring reports. Examples of formal and informal scrutiny include: -

Formal

- Performance reports
- Strategies

- Policy development/Approval/Review
- Capital and revenue monitoring
- Management information
- External inspection reports
- Internal/external audit reports
- Resident consultation/feedback
- Referral from Audit Committee

Informal

- Performance sessions outwith Committee
- Member’s surgeries
- Ward Forums
- Joint Area Committee/Area Management Team meetings

4.4 Policy Committees are also responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of policy implementation and service delivery in respect of any function within its remit and identifying and implementing improvements as appropriate in accordance with the Policy Development and Review Framework. On occasions Committees will wish to further assure themselves and may want to undertake more detailed scrutiny. This can be undertaken through a three-stage process: -

Committee Review Process

- Stage 1 Report
- Stage 2 Workshop
- Stage 3 Investigation

4.5 The Committee’s scrutiny activity over the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 is summarised in the table below and a full list is provided in **Appendix 1**. The table highlights scrutiny activity per meeting detailing the total number of items for each meeting (excluding standard items 1, 2 and 3) and those which represent scrutiny activity based on the categories included in the Scrutiny at Aberdeenshire guidance. For the Infrastructure Services Committee this represents 56.1% of committee business over that period. The percentage for other committees will be higher but Infrastructure Services Committee deals with a number of planning applications and these are not classified as scrutiny activity.

Date of Committee	Total number of items	Number of items representing scrutiny activity	%age scrutiny activity
14/05/2021	5	3	60%
18/06/2020	9	4	44.4%
20/08/2020	10	5	50%
01/10/2020	12	9	75%
26/11/2020	10	7	70%
21/01/2021	21	10	47.6%
11/03/2021	15	8	53.3%
Total	82	46	56.1%

4.6 The type of Formal scrutiny activity undertaken can be summarised as follows: -

Type	Number	Percentage
Management Information	25	54.4%
Policy Development/approval/review	4	8.7%
Capital and Revenue Monitoring	6	13.0%
Strategies	10	21.7%
Member promoted issue	1	2.2%
Total	46	

As can be seen the Management Information category is the largest covering activities such as outstanding business, partnership reviews, funding issues and charging, procurement, business plans and digital infrastructure.

4.7 One Member Promoted Issue was considered by the Committee during 2020/21. In January the Committee received a report on Walking and Cycling on Rural Roads- (item 14) as a result of a request made by the Committee at a previous meeting.

4.8 On 7 occasions, in considering reports submitted, additional actions were requested by the Committee, including issues such as:

- Requesting that Transport Officers discuss with bus operators issues regarding post Covid requirements.
- Officers provide a briefing note on greener routes.
- The Director of Infrastructure provide a report on Scottish Government Town Centre Funding grants awarded under delegated powers.
- The Head of Economic Development and Protective Services provide a report setting out fee charges for businesses for 2022/23.
- Provide a briefing on recycling rates at HWRCs pre and post introduction of booking system.
- Provide a report on future changes in types of vehicles, active travel and investment in infrastructure.

5 Council Priorities, Implications, and Risk

5.1 The Council Plan has been developed around the three pillars and six strategic priorities. These are: -

Pillar	Priority
<i>Our People</i>	<i>Education Health & Wellbeing</i>
<i>Our Environment</i>	<i>Infrastructure Resilient Communities</i>
<i>Our Economy</i>	<i>Economy & Enterprise Estate Modernisation</i>

- 5.2 Underpinning the Priorities are a number of key principles. They are right people, right places, right time; responsible finances; climate and sustainability; Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plans; human rights and public protection; tackling poverty and inequalities; digital infrastructure and economy.
- 5.3 Whilst the various issues and topics considered as scrutiny relate to all the Council’s Priorities and Key Principles they particularly focus on the Pillar “Our Environment” and the Priorities “Infrastructure” and “Resilient Communities” and supports the principles around climate and sustainability, Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plans; human rights and public protection; digital infrastructure and economy.

5.4 Equality Considerations:

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		x	
Staffing		x	
Equalities		x	
Fairer Scotland Duty		x	
Town Centre First		x	
Sustainability		x	
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing		x	

- 5.5 An equality impact assessment is not required because the annual report of scrutiny does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.
- 5.6 Similarly, there are no specific implications for staffing, finances, wellbeing, or children and young people’s rights.
- 5.7 Various Risks have been identified as relevant to the areas of business covered in the content reports for this annual report and were identified when the individual matters were considered. There are no risks, either at a Corporate or Directorate level, relevant to this annual report on scrutiny.

