

## REPORT TO BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE – 15 MARCH 2022

### EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2021 (COUNCIL PRIORITIES: AREA PLAN 2021-2023)

#### 1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 The purpose of this report and accompanying appendix is to provide an update on the progress with key council area outcome indicators identified as provided by the Education & Children's Services Directorate, which help demonstrate how we are delivering on the Aberdeenshire Council Plan Priorities (2020-2022) framework linked to the Buchan Area Plan (2021-2023), and consider how the Service is progressing, evidenced through a reflection of the performance achieved during the first six months of the reporting year 2021/22 (April to September 2021), in order that Committee can acknowledge progress and fulfil their scrutiny and monitoring role.

#### 1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 **Acknowledge and consider progress made during April to September 2021 toward achieving the Council Plan Priorities 2020-2022 linked to the Buchan Area Plan 2021-2023; and**

1.2.2 **Instruct the Director of Education & Children's Services to continue to present performance reports to the Area Committee on a six-monthly basis, evidencing progress and performance with delivery of the Council Plan linked to the Buchan Area Plan.**

#### 2 Decision Making Route

2.1 In light of the unparalleled impact of Covid-19 on Aberdeenshire communities, the economy and on public services, Full Council formally closed down the former Council Plan 2017-2022 and associated priorities at the special meeting of 23rd July 2020 (Item 4), and approved a renewed Council Plan 2020-2022 at the special meeting of 7th October 2020 (Items 3 and 3a) to better reflect the current challenges being faced by the council and the region – centric to the [three pillars](#)<sup>1</sup> *Our People, Our Environment, and Our Economy*.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-plan/strategic-priorities/>

2.2 The *Education & Children's Services (ECS) Directorate Plan* and accompanying *Directorate Improvement Action Plan 2021/22*, which provide more detail around how the renewed outcomes are to be delivered with a focus on performance and improvement – setting out high level key themes for performance measures and benchmarking to monitor the progress of our key actions, and accountability for delivery – was considered and approved most recently at ECS Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (Item 11). As agreed, the Service primarily leads or collaborates on the [council priorities](#)<sup>2</sup> and associated outcomes:



To secure continuous improvement in outcomes for ALL children and young people (Council Priority 1)



To have better, integrated working arrangements in pursuit of improved outcomes for children and young people (Council Priority 2)



Efficient and effective business support, advice and regulation (Council Priority 3)



To develop and deliver a revised LLA Business Plan focused on the three pillars of Live Life Outdoors, Live Life Well and Live Life @ Home (Council Priority 27)

2.3 The *Buchan Area Plan* is the delivery vehicle for Directorate Plans at an area level, providing a clear performance and scrutiny framework – and aims to capture the synergies and relationship with Directorate Plans. Area Plans are, in part, informed through Directorate Plans, Council policies and locally based information to reflect the needs and priorities of the area and its communities. The current Area Plan covers the two year period 2021-2023, and was considered and approved at Buchan Area Committee on [22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021](#)<sup>3</sup> (Item 8).

2.4 Performance information in relation to Education & Children's Services key Directorate project actions and outcome indicators are presented to the ECS and Communities policy committees, in line with their scrutiny remit, with the latest mid-year update presented to ECS Committee on [2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021](#)<sup>4</sup> (Item 10). Those outcome indicators with an area perspective are also considered by the five other council area committees (outlined in their council area plans), in line with their remit of determining matters which directly affect their areas and making recommendations. Updates on the progress with delivery and impact of projects and actions within the Buchan Area Plan is scheduled to be presented separately, as outlined in the area performance calendar considered at area committee on [5<sup>th</sup> October 2021](#)<sup>5</sup> (Item 8).

### 3 Discussion

3.1 A high-level summary overview of the progress made during April to September 2021 in relation to key Directorate outcome indicators with an area perspective updated during Q1 or Q2 2021/22, can be found in the discussion below with a focus on Council Priorities 1 and 27, with fuller details of progress made provided in Appendix 1.


