



REPORT TO PROCEDURES COMMITTEE – 24th MAY 2019

CORPORATE REPORT TEMPLATE REVIEW - UPDATE

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note that a new draft Corporate Report Template has been developed and has been consulted upon;
- 1.2 Endorse the arrangements for introduction of the new version of Corporate Report Template set out in paragraph 3.6.

2 Background

2.1 A review of the Corporate Report Template was initiated by a request from the Procedures Committee in April 2018.

2.2 The Procedures Committee subsequently considered a report, [Item 7](#) “Committee Report Template” at its meeting on 7th September 2018 and provided the following comments to help inform improvements to the current report template:

- There is a need for reports to be clear and precise;
- Report authors should limit the number of pages by inserting links to documents already published elsewhere;
- The addition of an introduction/summary paragraph would be helpful;
- Reports should demonstrate how the action proposed contributes to meeting the Council’s priorities; and
- That the report template retain a section specifying staffing, financial and risk and include a new paragraph on “other implications” which could include things such as: sustainability, quality of life, wellbeing, town centre first, climate change, economy of towns and possibly equalities.

2.3 The Committee agreed that the Head of Legal and Governance would assess improvements required to the template and that consultation would take place across Directorates prior to implementation.

3. Discussion

3.1 In developing a new template, officers have considered report styles from other local authorities and the report style used by COSLA which has been useful to help compare reporting styles, and for drawing out best practice which meets Aberdeenshire’s needs as well as the Committee’s suggestions in para 2.2 above.

3.2 It is recognised that quality reports are essential for:

- Good governance

- Elected Members having the right information to enable them to make good decisions.
- Ensuring that the public can understand what business the Council is considering
- Increased openness and transparency of decision making

3.3 The essential elements of a committee report are considered to include:

- A clear purpose,
- Officer recommendations,
- Material considerations,
- Implications of making the decision, including any impacts of not making a decision.

3.4 Consultation

3.4.1 A draft new corporate report template was developed by the Legal and Governance Service and consultation on this has taken place in March and April 2019. The aim of the consultation was to seek feedback from Services and Elected Members on whether the proposed changes to the report template would enhance the overall quality of the report. Officers were also asked whether they would feel confident in using the new style and whether any training would be required. The draft new template which was used in the consultation is attached at Appendix 1.

3.4.2 The consultation has involved:

- An online Questionnaire issued to all Services open from 29th March to 30th April
- An afternoon discussion session with Governance Service Champions on 17th April, attended by 20 officers with representatives attending from all Council Directorates
- An afternoon discussion session with an informal cross-party Member Reference Group on 25th April, attended by 6 Elected Members

3.4.3 The results of the consultations are provided in Appendix 2. Responses to each of the comments or issues raised have been provided and refinements have been made to the draft new template in response. Appendix 3 shows the latest version of the new template, with changes from the version consulted on shown in red.

3.5 New Template

3.5.1 The main changes to the updated new version of the committee report template (Appendix 3) in comparison to the existing report template are as follows:

- New “Reason for Report / Summary” paragraph at the start of the report where a concise paragraph will be provided to detail what the report is about.

- New “Purpose and Decision Making Route” paragraph to replace “Background” where the reasons for bringing the report will be set out along with details of which other committees have had sight (or will have sight) of the report.
- Separate paragraph for “Discussion” where relevant facts and advice will be set out (the template consulted on suggested using headings of either “Appraisal / Assessment / Update” however feedback suggested that having one heading was more appropriate and that “Discussion” was general enough to cover all report topics).
- New section to show which of the Council Priorities are advanced by the subject of the report and the decision.
- Implications section changed to table format with further details/assessments to be provided only where relevant.
- Table to include new implications of Sustainability and Fairer Scotland Duty.
- Scheme of Governance and monitoring paragraphs moved to the end of the report.

3.6 Next Steps

- 3.6.1 Following consideration by this Committee, the intention would be to finalise the new template shown in Appendix 3 through discussion with Governance Service Champions. Traditionally, Officers have maintained responsibility for operational documents and formal Council/Committee approval of the Corporate Report Template is not required. No changes to the Scheme of Governance are required. A suitable training package for report authors will be produced and delivered over the next few months. The aim of the training would be to ensure consistency in adoption of the new style and that officers are supported to confidently use this. The Guidance on Report Writing is being updated and will be made available on Arcadia alongside the new template and with some example reports. It is intended to use the introduction of the new template as an opportunity to remind report authors to use appropriate writing styles, i.e. ensuring reports are drafted clearly, concisely, using plain English and avoiding jargon and abbreviations.
- 3.6.2 A Briefing Note would be issued to Elected Members to inform them of the introduction of the new template, so that they are aware of the changes and when they can expect to see these happen.
- 3.6.3 The intention is that the new template would likely be introduced for Council and Committee meetings beginning after the Summer Recess, to allow sufficient time for training and awareness raising. Use of the new style and feedback will continue to be monitored over the first year, and any minor refinements made as necessary.
- 3.7 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

4 Scheme of Governance

- 4.1 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section R of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to matters arising from the Scheme of Governance.

