

Report

Report to:	Finance and Corporate Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	20 January 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Finance and Corporate Resource Plan: Quarter 2 Progress Report 2020/2021
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide the Finance and Corporate Resource Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report 2020/2021, for the period 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendations:-

- (1) that the Finance and Corporate Resource Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report 2020/2021 as summarised in paragraph 5.2. and attached as Appendix 2 of this report, be noted;
- (2) that the key achievements made by the Resource to date, as detailed in paragraph 5.3. of this report, be noted; and
- (3) that the additional scrutiny of reporting the updated status of those measures identified as 'report later' at Quarter 4 2019/2020, as summarised in paragraph 5.5. and detailed at Appendix 3 of this report, be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Finance and Corporate Resource Plan 2020/2021 was approved by this Committee on 19 August 2020 and sets out the objectives and actions to be managed and delivered by the Resource for the financial year 2020/2021.
- 3.2. The Resource Plan follows the agreed corporate structure and style. The Plan is a key element of the Council's performance management arrangements and provides details of the context within which the Resource operates and establishes actions and measures for the year ahead based on the Priorities set out in the Council Plan Connect 2017 to 2022.
- 3.3. As Elected Members are aware, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the Council was forced to suspend or reduce a number of services that could not be continued in full due to government advice, including adhering to physical distancing requirements for residents and for staff. The Council was also obliged to redirect resources so that it could deliver vital new services and supports for individuals, communities and businesses. There has been an inevitable impact on performance in some areas.

4. Resource Objectives 2020/2021

- 4.1. The Resource has established a number of objectives to support the delivery of the Connect Priorities in 2020/2021. These are detailed at Appendix 1.

5. Quarter 2 Progress Report 2020/2021

- 5.1. Progress against all Resource Plan measures is contained in the Quarter 2 Progress Report 2020/2021, attached as Appendix 2. This report has been produced from the Council's performance management reporting system IMPROVe, and uses a traffic light format with the following definitions to give a status report on each measure:-

Status	Definition
Blue	Project complete
Green	The timescale or target has been met as per expectations
Amber	There has been minor slippage against timescale or minor shortfall against target
Red	There has been major slippage against timescale or major shortfall against target
Report later	The information is not yet available to allow us to say whether the target has been reached or not. This will be reported when available
Contextual	Included for 'information only', to set performance information in context

- 5.2. Measures which are classified as 'red' are considered in detail at section 5.4. of this report. To ensure adequate scrutiny of performance across all Resources, the Council's Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum may consider 'red' and/or 'amber' measures at a future meeting.

The overall summary of progress to date is as follows and performance should be considered in the context of the impact of responding to Covid:

Status	Measures			
	Statistical	Project	Total	%
Blue	N/A	4	4	9%
Green	16	10	26	55%
Amber	1	1	2	4%
Red	0	0	0	0%
Report later/Contextual	5	10	15	32%
Totals	22	25	47	100 %

(Data correct as at 4 December 2020)

- 5.3. Key achievements for 2020/2021, to date, are noted below:-

5.3.1.

Connect Priority	Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and tackle disadvantage
Resource Objective	Achievement
Deliver effective Employability Services to support Economic Recovery	Implemented a pan-Lanarkshire local employability partnership to support the Lanarkshire Labour Market, particularly prevalent as the impact of Covid-19 affects our local economy. Designed to support those at risk of losing their job and those made redundant seeking new opportunities.

Connect Priority	Get it right for children and young people
Resource Objective	Achievement
	No Resource Objectives for this Priority

Connect Priority:	Improve health, care and wellbeing
Resource Objective	Achievement
	No Resource Objectives for this Priority

Connect Priority	Ensure communities are safe, strong and sustainable
Resource Objective	Achievement
Facilitate communication and consultation on the council, its policies and its services	<p>Developed a new Covid Health and Safety Guidance that permits necessary procedures to be developed across all Resources/ Services</p> <p>Facilitated an online meeting of the British Sign Language (BSL) steering group (BSL users and interpreter) – this was the first such event using online technology for members of the BSL community to engage with the Council.</p>
Improve customer experience of council services	<p>Automated fortnightly payments of £30 cash to 10,000 children in receipt of Free School Meals over the school summer break using PayPoint as the fulfilment mechanism. Plus 1,500 SMSs issued to remind customers of cash Free School Meals vouchers.</p> <p>Implemented 'Myaccount' with the Council's on-line payment function to enable customers to access their Council Tax and rent accounts, check balances and make a payment, all in the one place. Promotional activity to date for My Account Council Tax (over 37,000 SMSs, social media, emails) resulted in 14,000 hits to My Account web page and 800 new registrations.</p>

- 5.3.2. In addition to working towards these Priorities, we recognise that the Council will continually aim to improve and ensure effective and efficient use of resources, and that business will be conducted with integrity and transparency and will operate to the highest standards. In order to monitor and report progress against these values, Resource objectives have also been identified under the heading Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value.

Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value	
Resource Objective	Achievement
Provide sound financial stewardship and effective financial strategies	<p>A financial strategy has been agreed for 2021/2022 and paves the way for finalising a budget for members to approve before March 2021.</p> <p>The financial accounts were finalised in line with the normal timetable, despite the challenges of different working approaches brought about by the pandemic. The audit of the accounts is complete, with a clean audit certificate received in November.</p> <p>Throughout this financial year, support and advice has been provided by finance teams managing the impact and recovery from the pandemic.</p> <p>A detailed review of the Council's Loan Fund has resulted in financial benefit to the Council and has been embedded as part of the revenue budget financial strategy.</p>

Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value	
Resource Objective	Achievement
Deliver and communicate the Council Plan and ensure high standards of governance	Resource Planning Guidance was reviewed and a new template developed for the production of Resource Plans for 2020/2021. The new format facilitates communication and scrutiny by focusing on what's most important in achieving the Council's Priorities.
Implement a Digital and ICT Strategy that meets business needs	The Communications team introduced online email communications using a marketing solution to drive postage volumes down which is helping drive digital transformation.
Develop improvement activity and promote scrutiny	Completed review and update of the Council's risk management strategy.
Improve the skills, flexibility and capacity of the workforce	The pandemic has necessitated a more flexible approach to managing staff and workloads, where homeworking and a greater reliance on digital solutions has been embraced.
	There were 1,420 attendances by employees at classroom based training and 120 attendances at teams training events. There were also 29,978 Learn on Line completions by employees.
	The Procurement Service has completed the Scottish National Procurement Competency Framework for all officers and assistants and embedded training requirements into appraisals.

5.4. Areas for improvement

There were no measures classified as 'red' (major slippage against timescale or shortfall against target).

5.5. Report later

Measures in the quarterly progress report which are not red, amber or green can be assigned a status of 'report later' or 'contextual'. Of the 31 measures identified in those categories at Quarter 4 2019/2020, 2 are contextual measures for which results were provided in the Q4 report, 10 are Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators, for which the 2019/2020 results will not be published until February 2021, at the earliest. Progress on many of the measures was adversely affected by the Covid-19 crisis. The updated status and explanatory narrative relating to the remaining 19 'report later' measures is detailed at Appendix 3.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. The Resource Objectives noted within the Resource Plan will inform the Service Action Plans, where applicable, and in turn the Performance Appraisal process for individual employees.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. The objectives within the Resource Plan are reflected in the respective annual Resource Revenue and Capital budgets and, longer term, within the framework of the council's approved Financial Strategy.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 8.1. There are no climate change or environmental implications as a result of this report.
- 8.2. The Resource Plan takes into account Resource responsibilities in relation to sustainable development.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. The Community Plan 2017 to 2027 was agreed at the Community Planning Partnership Board on 11 October 2017. A significant element of the delivery of the outcomes in the Community Plan will come through the achievement of the actions contained within Connect.
- 9.2. Resource Plan actions are assessed as part of the Resource's risk management arrangements and relevant issues have been added to the Resource Risk Register.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1. Many of the actions detailed within the Resource Plan reflect ongoing strategies and policies which will be or have been the subject of consultation and equality impact assessment.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

10 December 2020

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ♦ The Resource Plan has been structured upon the Vision, Values and Priorities in the Council Plan Connect 2017-22

Previous References

- ♦ Finance and Corporate Resources Quarter 2 Progress Report 2019/2020, 11 December 2019

List of Background Papers

- ♦ Council Plan Connect 2017-22 – endorsed by the Executive Committee on 8 November 2017 and approved by the full Council on 6 December 2017: mid-term review of Connect endorsed by the Executive Committee 24 June 2020
- ♦ Finance and Corporate Resources Plan 2020-21 – approved by Finance and Corporate Committee on 19 August 2020

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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Finance and Corporate Resource Objectives 2020-21

Connect Priority	Resource Objectives
Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and tackle disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support key voluntary organisations and help to develop the social economy Lead partnership approaches to tackling the causes and effects of poverty and equality Deliver effective Employability Services to support Economic Recovery
Get it right for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Resource Objectives for this priority
Improve health, care and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Resource Objectives for this priority
Ensure communities are safe, strong and sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepening community engagement Facilitate communication and consultation on the council, its policies and its services Improve customer experience of council services

Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value	Resource Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Corporate Covid-19 Recovery Provide sound financial stewardship and effective financial strategies Deliver and communicate the Council Plan and ensure high standards of governance Support local democracy, council committees, Integrated Joint Board, elected members and senior managers Deliver professional legal services Embed Equalities and Workforce Planning in Recovery Process Promote equality and the wellbeing of staff Implement a digital and ICT strategy that meets business needs Develop improvement activity and promote scrutiny Improve the skills, flexibility and capacity of the workforce Develop a programme of Service Reviews supporting Service Recovery
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