6 Scheme of Governance

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section F 7.6 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it refers to scrutiny activity undertaken by this Committee.

Alan Wood
Director Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Alan Morris Service Development Coordinator

Date 28/05/2021

List of Appendices – *Appendix 1 – Infrastructure Services Committee - Scrutiny Activity, 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021*

Appendix 1

Infrastructure Services Committee
Scrutiny Activity, 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

Meeting Date	Item Description	Category of Scrutiny	Additional Actions
14 th May 2020	(04) Outstanding Business Covering Report	Management Information	Actions to be included on agenda of next meeting: - (i) Developing Excellence in Our North Coast Communities – Annual Review (ii) Economic Development Priorities and Action Plan 2017-2021 – Annual Review (iii) Business Gateway/ Supporting Aberdeenshire Businesses – Annual Review (iv) Torphins – Review of Existing Speed Limit
	(05) Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021 – Revised Development Plan Scheme 2020	Policy development/ approval/review	Agreed recommendations
	(06) Strategic Transport Update	Strategies	Agree to accept further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of the Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (LTS) as appropriate.
18 th June 2020	(04) Outstanding Business Covering Report	Management Information	Actions to be included on agenda of next meeting: - (i) Developing Excellence in Our North Coast Communities – Annual Review (ii) Economic Development Priorities

			and Action Plan 2017-2021 – Annual Review (iii) Business Gateway/ Supporting Aberdeenshire Businesses – Annual Review (iv) Torphins – Review of Existing Speed Limit
	(06) Partnership Review – Bus Alliance	Management Information	It was agreed that the Council continue to participate in the partnership for a further two years. The Committee requested that officers discuss, with bus operators, at the next forum, issues regarding post Covid requirements regarding layout and service provision will maximise social distancing, as mitigation for health risks
	(08) Rural Partnership Funding 2020 - 2021	Management Information	Noted that a future funding for Rural Partnerships would be presented to the November meeting of the Committee.
	(09) Finance Update – Covid 19 Impact	Capital and revenue monitoring	It was agreed to receive regular updates on the financial impact of COVID-19 on the budget areas within the Committee’s remit
20 th August 2020	(04) Outstanding Business	Management Information	It was agreed that (3) Financial Update – Covid 19 Impact – provide Covid Update to every meeting on ISC Budget Areas. (4) Carbon Budget, 2020/21 Action Plan – item to be presented to October Committee (5) European Social Fund – item to be

			presented to October Committee (6) Historic Asset Management Project (HAMP) Annual Report - item to be presented to October Committee
	(07) Strategic Transport Update	Strategies	Agree to accept further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of the Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (LTS) as appropriate and note the update on Spaces for People in Aberdeenshire.
	(09) Economic Development Action Plan Annual Update	Strategies	Agree to receive a proposed new Economic Development Business Plan in the November cycle, setting out new priorities and actions
	(11) Coastal Communities Crown Estate Funding	Management Information	Recommendations were agreed
	(12) Financial Reporting To 30 June 2020	Capital and revenue monitoring	The Committee agreed to approve the budget movements as set out in Appendix 2, with further details in Appendix 3.
1 st October 2020	(04) Outstanding Business	Management Information	The Committee agreed that (i) Financial Update – Covid 19 impact - full updated report to be presented to the November meeting. (ii) Rural Partnership funding - item to be presented to the November meeting. (iii) Performance Monitoring Report (Council Plan Priorities 2017- 2020) - as the Council has adopted new priorities, the final update on performance

			in support of the previous priorities will be issued as a bulletin report.
	(06) Carbon Budget Six-Monthly Update and Covid-19 Sustainability and Climate Change Lessons Learned	Capital and revenue monitoring	The Committee requested reports on progress with the Carbon Budget be presented 6-monthly to the relevant Policy Committees and to the Sustainability Committee
	(07) Historic Asset Management Project Annual Update	Management Information	Agreed recommendation(s)
	(08) Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy Consultation & Aberdeen City Region Deal Strategic Transport Assessment	Strategies	The Committee requested that officers provide a briefing report on Greener Routes.
	(09) Update on Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee	Management Information	Agreed recommendation(s)
	(10) Partnership Review – East Grampian Coastal Partnership	Management Information	The Committee agreed that the Council continues to participate in the partnership for a further two years.
	(11) Scottish Government Town Centre Funding	Management Information	The Committee instructed the Director of Infrastructure Services to report back to Committee with details of future applications approved under delegated powers
	(12) Preparing for Eu Exit & Support for Exporting Businesses	Management Information	The Committee agreed to: - (i) Delegate authority to the Head of Economic Development and Protective Services to adjust the fee for Export Health Certificates to companies exporting