5 Implications and Risk

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and is attached at Appendix 4. There is a positive impact upon three groups of protected characteristics; no negative impacts upon groups have been identified.
- 5.2 There are no staffing and financial implications at this time.
- 5.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level: ACORP004 Business and organisational change (including: ensuring governance structures support change; and, managing the pace of change). The Council needs to be assured that it has the best fit of decision making so as to make it an agile and efficient body and a governance structure that reflects and serves well the communities whose priorities it is here to deliver. The link is here to the [Corporate Risk Register](#).

Ritchie Johnson, Director of Business Services

Report prepared by Geraldine Fraser, Legal Service Manager (Governance)
8th May 2019



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REPORT TO ***ENTER NAME OF COMMITTEE HERE *** – ***Enter Full date here***

ENTER TITLE OF REPORT HERE

Please see Guidance on Report Writing

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 Outline in as few words as possible what the report is about and what councillors are being asked to do (one short paragraph). This is to allow readers to see at a glance what the report is about without reading further.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

2.1 List the decisions needed here; and

2.x Try to avoid asking the Committee to “note” matters which could be explained in the Summary or Purpose paragraphs.

3 Purpose and Report Journey

- 3.1 Use this section to detail relevant background information which explains why the matter is coming before the Committee. This could be because of new legislation, a request from the committee or other reasons. This provides the context to the report.
- 3.2 The “report journey” should provide a short explanation of whether the item has already been considered by this or another committee, and where it will be considered next. If consultations have been carried out, these should be mentioned here. This helps the Committee see what stage the matter has reached. If developing or reviewing a **Council Policy** remember to follow the Policy Review Framework in Part 4A of the Scheme of Governance.

4 Appraisal / Assessment / Update *** Delete as appropriate***

- 4.1 Use this section to provide information which the Committee needs to know in order to be able to agree the recommendations. Use plain English and avoid



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jargon and repetition. Keep paragraphs short and use bullet points where possible. Provide additional background detail in Appendices or with links to other sources where possible.

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 ****complete the sentence with either:- “and had no comments to make” OR “and their comments are incorporated within the report “AND***** and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

5.2 Report authors are required to indicate here why the report is submitted to this Committee. Examples are -

The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section B.10.2.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as the value of the acquisition exceeds £50,000, relates exclusively to the Marr Area and the decision is in accordance with officer recommendations.

OR

The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section C.2.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to approval of banking arrangements for the Council.

OR

The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section F.6.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the approval of concessionary travel arrangements.

6 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

6.1 Specify which of the Council’s 11 Priorities are relevant to the report. Examples are:

This report helps deliver Council Priority 3 - Providing the best life chances for all our children and young people by raising levels of attainment and achievement.



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The report helps deliver Council Priority 10 – Having the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time.

- 6.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed.

Insert an x in the relevant box. Where answered “Yes” to Staffing, Financial, Sustainability or Wellbeing, further details should be provided of the impact in a paragraph below. Where answered “Yes” to Equalities or Town Centre First Principle, relevant impact assessments must be completed and attached as appendices.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Equalities	[EIA attached as appendix xx]		
Staffing			
Financial			
Town Centre First	[TCFP impact assessment attached as appendix xx]		
Sustainability			
Wellbeing			

- 6.3 ***[The staffing / financial / sustainability / wellbeing implications are xxx]***

- 6.4 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

- (narrate name of risks as they appear on the Corporate Risk Register with any appropriate explanation or mitigation e.g. budget implications; working with other organisations; demographic change – *insert link to page with Corporate Risk Register*).

[The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:

- narrate name of risks as they appear in the Directorate Strategic Risk Register with any appropriate explanation or mitigation – *insert link to page with Directorate Risk Registers*].



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*****Enter name and directorate of director presenting report here*****

Report prepared by *****Enter name and job title of the report author(s) here*****

Date *****Enter date report written here*****

APPENDIX 2

CONSULTATION – RESPONSES

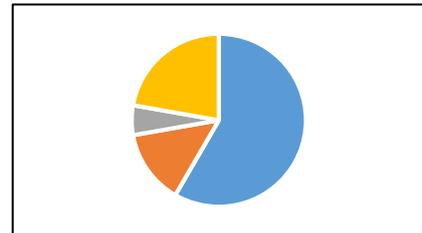
QUESTION ONE

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

Section 1 (NEW) – Reason for Report / Summary – Do you think the addition of this new paragraph would add value to the report?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	21	58
Maybe	5	14
No	2	6
Other	8	22



SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:

OFFICERS (<i>Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Purpose of report should be clear from the title and the recommendations being put forward.	Comment noted.
One short paragraph may not be sufficient.	Comment noted.
Risk of duplication within sections: 1-4.	Guidance on Report Writing and Training for report authors will address this issue to prevent risk of duplication.
May be better placed at the start of the background section in order to enhance the recommendations and discourage readers from coming to a decision before assessing the terms of the whole report and what is being asked of them.	Comment noted, however majority prefer position proposed.
MEMBERS (<i>Comments made at member reference group meeting</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Most stated they would welcome this addition to the report and agree it should be limited to a short and concise summary, as alluded to in the template.	Comments noted.
Some would prefer to see this section include the relevant facts and advice rather than a couple of sentences providing a summary.	Suggest facts and advice could be summarised in updated "Discussion" section.

