

## **REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE 08 JUNE 2022**

### **ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES PERFORMANCE AND DIRECTORATE PLAN UPDATE OCTOBER 2021 – MARCH 2022 (ABERDEENSHIRE PERFORMS).**

#### **1 Executive Summary/Recommendations**

To provide the Committee with an update on progress with the actions and performance measures set out in the Environment & Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan for the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 which fall under the remit of the Infrastructure Services Committee.

#### **1.2 The Committee is recommended to:**

**1.2.1 Consider and comment on progress and performance made during the period 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022 with the key measures and actions set out in appendices 1-3; and**

**1.2.2 Instruct the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services to continue to present performance reports to the Committee on a six-monthly basis, evidencing progress and performance with delivery of the priorities set out in the E&IS Directorate Plan 2020 – 2022.**

#### **2 Purpose and Decision Making Route**

2.1 On the 7 October 2020 Aberdeenshire Council approved a revised Council Plan for the period 2020 – 2022 (item 3). The Council Plan sets out the outcomes (Council Priorities) expected for the six strategic priorities. In all, 27 Council Priorities (outcomes) were identified.

2.2 Those actions to be taken by Environment & Infrastructure Services (E&IS) in support of the Council Priorities were set out in the Environment & Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan which was approved by the Infrastructure Services Committee at its meeting of the 11 March 2021 (Item 5). The Plan shows Environment & Infrastructure Services as the lead for delivering 15 out of the 27 Council Priorities.

2.3 An update on progress with actions and performance for the period April 2021 – 30 September 2021 was reported to the Infrastructure Services Committee on the 25 November 2021 (item 16).

#### **3 Discussion**

3.1 The Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan sets out a total of 53 actions to be undertaken in support of the Council's Operational Priorities. These are set out under the four themes of Economic Development, Environment, Connectivity and Housing.

- 3.2 The Directorate Plan also defines the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) measures as the key performance indicators for the service.
- 3.3 This report concentrates on those actions and measures which fall under the remit of the Infrastructure Services Committee. Progress with the Housing related actions (22 in total) and Housing related performance measures will be reported to the Communities Committee on the 16 June.
- 3.4 **Appendix 1** to this report provides details of the LGBF measures for Environment and Infrastructure Services which fall under the remit of the Committee. There are 23 LGBF measures shown. Because the data is collected and analysed by the Improvement Service this data is always made available to Councils a long time after it has been collected. The LGBF data shown in Appendix 1 is for the period 2020/2021 so is already 16 months old. However the data is useful as it provides a snapshot of how things have changed over time and provides opportunities to compare how Aberdeenshire Council is performing against other Councils.
- 3.5 The Council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) considered the LGBF National Overview 2020/21 on 6 April. It was agreed by SLT that each Directorate Management Team (DMT) should consider its data and any improvements that are required for indicators in quartiles 3 and 4, particularly where these are linked to Council priorities. Improvements are to be included in Directorate and Area Plans and reported to Policy and Area Committees before the summer recess.
- 3.6 Environment & Infrastructure has reviewed these measures and has reported back its response to the SLT and Corporate Performance & Improvement Team. The response will be incorporated in the LGBF report to Audit Committee on 29 June and the Annual Performance Report for Full Council on 29 September. The response is as follows:-
- 3.7 Waste related measures (**SENV02a: Net waste disposal cost per premises & SENV6: % of total household waste arising that is recycled**). The Head of Environment & Sustainability (E&S) has confirmed that these will be addressed by existing actions already in the E&S Directorate Plan and Area Plans. These actions include the rollout of the new 3 weekly collection system from Spring 2023 and the opening of the EfW Plant in winter 2022/spring 2023. There are no additional actions which would be included in the E&S Improvement plan and the systems will be rolled out pan Aberdeenshire.
- 3.8 Protective Service Related Measures ( **SENV5: Cost of Trading Standards and environmental health per 1,000 population & SENV5b: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population £** ) the Service Manager for Environmental Health and Trading Standards advises that Protective Services will be carrying out a service review this year, part of which will consider the cost of the Service and opportunities for efficiencies. In addition the service has a number of new duties which have or are coming on stream such as animal licensing, short term let licensing, issuing export health certificates for products

of animal origin exported to Europe and Feed inspection. A number of these duties can be charged for or we receive a fee for carrying out. It is the intention of Protective Services, later this year following the Service Review to review their fees and charges to ensure full cost recovery.

