

REPORT TO FORMARTINE AREA COMMITTEE – 14 JUNE 2022

BUSINESS SERVICES' AREA COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT – YEAR-END PROGRESS (APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022)

1 Executive Summary / Recommendations

1.1 To provide the Formartine Area Committee with a year-end update on progress in relation to Business Services performance indicators which support the Council Plan Priorities 2020-22.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 Acknowledge and consider progress made in relation to Business Services performance indicators relating to the Formartine Area; and

1.2.2 Instruct the Director of Business Services to continue to present reports on progress with performance indicators to the Committee on a six-monthly basis, in line with the Performance Management Framework, evidencing progress and performance supporting the Council Plan 2020-22.

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 The Council Plan 2020-22 was approved at Full Council at the meeting of 7 October 2020. The Plan is centered around three pillars aimed at supporting wider recovery in response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.2 To help support and deliver the Council Plan, Directorate and Area Plans have been developed and approved by their respective committee. The Formartine Area Plan was approved by this committee at its meeting on 18 May 2021.

2.3 The Formartine Area Action Plan details projects/actions specific to the Formartine Area and six-monthly reporting on progress is provided in line with the Performance Management Framework.

2.4 In addition to the Area Plan, each Directorate is responsible for reporting six-monthly on a suite of area-based performance indicators to allow for further scrutiny of performance within each area.

3 Discussion

3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Formartine Area Committee with a year-end update on progress with the Business Services performance indicators which help demonstrate how we are working towards delivering the Council's Strategic Priorities.

- 3.2 There are 16 performance indicators being reported and **Appendix 1** to this report details progress along with supporting narrative. All indicators are currently being reported on an Aberdeenshire-wide basis, as the systems will not facilitate reporting at an area basis.
- 3.3 Work is ongoing however, to enable the two measures relating to operational buildings to be reported at an area level from April 2022 onwards. Area-based information for these two measures will be included in the mid-year update for the period April-September 2022, presented to this Committee in November 2022.
- 3.4 Five performance measures are showing as green and on track, one is showing as amber and two are showing as red. The supporting narrative for each of these measures provides more detail. Seven performance measures are 'data only' and relate to benefit and grants payments. The final measure relates to the percentage of web chats which are automated. The project to implement this system is ongoing and data will be reported once the system has been implemented.
- 3.5 This and future performance indicator 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 At its meeting on 7 October 2020, Full Council agreed a new set of six Strategic Priorities detailed in the undernoted table.

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

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.

This report supports the priorities of: Resilient Communities; Health & Wellbeing; Economy & Enterprise; and Estate Modernisation.

This report supports the key principles of: right people, right places, right time; responsible finances; climate and sustainability; tackling poverty and inequalities; and digital infrastructure & economy.

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is 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
Health and Wellbeing		X	
Town Centre First			X

4.3 There are no staffing or financial implications arising directly from this report, however any actions taken to improve performance, where required, may affect the finances of the Service and may be subject to separate reporting where required.

4.4 An integrated impact assessment has been carried out at the screening stage (IIA-000700) and no further detailed assessments are required. This report is a high-level planning document and does not have any differential impact on any of the protected characteristics. Any service changes made as a result of this plan will be subject to separate reporting and integrated impact assessments carried out as appropriate.

4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate and Directorate Level:

Aberdeenshire Corporate Risks: (*link: [Corporate Risk Register](#)*)

- ACORP001 – Budget Pressures
- ACORP002 – Changes in government policy, legislation and regulation
- ACORP004 – Business & organisation transformation
- ACORP005 – Working with other organisations (e.g. supply chains, outsourcing and partnership working)
- ACORP006 – Reputation Management (including social media)
- ACORP007 – Social Risk (e.g. population changes, poverty and social inequality, demographic changes, crime, anti-social behaviour)
- ACORP008 – Data Protection & Cyber Security
- ACORP009 – Operational Risk Management (including Health & Safety)

- ACORP010 – Environmental Challenges e.g. extreme weather events, climate change (this includes localised risks around flooding and air pollution and the need for communities to display resilience)

Business Services Directorate Risks: ([link: Business Services Directorate Risk Register](#)).

- BSSR002 – Communities are confident, resilient and inclusive. Individuals feel secure and in control of their circumstances
- BSSR003 – We live within our means and use public money to maximise outcomes for our communities
- BSSR004 – Our asset, property and land are managed to the best financial effect, supporting delivery of our priorities and service ambitions in the medium to long term
- BSSR005 – One Aberdeenshire, people working effectively with each other across public services and across communities
- BSSR006 – Staffing working close to the communities they serve, making decisions based on local need

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 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 B.11.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to reviewing the effectiveness of Council policy implementation and Council service delivery within the Area and identifying potential improvements and making recommendations to the relevant Policy Committee.