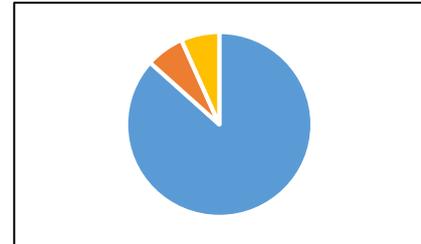
QUESTION TWO

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

Section 2 – Recommendations – Do you think this would be the best place for recommendations?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	26	86
Maybe	2	7
No	0	0
Other	2	7



SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (<i>Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Section is well positioned bringing these to attention.	Comment noted.
Recommendations should be moved to the start of the report to provide focus and better frame the report.	Comment noted, this will be monitored and further feedback sought during implementation.
Guidance in terms of the 'noting of issue's should be amended to allow this in limited circumstances.	Agreed – Guidance and training to address this. Template amended at 2.2 and reference to avoiding use of 'note' removed.
MEMBERS (<i>Comments made at member reference group meeting</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Councillors are aware and recognise the issue of 'noting'.	Comment noted. Template amended at 2.2 and reference to avoiding use of 'note' removed.
"Consider and Comment" perhaps just "Comment" (understand that the current term may better reflect how items are detailed within the Minutes).	Comment noted. Guidance and training to address use of suitable recommendations.

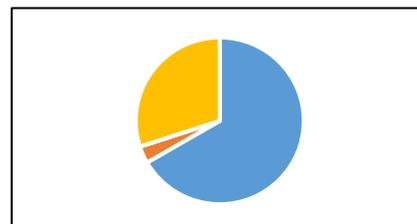
QUESTION THREE

OFFICERS

Section 3 – Purpose and Report Journey – Is it clear what you would need to do to complete this?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	20	67
Maybe	1	3
No	0	0
Other	9	30



MEMBERS

Section 3 – Purpose and Report Journey – (replaces Background) Is this section helpful and are you clear about what you would expect to see here?

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS <i>(Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Change the Terminology – Suggestion keep “Background” and move away from “Report Journey” which is not Plain English.	Comment noted. “Report journey” changed to “Decision Making Route”.
Continuation reports should refer or link to previous Minutes in respect of that item.	Agreed - this will be highlighted in the Guidance and training.
Risk of duplication within sections: 1-4.	Comment noted. New wording added to remind report authors not to repeat details provided in Section 1. Guidance and training to address this.
Clear distinction required in terms of sections 1-5 to avoid cases of duplication, overlap and confusion.	Comment noted. As above.
Predominately operational / administrative process taking away focus from the strategy element of the report.	Comment noted.
‘Purpose’ within this section should be about transparency in terms of decision making and the processes used.	Comment noted. Agreed that clarity on decision making route should add transparency.
MEMBERS <i>(Comments made at member reference group meeting)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Expect section to provide background in terms of what has happened already, to set out the route that the report or issue has taken to get here (e.g. Area Committee referral).	Comment noted.
Change in terminology – Alternative to ‘Journey’	Agreed. Changed to “Decision Making Route”.

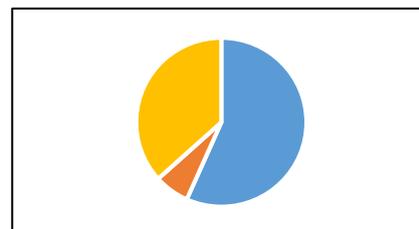
QUESTION FOUR

OFFICERS

Section 4 (NEW) – Appraisal / Assessment / Update - Is the purpose of this proposed new section clear?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	17	57
Maybe	2	6
No	0	0
Other	11	37



MEMBERS

Section 4 (New) – Appraisal / Assessment / Update – (replaces Discussion) Is the purpose of this proposed new section clear and are these headings appropriate?