<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-plan/delivering-our-priorities-across-services/>






<sup>3</sup> <https://committees.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Committees.aspx?commid=3&meetid=19902>

<sup>4</sup> <https://committees.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/committees.aspx?commid=494&meetid=19869>

<sup>5</sup> <https://committees.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Committees.aspx?commid=3&meetid=19906>

- 3.2 Due to the nature of education data, most of the outcome indicators linked to the Council Priorities (2020-2022) and Buchan Area Plan (2021-2023) that are reported to Area Committee, provide whole-of-session data, therefore are reportable on an annual basis released at varying times during the following reporting year within the biannual update closest to when the data is released. Details on those due to be reported later in the performance reporting year is provided in Table A of Appendix 1.
- 3.3 During the first six months of this reporting year (2021/22), the Service has continued to adapt their response to the Covid-19 pandemic, with the impact influencing the services ordinarily delivered by ECS that persisted from the initial national lockdown which commenced 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 – which had begun to ease during this latest six-month reporting period. Following the periods of imposed physical school closures, schools were able to reopen on a phased approach from late February 2021 and remained open throughout the early months of the new school session (beginning August 2021).
- 3.4 Although overall performance across Q1 and Q2 2021/22 has continued to be heavily affected compared with services provided pre-pandemic, performance updates reported to policy and area committees for this mid-year period continue to outline the many positive, flexible and innovative ways the Service has adapted to offer support and maintain engaged with our service users and communities, using and embedding alternative means of providing services (e.g. online).”

	<b>Service Priority linked to Council Priority 1</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To secure continuous improvement in outcomes for children and young people</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcome Indicators</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More information on annual measures evidencing progress towards Council Priority 1 scheduled for update later this year is provided in the 'Table A: Summary of other annual ECS Performance Outcome Measures scheduled for update to Buchan Area Committee later in the reporting year 2021/22' table provided at the end of Appendix 1.</li> </ul>		

	<b>Service Priority linked to Council Priority 27</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop and deliver a revised LLA Business Plan focused on the three pillars of Live Life Outdoors, Live Life Well and Live Life @ Home</li> </ul>			
<b>Outcome Indicators</b>				
Overview Mid-Year 2021/22 <sup>6</sup>	0% at 	0% at 	50% at 	50% at 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the focus has remained on establishing and maintaining safe operational delivery, the service has not reinstated the internal satisfaction surveys usually carried out directly during a physical visit on-site, however the intention is for gathering to resume in Q3 2021/22.</li> <li>Adults who engaged with CLD during the first six months of 2021/22 across Buchan remained above the target of 80% achieving their intended learning goals, despite the impact of Covid-19 restrictions, with the latest quarter (July to September 2021) seeing continued prioritisation of ESOL provision as an important delivery offer in the area.</li> </ul>				

<sup>6</sup> Percentages based on combination of quarterly, biannual or annual measures updated during Q1 or Q2 2021/22 with latest data.

Face-to face offerings and support also returned for literacies, with literacies remaining a current priority in Buchan. There was also an opportunity to connect with families in Mintlaw, with family learning sessions delivering a variety of STEM activities and family literacies. The *STEPS for Excellence* programme has also resumed within HMP Grampian, with CLD adult learning delivering with support from Fife Learning Centre.

- 3.5 Although the set of measures outlined above and in the accompanying appendix collectively provide a focus on our service priorities with an area perspective – encompassed within the associated Directorate Plan and Area Plan – teams aligned to each Head of Service within Education & Children’s Services continue to collect and monitor a broad wealth of additional measures and data supporting internal scrutiny and self-assessment and providing direction for the allocation of resources and work plans at an operational level.
- 3.6 This and future performance monitoring reports are provided to assure and enable the Committee to monitor progress of delivery of the council priorities the Service is responsible for, providing a balanced overview allowing elected members to form a judgement on performance and support improvement as required in line with the scrutiny remit of the Committee.