- 3.9 Economic Development related measures (**SECON1: % Unemployed people accessing jobs via Council funded / operated employability programmes; SECON06: Investment in Economic Development and Tourism (per 1,000 population); SECON07: Proportion of People Earning Less than the Living Wage; SECON08: Proportion of Properties Receiving Superfast Broadband**). the Service Manager for Economic Development has responded as follows:-

*Unemployed people accessing jobs via the Council funded/operated employability programme (SECON1).* This is not a concern as it reflects the better than average unemployment figures for the area. The action here is to continue to develop our employability programmes in conjunction with Scottish Government and the Local Employability Partnership.

*Investment in Economic Development and Tourism (SECON06)* - there is a misinterpretation of the data here. The strategy is to increase spend in this area. Aberdeenshire is above average on this measure according to LGBF data for 2020/21. No further action required.

*Proportion of people earning less than the living wage (SECON07)* Not a specific action but the service will continue to work to encourage economic development that results in fair work jobs.







*Proportion of people receiving superfast broad band (Secon08)* there is limited power for local authority to change this. Aberdeenshire has a digital engagement team in place but early signs are that R100 is behind schedule and this region remains the worst mainland local authority in Scotland. So no specific action.

*Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan (SECON10):* - no specific action has been put forward for this as it will be addressed by the latest Local Development Plan.

- 3.10 Performance of the LGBF measures for 2020/2021 can be summarised as follows:-

Status	Number
Improving on previous year	15 (65.2%)
Declining compared to previous year	8 (34.8%)
Better than the Scottish Average	14 (63.6%)
Worse than the Scottish Average	8 (34.8%)
Quartile 1 (top)	5 (21.7%)
Quartile 2	8 (34.8%)
Quartile 3	7 (30.4%)
Quartile 4 (bottom)	3 (13.1%)

3.11 **Appendix 2** covers those service wide annual indicators that have been identified as being of strategic importance. 27 measures are shown. Data for 2021/22 is not available for 9 of these measures. These will be reported to the Committee when the data is available. The position with the 27 Service Annual Measures can be summarised as follows:-

	Status	Number of Measures	Percentage
No target		5	18.5%
On or above Target		15	55.6%
Below Target		1	3.7%
Below Target		6	22.2%
Improving		14	51.9%
Getting Worse		11	40.7%
No Change	—	2	7.4%

3.12 A number of indicators show exceptional performance (ie 5% or more over target) in the past year.






- 5 of these relate to the condition of the road network. All measures show green and the measure for the percentage of the total network that should be considered for maintenance treatment shows 22.6% which is well inside the target of 32%.
- Two of the road accident statistics for the previous year are promising. The actions Aberdeenshire Council and its partners are taking to meet the targets set out in the Scottish Road Safety Framework to 2030 are set out in the Road Safety Plan 2021-2030.
- The three measures relating to land available for employment and land for housing exceed targets set out in the Local; Development Plan. These audits are carried out each year and the audit for 2022 has not been finalised as yet.
- The annual measure for repairs to streetlights appears to be significantly above target. However the target was reduced downwards to reflect the fact that the strategic focus for the service is the LED street light replacement programme.

3.13 There was 6 measure below target showing red.

- The first relates to the assistance provided by Business Gateway to encourage business start-ups. Fewer start-ups were supported last year for a number of reasons related to issues around Covid and more people moving back into employment rather than starting up a business.

- The second relates to the proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband. As a rural authority we will never have the same connectivity as can be achieved within large towns and cities. Statistics for 2021 show that 83.7% of properties in Aberdeenshire have access up superfast broad band but only 13.7% have access to the latest full-fibre broad band with gigabit capable speeds. Openreach have the monopoly of infrastructure in the north east.
- The third measure showing red is the road safety indicator to reduce by 50% the number of people seriously injured on our roads. The statistics show a continuing downward trend which is encouraging. However a new target was introduced in 2020 and this measure is currently outwith the target. The aim is to achieve a sustainable reduction of 50% in casualty rates by 2030. This just indicates that although the number of casualties on north east roads has been significantly reduced in recent years a lot more work is required to maintain this trend as we work towards our shared local and national vision of zero road fatalities and serious injuries across Aberdeenshire by 2050.
- The two protective service measures relating to statutory inspections are both below target. Data is still being collated for this year. Data for last year illustrates the impact that the Covid pandemic had on the statutory inspection programmes.
- The final measure which missed target relates to the time to process a major planning application. The average time of 51.5 days was outside the target of 35 days. The legacy impact of Covid and unexpected staff changes impacted on team performance.