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Not clear what the purpose of this section is in terms of the report and what needs to be included here.	Comment noted. To be addressed by Guidance and training.
Further guidance required in order to make it clear what is expected within this section such as a completed example.	Comment noted. As above.
Change terminology– Suggestion: 'Discussion/Assessment'	Agreed. Changed to "Discussion".
Change terminology- Use of 'Appraisal' may suggest that formal appraisal has taken place not always the case.	Agreed. As above.
Should be separate headings as having to choose causes ambiguity and may confuse authors and readers.	Agreed. As above.
Risk of duplication within sections: 1-4.	Comment noted. To be addressed by Guidance and training.
Clear distinction required in terms of sections 1-4 to avoid cases of duplication, overlap and confusion.	Comment noted. As above.
Not sure what this adds as information contained within the other sections should cover this such as the 'Background' or 'Recommendations' sections.	Comment noted. As above.
In complex matters or option papers it may well be that appendices are a better option.	Comment noted. As above.
Appendices should be kept at a minimum to reduce cross-referencing if possible.	Comment noted.
Guidance should advise authors to avoid Acronyms.	Agreed.
MEMBERS (Comments made at member reference group meeting)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken

This suggests that officer will discuss pros / cons of issue.	Comment noted.
Change in Terminology – “Appraisal” is an unusual word to use and not sure it is necessary so could be removed.	Agreed. Heading changed to “Discussion”.
Reports are so different in nature, difficult to find a word that covers all reports – report author should know what to use – critical information and advice being presented – advice which assist in making decision. “Discussion” covers everything and is preferable as a heading.	Agreed. As above.

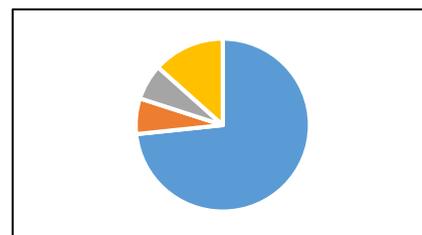
QUESTION FIVE

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

Having considered Sections 1 to 4 – Would you consider the sequence appropriate and logical for the reader?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	22	73
Maybe	2	7
No	2	7
Other	4	13



SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Not ideal as there is repetition within these sections.	Comment noted. To be addressed through Guidance and training.
Scheme of Governance Section would be better placed within the initial sections in terms of the report in order to set the scene.	Comment noted. Other feedback suggests preference is to move to end of report (see below).
MEMBERS (Comments made at member reference group meeting)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Not sure 'Priorities' should be placed after the 'Scheme of Governance' Section and 'Implications and Risks' are important so could look to swap these sections around.	Agreed – order of paragraphs swapped.

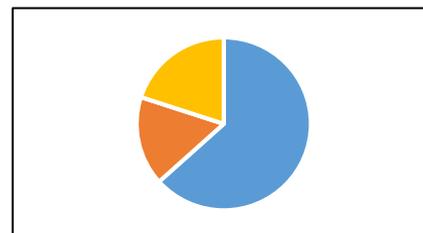
QUESTION SIX

OFFICERS

Section 5 – Scheme of Governance – Would you be confident in completing this section using the Scheme of Governance document and can you expand on anything that would make this easier?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	19	63
Maybe	5	17
No	0	0
Other	6	20



SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (<i>Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Plain English and less cross-referencing (if possible)	Comment noted. To be addressed in training.
Good to retain this section makes author consider why report is going to committee.	Comment noted.
Usually require some advice in respect of this section.	Comment noted. Training to address this.
Include link to Scheme of Governance.	Agreed. Links to the Scheme of Governance and List of Committee Powers added.
Find Scheme of Governance complex due to varying nature of reports and this section often takes time to complete as not always sure which powers are applicable.	Comment noted. Training to address this.
Keep 5.1, remove 5.2 as this section is largely irrelevant without having a copy of the Scheme of Governance, brings nothing to the table when it comes to supporting Members in making good informed decisions.	Comment noted. Links to the Scheme of Governance added. Decision making powers add transparency to decision making.
Aspiration should be to provide councillors with the policy discussion and simply reassure them that all administrative checks have been done off table, making this section irrelevant and the report easier to access.	Comment noted. As above.
Should include clear reference to the Power and what this covers, including a link where possible, this could then be checked by the Monitoring Solicitor.	Agreed. Links added.
Committees should also be reminded of their powers.	Comment noted. The power referenced will be the one relevant to the Committee and the report.

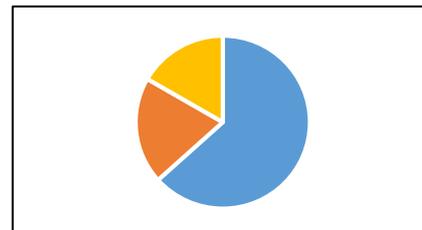
QUESTION SEVEN

OFFICERS

Section 6 (NEW) – Council Priorities – Having considered the 11 Council Priorities, would you be confident in completing this section?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	19	63
Maybe	6	20
No	0	0
Other	5	17



MEMBERS

Section 6 (New) Council Priorities – is it helpful to have this included?