#### 4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 This report helps deliver the Strategic Priorities ‘Education’ and ‘Health & Wellbeing’ within the Pillar ‘Our People’, ‘Resilient Communities’ within the Pillar ‘Our Environment’, and ‘Economy & Enterprise and ‘Estate Modernisation’ within the Pillar ‘Our Economy’, underpinned by the key principles *right people, right places, right time; responsible finances; Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plans; human rights and public protection; tackling poverty and inequalities; and digital infrastructure and economy.*
- 4.2 This report also helps deliver against the [Aberdeenshire Children’s Services Plan](#)<sup>7</sup> priorities, and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) priority on [Reducing Poverty](#)<sup>8</sup>.
- 4.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

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

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/about-girfec/our-childrens-services-plan/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/our-priorities/reducing-child-poverty/>

- 4.4 Although there are no direct staffing or financial implications arising from this report, trends are used to inform improvement activity and future budget planning.
- 4.5 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken as: *this report is to inform committee on performance and during the IIA Screening process no differential impact was identified.*
- 4.6 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level Level ([Corporate Risk Register](#)<sup>9</sup>):
- ACORP004 – *Business and organisational transformation*
  - ACORP006 – *Reputation management (including social media)*

The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level ([Education & Children's Services Directorate Risk Register](#)):

- ECSSR001 – *To have better, integrated working arrangements within ECS in pursuit of improved outcomes for children and young people*
- ECSSR002 – *To secure continuous improvement in outcomes for children and young people*
- ECSSR003 – *To have improved business support and resource management arrangements in place across ECS*
- ECSSR004 – *To develop and deliver a revised LLA Business Plan focused on the three pillars of Live Life Outdoors, Live Life Well and Live Life @ Home*

Continued monitoring of the key Directorate outcome measures and key actions linked to the Council Plan Priorities, along with the project management approach and services' internal policies and procedures, will mitigate these identified risks, and strengthen the link between performance information and service outcomes.

## 5 Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 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](#)<sup>10</sup> and relevant legislation.

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<sup>9</sup> Links to each of the Risk Registers (Corporate and Directorate): <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/about-us/plans-and-reports/>

<sup>10</sup> Link to Scheme of Governance and the List of Committee Powers: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/scheme-of-governance/>

- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.1.2 of the [List of Committee Powers](#) in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to considering, commenting on, and making recommendations on any matter or policy which impacts their Area, and Section B.11.2 as it relates to reviewing the effectiveness of Council policy implementation and service delivery within their Area.

**Laurence Findlay**  
**Director of Education & Children's Services**











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Date 16 February 2022

**List of Appendices**

APPENDIX 1 – Buchan: ECS Performance Monitoring Report – Measures of Success: Outcome Indicators April to September 2021 Update (Council Priorities 2020-2022)

# APPENDIX 1 – Buchan: ECS Performance Monitoring Report – Measures of Success: Outcome Indicators April to September 2021 Update (Council Priorities 2020-2022)

Generated on: 21 October 2021

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Red; Significantly adrift of target		Improving trend		Improving trend
	Amber; Slightly adrift of target		No Change or New Measure		No Change or New Measure
	Green; On target		Worsening trend		Worsening trend
	Data not yet available /status unknown – PIs only the status is not available either due to data not being available or no target being set				

**QUARTERLY PI trend definition:** Short trends are calculated by comparing the value for the current period to the value immediately preceding it, e.g. Q1 2021/22 is compared to Q4 2020/21. Long trends are calculated by comparing the current value to an average of historic values in the three years preceding, e.g. Q1 2020/21 is compared to an average of all the quarterly values in the preceding three years (i.e. 12 quarters, Q1 2018/19 to Q4 2020/21).