			Products of Animal Origin for the period January to June 2021 (ii) Instruct the Head of Economic Development and Protective Services to submit a further report to this Committee by the end of 2021 to set a revised fee to start from financial year 2022/23;
	(14) Supplementary Infrastructure Services Procurement Plan	Management information	Committee requested that officers report information on recycling figures pre- and post the introduction of the booking system at HWRCs.
26 th November 2021	(04) Outstanding Business	Management Information	(i) Financial Update – Covid-19 Impact - a bulletin report will be issued to the October cycle with a full updated report being presented to the November meeting.
	(07) Roads Asset Management Update	Management Information	The Committee requested a briefing note on recommendation 2.4 in 6 months and requested an additional report on future changes in types of vehicles, active travel and investment in infrastructure.
	(08) Strategic Transport Update	Strategies	Agree to accept further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of the Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (LTS) as appropriate.
	(09) Roads Policy Review Update	Policy development/ approval/review	The Committee requested a report to be brought back on Green Routes and wider associated issues in January 2021.

	(11) Rural Partnership Funding 2021 - 2024	Management Information	Instruct the Director of Infrastructure Services to report back to Committee following the end of the first year
	(14) Aberdeenshire's Digital Strategy	Strategies	The Committee agreed to note Aberdeenshire's Digital Strategy in relation to the Council's priorities, and to instruct Officers to forward the comments raised by the Committee to be considered by the Business Services Committee:
	(15) Financial Performance Reporting To 30 September 2020	Capital and revenue monitoring	The recommendations were approved
21 st January 2021	(04) Outstanding Business	Management Information	(i) Roads Asset Management Update - updated information will be available after the next RAMP Audit and reported to Committee thereafter (ii) Tour of Britain Update - Report is planned for 11 March 2021 Committee. (iii) Annual Procurement Performance Report 2019-2020 - report will be brought to the next meeting on 11 March 2021.
	(11) Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service Strategy Review 2017-20 & Archaeology Service Strategy 2020-23	Strategies	The recommendations were approved
	(12) Aberdeenshire Council NESBReC Strategy Review 2017-20 & NESBReC Strategy 2020-23	Strategies	The recommendations were approved

	(13) Aberdeenshire Council Ranger Service Strategy Review 2017-20 & Ranger Service Strategy 2020-23	Strategies	The recommendations were approved
	(14) Walking and cycling on rural roads	Member promoted issue	Noted
	(17) Approval of Trade Waste Charges 2021/22	Management Information	The recommendations were approved
	(18) Bridges Prioritisation Model – Starter Paper	Policy development/ approval/review	<p>Instruct Officers to develop a formal policy that links to the prioritisation model, and report back to Committee for approval in line with the Policy Development and Review Framework.</p> <p>An update paper would to be presented to the Infrastructure Services Committee on 13 May 2021, following a public engagement exercise and consideration by each of the Area Committees.</p>
	(20) Crown Estate Scotland Funding	Management Information	The recommendations were approved
	(21) Update on Covid-19 Business Grants	Management Information	The recommendations were approved
	(22) Financial Performance Reporting to 31 December 2020	Capital and revenue monitoring	The recommendations were approved
11 th March 2021	(04) Outstanding Business	Management Information	<p>(i) Tour of Britain Update – report will go to May Committee</p> <p>(ii) Bridges Prioritisation Model - Starter Paper - reports will be presented to all 6 Area Committees comments to be incorporate into a report to ISC in May 2021</p>

			(ii)
	(5) Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan 2020-2022	Management Information	Director to continue to report, by exception, to Committee quarterly on performance measures against service objectives and six monthly on progress in delivering all aspects of the Directorate plan.
	(09) Strategic Transport Update	Strategies	Agree to accept further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of the Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (LTS)
	(11) Carbon Budget Six-Monthly Update and Covid-19 Sustainability and Climate Change Lessons Learned	Capital and revenue monitoring	The recommendations were approved
	(12) Crown Estate Scotland Funding	Management Information	The recommendations were approved
	(13) Improving Access to Digital Infrastructure	Management Information	The recommendations were approved
	(14) Policy Register Annual Reporting	Policy development/ approval/review	The recommendations were approved
	(15) Fees and Charges Review: Proposed Approach	Management Information	The recommendations were approved