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (<i>Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Unsure of relevance and added value of this section.	Comment noted. This will be monitored and section may be further developed in future.
Section would not be relevant to the Licensing Boards.	Comment noted. Will note be included in reports to Licensing Boards.
May be better to include this element within the 'Background' section of the report.	Comment noted.
'Priorities' should be included separately of 'Implications'.	Comment noted. The Priorities will be separated from the other implications.
Requires to be more than a tick box exercise should include information in terms of how these will be met.	Comment noted. This will be monitored and section may be further developed in future.
May not be meaningful, as all reports like to fall under several of the priorities which may lead to a 'blanket response' being used each time.	Comment noted. As above.
Is this to be used to monitor council priorities?	No. Reports on delivery of the Council's priorities will be reported separately.
Link to Council Priorities fine but these are quite vague.	Comment noted. This will be monitored and section may be further developed in future.
MEMBERS (<i>Comments made at member reference group meeting</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Definitely meaningful.	Comment noted.

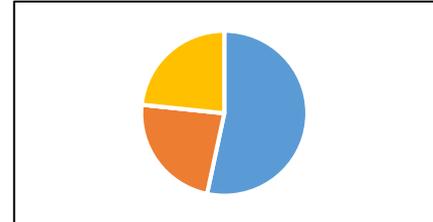
QUESTION EIGHT

OFFICERS

Section 6 – Implications and Risk – Would the proposed tick box checklist be a useful tool to remind authors of the implications that must be considered when writing a report?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	16	54
Maybe	7	23
No	0	0
Other	7	23



OFFICERS

Section 6 - Implications and Risk - Would the table layout be useful to see at a glance which implications should be considered?

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS <i>(Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Impossible to have an exhaustive list.	Comment noted.
Does not adequately cover the 'Fairer Scotland Duty'	Agreed. "Wellbeing" changed to "Fairer Scotland Duty".
Appears cumbersome and unnecessary.	Comment noted. The table is designed to make presentation of information simpler and easier for the reader to understand.
Ready access to the Corporate Risk Register is needed.	Comment noted. The template contains a link to the Risk Registers.
Requires to be more than a tick box exercise, this should demonstrate what has been considered and determined either by including an explicit statement within the report or via a link to a portal or other document detailing this information (incl. EIA etc.) which may also reduce the length of the report.	Agreed. Report authors are expected to apply and detail relevant considerations. This will be addressed in the Guidance and training.
More guidance required as for some reports this section will be paramount.	Comment noted. This will be addressed in the Guidance and training.
Aspiration should be to provide councillors with the policy discussion and simply reassure them that all administrative checks have been done off table, making this section irrelevant and the report easier to access.	Comment noted. Reporting implications provides the Council and the public with an assurance that relevant considerations have been made in decision making. This includes considerations which are statutory requirements.
MEMBERS <i>(Comments made at member reference group meeting)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Yes, the new layout is useful.	Comment noted.

Financial implications should be given more priority in terms of the list i.e. potentially rearrange the order so these are before 'equalities'.	Agreed. Financial implications moved to top of table.
'Sustainability' and 'Wellbeing' are relatively new so additional guidance required to ensure everyone is clear what is to be considered in respect of these.	Agreed – these will be covered in the Guidance. Wellbeing has been replaced with the Fairer Scotland Duty.
Add reference to the actual funding involved e.g. budget line, potentially covered by an additional paragraph where this was identified as an implication in terms of finance.	Agreed. This will be addressed through Guidance and training.

QUESTION NINE

OFFICERS

Section 6 (NEW) – Additional Implications – What additional guidance would you consider necessary to complete this section?

SURVEY RESPONSES

MEMBERS

Section 6 – Implications – Are these the right implications (wellbeing may be covered by Fairer Scotland Duty)

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (<i>Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Require further guidance and clarification in respect of what is to be included in this section.	Comment noted. Guidance and training to address this.
Unclear what is required given the requirement to also prepare an EIA etc. where necessary – duplication.	Comment noted. The table is to see at a glance what implications require to be considered. Equalities and Fairer Scotland are duties which the Council must show it has considered, which is why an assessment is completed.
Guidance required in terms of how to identify risks and the nature of these as the corporate risk register can be quite restrictive in this regard.	Comment noted. Guidance and training to address this.
Need to consider the council's Environmental and Climate Change Policy	Comment noted. These will be covered by the Sustainability implication.
Need to consider the Fairer Scotland Duty.	Agreed – this has been added in place of "Wellbeing".
Include examples of actual / possible risks.	Comment noted. The risks are detailed on the Risk Register.
Include a completed table as an example.	Comment noted. Example reports will be used in training and in the Guidance.
Link to EIA process and document should be included.	Comment noted. This should be possible to include.
Link to corporate risk register.	This is already provided.

Link to the council priorities.	Agreed. This has been added.
Link to council policies and other relevant documents providing definitions and explanations e.g. in terms of what is meant by “sustainability” and “wellbeing”.	This will be addressed in the Guidance and training.
Little value as any risks should be detailed within the ‘Background’ of the report.	Comment noted.
If done properly this could be an extremely lengthy section of the report.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
Aspiration should be to provide councillors with the policy discussion and simply reassure them that all administrative checks have been done off table, making this section irrelevant and the report easier to access.	Comment noted. The table is designed to provide that assurance with further detail provided as required. This section provides a record that implications have been considered as part of the decision making process.
MEMBERS (<i>Comments made at member reference group meeting</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Yes	Comment noted.