**BI-ANNUAL PI trend definition:** Short trends are calculated similar to quarterly but e.g. H1 2021/22 performance (reporting Q1 and Q2, or April to September) is compared to H2 2020/21 performance (Q3 and Q4, or October to March). Long trends are calculated e.g. H1 2021/22 is compared to an average of all the half-yearly values in the preceding three years (i.e. 6 half-years, H1 2018/19 to H2 2020/21).

**ANNUAL PI trend definition:** Short trends are also calculated similar to quarterly, but e.g. 2020/21 performance (reported during 2021/22 reporting cycle) is compared to 2019/20 performance; and long trends are calculated e.g. 2020/21 (reported during 2021/22 reporting cycle) is compared to an average of the annual performance in the preceding three years (2017/18 to 2019/20).

**Traffic Light: Red 0, Amber 0, Green 1, Unknown 1**

Note: Red and amber thresholds are determined by services on an annual basis. The thresholds included in this report apply to the current reporting year only. YTD stands for Year-To-Date for the current reporting year which runs 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.




**Council Priorities 2020-2022: 27. People are supported to live healthy active lifestyles focused on Live Life Outdoors, Live Life Well and Live Life at Home**

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold			Status	Spark Chart
					Value		
27.4 Buchan: Live Life Aberdeenshire - To determine level of customer satisfaction experience (excellence) when participating in services	70.0%	59.0%	50.0%	Q2 2020/21	N/A	?	
				Q3 2020/21	N/A		
				Q4 2020/21	N/A		
				2020/21	N/A		
				Q1 2021/22	N/A		
				Q2 2021/22	N/A		
				2021/22	N/A		

In quarter 2, due to the operational challenges of Covid, the Service has not implemented the normal survey process for gathering customer satisfaction and will rely upon the IPB Reputational Tracker Satisfaction data.

The service intends to re-establish the process for gathering customer satisfaction in quarter 3.

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold			Status	Spark Chart	
				Value	Base			
27.8 Buchan: Percentage of adults achieving outcomes	80.0%	74.0%	72.0%	Q2 2020/21	87.9%	91	✓	
				Q3 2020/21	91.8%	97		
				Q4 2020/21	91.3%	69		
				2020/21	90.1%	322		
				Q1 2021/22	90.2%	51		
				Q2 2021/22	95.9%	171		
				2021/22	94.6%	222		

In Buchan in Q2 of 2021/22, 164 of 171 (95.35%) of adults engaged with CLD Adult Learning achieved their intended learning goals. This is well above the 80% target. ESOL provision continues to be an important delivery offer across Buchan with 43 of these adults having been assessed to attend classes, predominantly face to face. In Peterhead new literacies groups have been set up which are now face to face offering people who were disadvantaged during the lockdown an opportunity to progress with their learning journeys. Literacies remains the current priority in the area and this provision is being supported by volunteers who are returning to face-to-face support. The STEPS for Excellence programme has resumed within HMP Grampian, delivered by CLD adult learning, and supported by Fife Learning Centre. Five Buchan learners were supported to attend the Celebration of Learning Event in Inverurie. They listened to various learners speaking about their learning journeys and received certificates of achievement for the learning that they had participated in. In Mintlaw family learning sessions were delivered and included 6 families during each session, with 16 children in attendance. The sessions covered a variety of STEM activities and incorporated family literacies and encouraged working together and problem solving.



Summary of other annual ECS Performance Outcome Measures scheduled for update to Buchan Area Committee later in the reporting year 2021/22		
Council Priority (CP): Topic	Description	Availability
CP1: Early Years and Childcare	Annual indicator measuring overall take-up of eligible 3, 4 and 5 year olds as a percentage of the Central Health Index (CHI).	April/May nearing end of school session 2021/22.
CP1: School leaver destinations	Annual indicator measuring the percentage of school leavers who have left school, securing a positive post-school destination.	February/March following the end of the previous school session (2020/21).
CP1: Foundation Apprenticeships	Annual indicator measuring the percentage of young people successfully completing a Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) in Aberdeenshire schools.	February/March following the end of the previous school session (2020/21).