Ritchie Johnson
Director of Business Services

Report prepared by Jenn Askildsen, Support Services Team Leader
1 June 2022

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Business Services Area Performance Indicator Report – Year-end Update (April 2021-March 2022)

BUSINESS SERVICES' AREA COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT – YEAR-END PROGRESS (APRIL 2021 – MARCH 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				



Traffic Light: Red - 2; Amber – 1; Green - 5; Data Only - 7; New PI - 1

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Average call wait times for Contact Centre	10	10.1	10.5	Q1 2021/22	5.86		
				Q2 2021/22	6.7		
				Q3 2021/22	6.53		
				Q4 2021/22	5.14		

This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.

Average call wait times continue to improve after a decline in Q2, and are well below the target of 10 minutes. Q1 = 5.86 minutes, Q2 = 6.7 minutes, Q3 = 6.53 minutes, and Q4 = 5.14 minutes.

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
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Contact Centre call abandonment rate	25%	25.25%	26.25%	Q1 2021/22	28.6%		
				Q2 2021/22	30%		
				Q3 2021/22	30.5%		
				Q4 2021/22	26.48%		



This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.

Whilst this quarter's abandonment rate is slightly higher than the target of 25%, there is a marked improvement from the past two quarters (Q1 = 28.27%, Q2 = 30.04%, Q3 = 30.50% and Q4 = 26.48%).

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Percentage of web chats which are automated	85%	84.15%	80.75%	Q1 2021/22	0%	N/A	N/A
				Q2 2021/22	0%		
				Q3 2021/22	0%		
				Q4 2021/22	0%		

This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.



The project to implement artificial intelligence web chat is ongoing and the system has not yet been implemented. Once the new system is in place this will be reported on.

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Average number of days: Council Tax Reductions (CTR) new claims	22	27.02	27.02	2020/21	27.19		
				Q1 2021/22	30.76		
				Q2 2021/22	31.07		
				Q3 2021/22	27.03		
				Q4 2021/22	24.12		
				2021/22	28.25		

This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.



ASAT targets are currently under review as regards the processing of New Claims. In 2021/22 how new claims are prioritised has changed and for housing benefit those processing times have improved ending the year in a better position than the previous year. However, it has become apparent that our target of 22 days is unsustainable mainly due to waiting times for

Universal Credit (UC). A UC claim will only be decided and awarded after 5 weeks, meantime the housing benefit council tax reduction claim has to wait for the level of income to be decided upon before an award can be made. Those claims for working age claimants therefore find that they will have to wait 5 weeks before their UC income is known so that their housing benefit council tax reduction claim can be processed. Therefore, the target is currently being discussed by senior management and will be amended in due course. Meanwhile the support and advice team will continue to prioritise new claims.

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Average number of days for Changes in Circumstances: Council Tax Reduction	9	12.06	12.06	2020/21	6.8		
				Q1 2021/22	9.06		
				Q2 2021/22	9.27		
				Q3 2021/22	7.99		
				Q4 2021/22	4.32		
				2021/22	7.66		

This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.

ASAT targets for changes in circumstances processing times is 9 days although slightly up overall in comparison to the year before those processing times are within target.



Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Number of Discretionary Housing Payments awards made				2020/21	2,349		
				Q1 2021/22	944		
				Q2 2021/22	294		
				Q3 2021/22	216		
				Q4 2021/22	284		
				2021/22	1,738		

This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.

In the year 2021/22 ASAT saw an increase in awards from 2597 in the previous financial year to 2659. In total £1,405,308.29 was awarded in comparison to £1,312,028.26 in the previous year.

Any Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) is made on a weekly basis and payments are made 2-weekly in arrears to a claimant or 4-weekly in arrears to a landlord. Therefore when an award is made at the start of the year it is detailed as committed.

The vast majority of awards that are made are for the mitigation of Social Sector Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax) and for those cases that are subject to the benefit cap. There are also awards made dependant on circumstances for those in private sector accommodation where for example their rent has been restricted due to the local housing allowance rates. In these cases the claimant will have to provide details of their income and expenditure and outline any household, personal or health related issues that they may have in support of their application.



Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold	Value		Status	Spark Chart
Committed Discretionary Housing Payments expenditure	N/A	N/A	N/A	Q1 2021/22	£879,551		
				Q2 2021/22	£593,042		
				Q3 2021/22	£323,907		
				Q4 2021/22	£27,767		

This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.