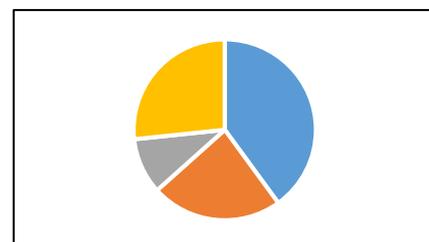
QUESTION TEN

OFFICERS

Guidance on Completion – Would the guidance provided under each section (in yellow) provide sufficient guidance to complete the template?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	12	40
Maybe	7	23
No	3	10
Other	8	27



SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (<i>Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings</i>)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Provide example paragraphs below the tables.	Example reports will be provided as part of the training and in the Guidance.
Provide further guidance in this regard e.g. a completed report template or further detail in respect of what is to be included.	As above.
May also benefit from a best practice guide.	Comment noted. The Guidance will address this.

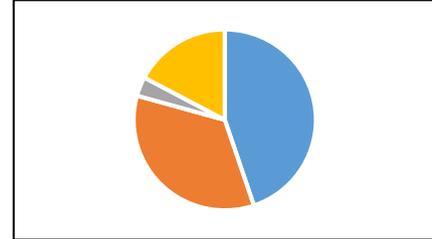
QUESTION ELEVEN

OFFICERS

Overall – Would the new style be easy to use?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	13	45
Maybe	10	35
No	1	3
Other	5	17



SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
May be easier to use once some of the issues have been addressed and with some additional guidance.	Comment noted.
No as changes are unnecessary.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
No it is more complex so less easy to use but people would get used to it over time.	Comment noted.
No as Section 6 seems lengthy and may change the overall balance of the report.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
No as far too repetitive focussed on additional governance and not good governance which should be the priority.	Comment noted. Changes have been requested by Members.

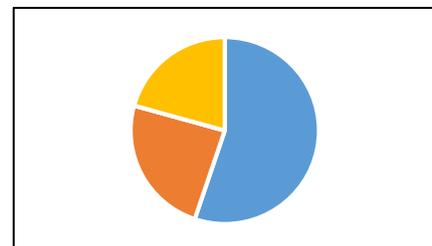
QUESTION TWELVE

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

Would the proposed changes enhance the quality of the report?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	16	55
Maybe	7	24
No	0	0
Other	6	21



SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS (Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
No as the changes put forward are unnecessary.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
No perhaps strengthens governance but no issue with the current template in that regard.	Comment noted.

Limited improvement as the additional information should have been included anyhow under current template.	Comment noted.
No as the sections within the template need to be more logically laid out.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
No as the lengthening of the report through repetition makes these less succinct and precise, taking away from the purpose of the report in the first place with the focus now on various considerations which could be reported in exceptional circumstances.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
MEMBERS <i>(Comments made at member reference group meeting)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Yes, these changes would provide a better report.	Comment noted.
The two examples of reports drafted on the new template show an improvement to the current reporting template.	Comments noted.

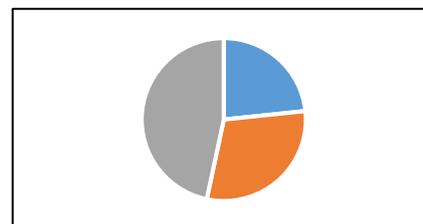
QUESTION THIRTEEN

OFFICERS

Training – Would you require additional training on how to complete the new report template?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Options	Number	%
Yes	7	23
Maybe	9	30
No	14	47



MEMBERS

Introducing a new template - Do you think Members would need training and/or a briefing on the new template?

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS <i>(Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Not at this stage as would need to trial new template.	Comment noted.
Training should be focused on consistency and encouraging authors to write good reports in order to support decision making and not a new template.	Comment noted. Training will address writing styles as well as the new template.
MEMBERS <i>(Comments made at member reference group meeting)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
No, the changes are self-explanatory.	Comment noted.

QUESTION FOURTEEN

OFFICERS

Do you have any suggestions to further enhance the committee report template?

SURVEY RESPONSES

MEMBERS

Any other suggestions / comments to help improve the template?