3.14 **Appendix 3** to this report provides details of 17 quarterly operational measures which have been identified in support of the service and Council priorities. The report covers the period up to 31 March 2022. Performance with these measures can be summarised as follows:-

	Status	Number of Measures	Percentage
No target		2	11.8%
On or above Target		6	35.3%
Slightly Below Target		2	11.8%
Below Target		7	41.1%
Improving		11	64.8%
Getting Worse		3	17.6%
No Change	—	3	17.6%

3.15 There were two measures which were 5% or more above target in Quarter 4. One relates to street lighting repairs. As was discussed with the annual measure the target was adjusted downwards because the priority is completing the delivery of the LED replacement programme. The second measure is 8.3 –

Percentage of building warrants and amended applications issued within 10 days of receipt of all satisfactory information.

- 3.16 Those quarterly measures that are more than 5% below target and worthy of further scrutiny (showing red in the table) include:-
- 7.4 Other types of planning applications – average time taken to deal with in weeks.
  - 7.5 The number and percentage of processing agreements dealt with within agreed timescales.
  - 7.6 Applications with legal agreements – average time to conclude within weeks.
  - 7.14 Average time taken to deal with a household planning application in weeks.
  - 7.15 Average time taken to deal with a non-householder planning application in weeks.
  - 6.2 Percentage of household waste that was collected by the authority that was recycled or composted .
- 3.17 **Appendix 4** to this report provides a summary of progress with the 31 actions which fall under the remit of this Committee. The actions are grouped by the three themes in the Directorate Plan (Economic Development; Environment; Connectivity) and each action has been linked to the Council Priority (Outcome) and Strategic Priority that it supports.
- 3.18 The majority of actions in Appendix 4 have progressed well and have achieved what was planned for the year 2021/2022. However there are a number of actions which have not progressed as well as expected, often for reasons outwith the Council's control. These actions (market in red) include:-
- 2.03 As funding allows introduce 3 weekly kerbside collection service – the roll-out will not now commence until next year.
  - 2.06 Implement Deposit Return Scheme - this has been delayed by the Scottish Government
  - 2.07 Delivery of the Operational Ness EFW Plant – plant will be not now be fully operational until 2023, it has been delayed by Brexit/Covid issues.
  - 2.10 Delivery heritage regeneration projects in Banff, Macduff, Peterhead and Fraserburgh. There have been delays due to revisions to the funding programmes.
  - 2.11 Support the delivery of the 17 Community Place Plans – this was delayed awaiting publishing of the Local Place Plan Regulations.

#### 4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 In October 2020 Full Council approved the new Council Plan for Aberdeenshire Council for the period of 2020-2022. The Plan sets out the strategic priorities for Aberdeenshire Council under three pillars:-

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

4.2 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.

Actions set out in the Directorate Plan help deliver the Strategic Priorities of Health and Wellbeing within the pillar of “Our People”.

Actions set out in the Directorate Plan help to deliver the Strategic Priorities of Infrastructure and Resilient Communities within the pillar of “Our Environment”.

Actions set out in the Directorate Plan help to deliver the Strategic Priority of Economy & Enterprise within the pillar of “Our Economy.”

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

4.4 The responses to the integrated impact assessment scoping questions (IIA-000224) suggest that an integrated impact assessment is not required because this report is to inform the Infrastructure Services Committee on the progress with actions and performance set out in the E&IS Directorate Plan. The report

supports the scrutiny role of the Committee. No operational decisions are required from the Committee.