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Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold	Value		Status	Spark Chart
Net Discretionary Housing Payments paid to date	N/A	N/A	N/A	Q1 2021/22	£308,379		
				Q2 2021/22	£661,281		
				Q3 2021/22	£1,007,553		
				Q4 2021/22	£1,365,568		



This is an Aberdeenshire wide performance indicator.



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Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
The average time taken to process new Housing Benefit claims from the date of receipt to the date of decision (days)	22	23	24	2019/20	22		
				2020/21	27		
				2021/22	23		
<p>ASAT targets are currently under review as regards the processing of New Claims. In 2021/22 how new claims are prioritised has changed and for housing benefit those processing times have improved ending the year in a better position than the previous year. However it has become apparent that our target of 22 days is unsustainable mainly due to waiting times for Universal Credit (UC). A UC claim will only be decided and awarded after 5 weeks, meantime the housing benefit council tax reduction claim has to wait for the level of income to be decided upon before an award can be made. Those claims for working age claimants therefore find that they will have to wait 5 weeks before their UC income is known so that their housing benefit council tax reduction claim can be processed. Therefore the target is currently being discussed by senior management and will be amended in due course. Meanwhile the support and advice team will continue to prioritise new claims.</p>							



Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
The average time taken to process change of circumstances for Housing Benefit claims from the date of receipt to the date of decision (days)	9	10	11	2019/20	6		
				2020/21	7		
				2021/22	8		
<p>ASAT targets for changes in circumstances processing times is 9 days although slightly up overall in comparison to the year before those processing times are within target.</p>							



Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Crisis Grant Claims Paid	N/A	N/A	N/A	2020/21	4,400		
				Q1 2021/22	1,149		
				Q2 2021/22	1,183		
				Q3 2021/22	1,442		
				Q4 2021/22	1,538		
				2021/22	5,312		
<p>In year 2021/22 a total of 7694 applications were made to the fund, and the 5312 of those received a positive outcome. In the previous year there were 6297 applications made with 4400 positive outcomes. Increased applications are as a direct result of the current economic climate and fall out from the storms of November and January which resulted in increased households falling into a crisis situation.</p>							

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Community Care Grants Paid	N/A	N/A	N/A	2020/21	864		
				Q1 2021/22	262		
				Q2 2021/22	219		
				Q3 2021/22	302		
				Q4 2021/22	328		
				2021/22	1,111		
In year 2021/22 a total of 2225 applications were made and 1111 had a positive outcome. In the previous year 2114 applications were made and 864 had a positive outcome.							

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Amount paid out for Crisis Grants	N/A	N/A	N/A	2020/21	£523,878.92		
				Q1 2021/22	£163,270.25		
				Q2 2021/22	£156,687.35		
				Q3 2021/22	£195,180.23		
				Q4 2021/22	£217,359.06		
				2021/22	£732,496.89		
In year 2021/22 a total of 2225 applications were made and 1111 had a positive outcome. In the previous year 2114 applications were made and 864 had a positive outcome.							

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold		Value	Status	Spark Chart
Amount paid out for Community Care Grants	N/A	N/A	N/A	2020/21	£419,812.44		
				Q1 2021/22	£159,040.24		
				Q2 2021/22	£125,331.44		
				Q3 2021/22	£167,900.06		
				Q4 2021/22	£190,078.84		
				2021/22	£642,350.58		
In year 2021/22 a total of 2225 applications were made and 1111 had a positive outcome. In the previous year 2114 applications were made and 864 had a positive outcome.							

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold	Value		Status	Spark Chart
				Year	Value		
Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use %	82.31%	81.49%	78.19%	2019/20	74.96%		
				2020/21	77.4%		
				2021/22	77.87%		
<p>Overall performance indicator for April 2022 notes that 482 operational assets are assessed as suitable for their current use - equating to 77.87% (an improvement of 0.5% on previous year). A number of underperforming assets are subject to review by Services and/or form part of ongoing strategies currently being implemented e.g. workSPACE/Office Space Strategy, Depots etc.</p>							

Performance Measure	Current Target	Amber Threshold	Red Threshold	Value		Status	Spark Chart
				Year	Value		
Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition %	89.2%	88.31%	84.74%	2019/20	87.56%		
				2020/21	90.82%		
				2021/22	91.59%		
<p>Overall performance indicator for April 2022 notes that 619,980sqm is assessed as being in satisfactory condition – equating to 91.59% (an improvement of 0.76% on previous year). Condition Surveys of operational assets continues in-line with Scottish Government guidance.</p>							