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS <i>(Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
Delighted to see measures being proposed - long overdue.	Comment noted.
Report Journey could be useful.	Comment noted.
Not at this stage as the template needs trialled first.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
Plain English and reduction of cross-referencing.	Comment noted. This will be addressed by Guidance and training.
A completed report for reference and guidance.	Comment noted. This will be included in the Guidance and training.
A pick list of priorities.	Comment noted. A link to the Council priorities has been added.
A suite of terms that the committees agree upon e.g. appraisal, update etc.	Comment noted. This has been changed to "Discussion".
Consideration being given to the Aberdeenshire Children and Young Person's Charter within the report template.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
A degree of flexibility in the report template e.g. not all reports will require an options appraisal or detailed consideration in terms of some of the other aspects, avoid over governance in terms of these reports.	Comment noted. The heading has been simplified to "Discussion". This will be monitored.
Detailed guidance and clarity regarding some of the sections within the template, why they are there and what should be included within them.	Comment noted. This will be addressed by Guidance and training.
Concern that the review has gone full circle since the last one which cleared out some of the proposed sections to move a cleaner simpler format, increasing the length may well lead to a reduction of reports being proposed to go to Committee.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
Engage with customers and members and adopt a more modern way to deal with any issues, looking at what each side is looking to achieve, what their role is rather than lengthening reports by way of duplication and including additional considerations which do not assist the decision making process.	Comment noted. The changes have been requested by Members.
Testing reports with councillors, to ensure they are able to focus on the strategic side and that these allow debate, as the additional administrative or operational requirements could then be considered by Leadership Teams, which if this had merit, could mean things like the EIA and TCFP could be agreed by	Comment noted.

officers and only reported to Committee as an exception.	
Training for report authors in terms of quality of reporting focussed on the public element of these.	Agreed.
Reminders about the use of acronyms and abbreviations.	Agreed. This will be addressed in the training and Guidance.
Make sure that the template produced is useable.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
Reduce the number of implications.	This will be monitored.
Reports would seem to be getting longer so consider how these should be presented e.g. bullet points should be encouraged.	Agreed. This will be addressed by Guidance and training.
MEMBERS <i>(Comments made at member reference group meeting)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
None	

OTHER COMMENTS / ISSUES RECEIVED

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

OFFICERS <i>(Comments made via: survey, separate email, service champions and member reference group meetings)</i>	
Comment / Issue Raised	Response / Action Taken
The proposed changes are beneficial.	Comment noted.
Change and simplify some of the terminology within the template as clarity and understanding is key.	Comment noted. This will be addressed by the Guidance and training.
Guidelines should be put in place for authors in terms of the standards of reporting incl. layout, format, content to ensure quality and consistency in terms of reports.	Comment noted. As above.
Noted that an alternative report style is used for Planning.	Comment noted.
Question what the purpose of this review and what it is trying to solve as if the issue is inconsistency in terms of reporting a new template will not achieve this so perhaps should focus on training and support for authors.	Comment noted. Changes have been requested by Members. Guidance and training will be provided to report authors.
Concerned with movement away from short and concise reports as detail may be lost as a result due to length and repetition, perhaps too governance heavy.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
New template includes several sections which seem to concern themselves with operational / administrative matters, rather than policy or strategy which is the main purpose of the report, perhaps these should be reported as an exception.	Comment noted. This will be monitored.
Consider movement towards electronic copy of papers which link to additional information (noted that several issues may need to be overcome e.g. lack of Wifi at Area Committee Meetings, Public Access, Document Control).	Comment noted.
Officer Induction should include section on how to prepare committee reports.	Comment noted. This will be considered.



From mountain to sea

REPORT TO ***ENTER NAME OF COMMITTEE HERE *** – ***Enter Full date here***

ENTER TITLE OF REPORT HERE

Please see Guidance on Report Writing

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 *Outline in as few words as possible what the report is about and what councillors are being asked to do (one short paragraph). This is to allow readers to see at a glance what the report is about without reading further.*

2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

2.1 *List the decisions needed here; and*

2.x *Try to keep recommendations concise. See Guidance for appropriate use of terms e.g. 'agree', 'acknowledge', 'endorse', 'note' etc.*

3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 *Use this section to detail relevant background information which explains why the matter is coming before the Committee. This could be because of new legislation, a request from the committee or other reasons. This provides the context to the report. Try to avoid repetition of information provided in the Reason for Report/Summary paragraph.*

- 3.2 *The "Decision Making Route" should provide a short explanation of whether the item has already been considered by this or another committee, and where it will be considered next. If consultations have been carried out, these should be mentioned here. This helps the Committee see what stage the matter has reached. If developing or reviewing a **Council Policy** remember to follow the Policy Review Framework in Part 4A of the Scheme of Governance.*



From mountain to sea

4 Discussion

- 4.1 Use this section to provide information which the Committee needs to know in order to be able to agree the recommendations. Use plain English and avoid jargon and repetition. Keep paragraphs short and use bullet points where possible. Provide additional background detail in Appendices or with links to other sources where possible.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 Specify which of the Council's 11 Priorities are relevant to the report. [Link to Council Priorities provided here](#). Examples are:

This report helps deliver Council Priority 3 - Providing the best life chances for all our children and young people by raising levels of attainment and achievement.

The report helps deliver Council Priority 10 – Having the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time.

- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed.