- 4.5 There are no risks associated with the report as the purpose is to report on performance and does not seek decisions on operational matters. When the actions that were included in the Directorate Plan were developed a number of risks at the corporate level were identified, these included:-

ACORP001 – Budget Pressures

ACORP002 – Changes in Government Policy, Legislation and Regulation

ACORP004 - Business and organisation change

ACORP005 – Working with Other Organisations (e.g. Supply Chains, Outsourcing and Partnership Working)

ACORP006 – Reputational Management

ACORP010 – Environmental Challenges, e.g. Extreme Weather, Climate Change.

A link to the corporate risk register can be found here:- [Corporate Risk Register](#)

- 4.6 The risk register for Environment and Infrastructure Services has identified a number of risks at a strategic level associated with each Outcome. Those most relevant to the actions covered by this report are detailed in ISR001 – ISR012. The Directorate Risk Register can be found here :- [Directorate Risk Register](#).

Actions are will taken to mitigate the impact of these risks during the delivery of each action.

## **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 and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section F 7.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to powers to identify and where appropriate to make recommendations and implement improvements to the performance of services in respect of any function within its remit with reference to the relevant Performance Indicators in terms of Performance Management (provided that any changes to Council Policy will be made following appropriate consultation with Area Committees).



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**Director Environment & Infrastructure Services**

Report prepared by Alan Morris Service Development Coordinator

Date 26 May 2022

**List of Appendices**

- Appendix 1 Local Government Benchmarking Framework Measures For E&IS
- Appendix 2 Environment & Infrastructure Services Annual Measures 2021 - 2022
- Appendix 3 Environment & Infrastructure Services Operational Measures Qrt 4 2021  
2022
- Appendix 4 Environment & Infrastructure Services Strategic Priorities Update  
October - end of March 2022

APPENDIX 1

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES LOCAL GOVERNMENT FRAMEWORK  
MEASURES 2020 - 2021

National Indicator	Scottish Average	Aberdeenshire	Status	Short Trend	National Ranking	Quartile Position
<b>CULTURE &amp; LEISURE MEASURES (COMMUNITIES POLICY COMMITTEE)</b>						
SC&L4: Cost of Parks and Open Spaces per 1,000 population £	19,112	15,070	GREEN	IMPROVING	12	2
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES (INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES POLICY COMMITTEE)</b>						
SENV1a: Net cost of Waste collection per premise	72.35	67.72	GREEN	IMPROVING	17	3
SENV02a: Net waste disposal cost per premises	104.5	124.82	RED	IMPROVING	24	3
SENV03a: Cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population £	14,845	10,223	GREEN	IMPROVING	10	2
SENV03c: Street Cleanliness Score	90.1	94.46	GREEN	DECLINING	9	2
SENV04a: Road cost per kilometre £	9,667	4,875	GREEN	IMPROVING	5	1
SENV04b: % of Class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment 10-12	29.8	23.3	GREEN	IMPROVING	11	2
SENV04c: % of Class B roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	34	19.9	GREEN	IMPROVING	3	1
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES (INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES POLICY COMMITTEE)</b>						
National Indicator	Scottish Average	Aberdeenshire	Status	Short Trend	National Ranking	Quartile Position
SENV04d: % of Class C roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	33.6	19	GREEN	IMPROVING	3	1
SENV04e: % of Unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	38.3	30.2	GREEN	DECLINING	4	1
SENV5: Cost of Trading Standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	18,463	18,728	RED	IMPROVING	19	3
SENV5a: Cost of Trading Standards, Money Advice & Citizen Advice per 1,000 population £	5,857	5,399	GREEN	DECLINING	15	2












<b>SENV5b: Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population £</b>	12,606	13,329	<b>RED</b>	IMPROVING	20	<b>3</b>
<b>SENV6: % of total household waste arising that is recycled</b>	42	40.8	<b>RED</b>	DECLINING	19	<b>3</b>
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEASURES (INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES POLICY COMMITTEE)</b>						
<b>SECON1: % Unemployed people accessing jobs via Council funded / operated employability programmes</b>	5.98	1.83	<b>RED</b>	DECLINING	28	<b>4</b>
<b>SECON02: Cost of planning &amp; building standards per planning application</b>	5,044	4,697	<b>GREEN</b>	DECLINING	15	<b>2</b>
<b>SECON03: Average time taken to deliver a commercial planning application decision</b>	11.08	8.57	<b>GREEN</b>	IMPROVING	9	<b>2</b>
<b>SECON05: No. of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population</b>	11.19	22.89	<b>GREEN</b>	DECLINING	3	<b>1</b>
<b>SECON06: Investment in Economic Development and Tourism (per 1,000 population)</b>	87,793	149,862	<b>RED</b>	DECLINING	28	<b>4</b>
<b>SECON07: Proportion of People Earning Less than the Living Wage</b>	15.2	19.8	<b>RED</b>	DECLINING	15	<b>2</b>
<b>SECON08: Proportion of Properties Receiving Superfast Broadband</b>	93.79	84	<b>RED</b>	IMPROVING	29	<b>4</b>
<b>SECON09: Town Vacancy Rates</b>	12.41	12.05	<b>GREEN</b>	DECLINING	18	<b>3</b>
<b>SECON10: Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan</b>	38.91	24.46	<b>RED</b>	IMPROVING	24	<b>3</b>

## Appendix 2







# Environment & Infrastructure Services Annual Measures 2021 - 2022



Generated on: 17 May 2022



PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

**Strategic Priority:- Economy and Enterprise**  
**Council Priority (Outcome): A location of choice that has a diverse economic base of innovative companies with a skilled workforce and return to full employment**

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Base	Status	Spark Chart
3.1 SPI1 CM06b - Through assistance provided by the Business Gateway: The number of business start-ups per year.	548	542.52	520.6	2018/19	630			
				2019/20	649			
				2020/21	587			
				2021/22	460			
Fewer start-ups were supported and this is likely for a number of reasons. Issues around Covid continued to be a concern for many people considering starting a business. In addition unemployment reduced over this period which meant some people chose employed work trading for themselves plus there became an additional hurdle in being able to find the right staff.								



Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Base	Status	Spark Chart
3.2 Quality of service provided by Business Gateway Contractor	No target			2018/19	86.5			
				2019/20	83			
				2020/21	90			
				2021/22	89			
Performance continues to be above the national average								

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Base	Status	Spark Chart
3.8 ECON5 - Number of Business Gateway Start-ups per 10,000 Population	No target			2018/19	23.94			
				2019/20	25.54			
				2020/21	22.89			
				2021/22	17			
An updated mid-year population estimate is expected in June. This figure is based on last year's estimate of 260,780. The number has fallen this year which is the result of a number of factors: an expected smaller number of start-ups owing to coronavirus uncertainty and labour market factors. In addition, more support is available online so the need to contact a Business Gateway adviser has reduced.								



Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Base	Status	Spark Chart
3.11 ECON8 - The proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband	93.8%	91.5%	89.1%	2018/19	78.6%			
				2019/20	82%			
				2020/21	83.4%			
				2021/22	83.7%			

For properties receiving Superfast Broadband (i.e. speeds of at least 30Mbps), Ofcom's Connected Nations Report gave us stats at the end of 2021, which was published in December. This gives Aberdeenshire a rank of 28th out of the 32 Local Authorities in Scotland. 13.7% of premises in Aberdeenshire had access to full-fibre broadband, with gigabit capable speeds, at the end of 2021. This equates to 17,269 properties, which also puts Aberdeenshire in 28th place ranking. The data from Ofcom is what is provided by the wholesale broadband operators (i.e. Openreach for Aberdeenshire). Unfortunately, this does not take into consideration the alternative broadband technologies utilised by residents (i.e. satellite, fixed wireless, mobile broadband).

The target shown is just based on the Scottish Average for the previous year and will be updated once this year's figures are released. Aberdeenshire has little influence on whether the target is achieved or not. Openreach currently have a monopoly of infrastructure in the North East.

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Base	Status	Spark Chart
7.8 SPI1 CM06ai - Availability of Marketable Employment Land	60	59.4	57	2018/19	307			
				2019/20	281			
				2020/21	281			
				2021/22				

The ELA 2020/21 was published in February 2022. Discussions ongoing with Aberdeen City with regard to moving to bi-annual publication.

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Base	Status	Spark Chart
7.9 SPI1 CM06aii - Housing Land Audit - AHMA (years)	5	4.95	4.75	2018/19	7.2			
				2019/20	7.2			
				2020/21	7.1			
				2021/22				

Housing Land Audit 2022 underway and due to be published in Summer 2022.











































































