

Report

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	24 June 2020
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Outcome of Mid-term Review of Connect
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Provide the updated Connect following a mid-term review.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the updated Council Plan, Connect, attached at appendix 1, be approved.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council Plan - Connect 2017-22 was approved in December 2017 and set out the council's key actions to be delivered over five years, around a long-term vision to improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire.
- 3.2. The vision is supported by a number of objectives relating to the delivery of operational services and values which influence how we work. These permeate through all levels of the organisation, known as the 'golden thread'.
- 3.3. As the plan approached the mid-point of its five-year term, it was appropriate to conduct a mid-term review of progress, and to health-check priorities and emphasis in light of the changing internal and external pressures impacting on the council.
- 3.4. The updated Connect following that mid-term review in late 2019 provided a refreshed focus for the council to achieve its priorities over the next two years and to build upon the successes achieved to date.
- 3.5. However, following the completion of work on the mid-term review the pressures impacting on the council changed significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken to minimise its spread. Some services had to be temporarily withdrawn or reduced as the council focused on key frontline services and took on an extensive range of new services in response to the pandemic.
- 3.6. The long-term impact on the council and its services, including the financial impact, will not be fully understood for some time. However, all Resources have prepared Recovery Plans which will be shared with Elected Members and will be developed in parallel with Resource Plans. These will, in turn, inform work in developing the next Council Plan, 2022-2027.
- 3.7. It is considered appropriate that the work undertaken through the mid-term review of the current Council Plan will still be an important consideration in developing those

Resource Plan and the next Council Plan, albeit that the context has now changed. This report therefore presents the updated version of Connect for approval by the Executive Committee.

4. The mid-term review

- 4.1. The purpose of the mid-term review was to bring the Council Plan up to date in terms of the latest context and challenges facing South Lanarkshire. The aim of the review was to check our direction of travel; reaffirm the vision, values and priorities which underpin our work; and to “fine-tune” elements of the plan to reflect the current situation and policy context.
- 4.2. The Council’s Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR), published by Audit Scotland in March 2019, made the following specific recommendation in relation to the Council Plan:
 - ◆ To increase the impact of the council’s efforts in achieving its strategic objectives, links between the council plan (Connect Plan) and the LOIP (Community Plan) should be made clearer with a sharper focus on the key areas of activity.
- 4.3. The revised Plan addresses this recommendation in two ways. First, the revised Plan incorporates a graphic which shows how the priorities within the Council Plan relate to the key activities in the Community Plan. Second, linkages have been made between the Next Steps in the Council Plan and actions within the Community Plan.
- 4.4. Testing of the vision, values and priorities within the Plan was carried out in January and February 2020. An online survey, open to all residents, was used to gather views on the council’s approach. To supplement this, views were sought specifically from older people’s groups and young people, to ensure these key stakeholders had the opportunity to engage with the planning process.
- 4.5. Taking the above into account, appendix 1 contains a final draft of the updated Council Plan which:
 - ◆ Updates the horizon scanning element of the Plan – the “South Lanarkshire Context”;
 - ◆ Clarifies what is important by highlighting four Priorities (which were previously described as “Ambitions”);
 - ◆ Makes the Plan simpler and shorter by moving the 11 objectives into an appendix;
 - ◆ Establishes stronger links between the Council Plan and the Community Plan as described in 4.2 above; and
 - ◆ Incorporates refreshed Next Steps to help guide performance reporting in the next 2 years.

5. Next Steps and recommendations

- 5.1. The mid-term review is part of a longer-term process which looks towards the production of a new Council Plan at the beginning of 2022.
- 5.2. Moving forward, the next stage of the process will be undertaking extensive consultation and planning for the next version of Connect. This will have to fully take into account the impact of COVID-19 on the council’s services and financial position.
- 5.3. As part of this work there will be discussions on the relationship between the key strategic planning documents. In particular there will be a joint programme of work involving the council and partners to more closely link and align the Council Plan and

the Community Plan (LOIP), taking into account the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

5.4 A report setting out the key stages and the timetable will be brought to a future Committee.

5.5 It is recommended that:

- ◆ the final draft update of Connect following the mid-term review, attached at appendix 1, be approved.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. There are no direct employee implications.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. There are no direct financial implications.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

8.1. There are no climate change implications as a result of this report. However the mid-term review acknowledged the need to take action in response to climate change and the emphasis placed on this will help Resources to highlight and prioritise appropriate actions going forward.

9. Other Implications

9.1. None.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required. Testing of the with public/interest groups (Seniors etc) was undertaken in January and February 2020.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

21 February 2020

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values/Ambitions

- Achieve results through leadership, good governance and organisational effectiveness

Previous References

- None

List of Background Papers

- None

Contact for Further Information

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

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