*Insert an x in the relevant box. Where answered "Yes" to Financial, Staffing, Sustainability, further details should be provided of the impact in a paragraph below. Where answered "Yes" to Equalities, **Fairer Scotland Duty** or Town Centre First Principle, relevant impact assessments must be completed and attached as appendices.*

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			
Staffing			
Equalities	[EIA attached as appendix xx]		
Fairer Scotland Duty	[EIA attached as appendix xx]		
Town Centre First	[TCFP impact assessment attached as appendix xx]		
Sustainability			



From mountain to sea

5.3 ***[The staffing / financial / sustainability implications are xxx]***

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

- *(narrate name of risks as they appear on the Corporate Risk Register with any appropriate explanation or mitigation e.g. budget implications; working with other organisations; demographic change – insert link to page with Corporate Risk Register).*

[The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:

- *narrate name of risks as they appear in the Directorate Strategic Risk Register with any appropriate explanation or mitigation – insert link to page with Directorate Risk Registers].*

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 ****complete the sentence with either:- “and had no comments to make” OR “and their comments are incorporated within the report “AND***** and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

6.2 *Report authors are required to indicate here why the report is submitted to this Committee (link to List of Committee Powers here). Examples are -*

The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section B.10.2.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as the value of the acquisition exceeds £50,000, relates exclusively to the Marr Area and the decision is in accordance with officer recommendations.

OR

The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section C.2.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to approval of banking arrangements for the Council.



From mountain to sea

OR

The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section F.6.1 of the [List of Committee Powers in Part 2A](#) of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the approval of concessionary travel arrangements.

*****Enter name and directorate of director presenting report here*****

Report prepared by ***Enter name and job title of the report author(s) here***

Date ***Enter date report written here***

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Business Services
Section	Legal & Governance
Title of the activity etc.	Corporate Report Template
Aims and desired outcomes of the activity	Improved Corporate Report Template
Author(s) & Title(s)	Geraldine Fraser - Corporate Report Template Review - Update

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Feedback obtained from internal consultation with stakeholders: Council Services and Members.
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online Questionnaire issued to all Services open from 29th March to 30th April 2019 • An afternoon discussion session with Governance Service Champions on 17th April 2019, attended by 20 officers with representatives attending from all Council Directorates • An afternoon discussion session with an informal cross-party Member Reference Group on 25th April 2019, attended by 6 Elected Members
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	None
External data (census, available statistics).	Other reports considered as part of development of new template including those used by other local authorities, Cosla etc.

Other (general information as appropriate).			
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:

<p>Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? The protected groups covered by the equality duty are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.</p> <p>Who is affected by the activity or who is intended to benefit from the proposed policy and how? Please complete for each protected group by inserting “yes” in the applicable box/boxes below.</p>				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation Advancing equality of opportunity Promoting good relations among and between different age groups	x			
Age – Older	x			
Disability	x			

Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)			x	
Religion or Belief			x	
Sex (Gender)			x	
Pregnancy and maternity			x	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			x	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			x	
Marriage and Civil Partnership eliminating unlawful discrimination			x	

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)
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.	Age – younger: the new corporate report template will improve the presentation of information reported to committees, increasing accessibility and transparency of reports and the Council’s decision making.	
	Age – older: the new corporate report template will improve the presentation of information reported to committees, increasing accessibility and transparency of reports and the Council’s decision making.	
	Disability: the new corporate report template will improve the presentation of information reported to committees, increasing accessibility and transparency of reports and the Council’s decision making.	

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>Groups have not been targeted specifically in consultation, however consultees include a wide range of age groups.</p>
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Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?

	Mitigating Steps	Timescale
<p>These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.</p>		

Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?

<p>These should be included in the action plan.</p>	<p>Provision of good information by the Council enables access and understanding to be provided of the Council's activities and decision making processes.</p>
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Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?

<p>Reports will be easy to access and understand by all groups.</p>

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place? How the EIA will be used to monitor the proposal

<p>These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).</p>	<p>Further feedback will be sought during and post implementation from stakeholders.</p>
--	--

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?

<p>Please complete the appropriate box/boxes</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.</p>
	<p>There is a positive impact upon three protected groups and no negative impact on any group.</p>	
	<p>2</p>	<p>Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.</p>
	<p>3</p>	<p>The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen</p>

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

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Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

<p>Sign off and authorisation</p>	<p>1) Service and Team</p>	<p>Legal & Governance</p>
	<p>2) Title of Policy/Activity</p>	<p>Corporate Report Template (if appropriate)</p>

3) Authors: I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Geraldine Fraser Position: Legal Service Manager (Governance) Date: 8 th May 2019 Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
	Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Date:	
5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Karen Wiles Position: Head of Legal & Governance Date: 15 th May 2019	Name: Position: Head of Legal & Gov Date: 15 th May 2019
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: 9 th May 2019
7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: equalities@aberdeenshire.gov.uk		Date:
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO		Date:

