Finance and Corporate Resources

Finance and Corporate Resource Plan 2022-23

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Section One – Introduction

I am pleased to introduce our Resource Plan for 2022-23 which sets out outcomes and priorities for the coming year.

The five services within Finance and Corporate Resources help to ensure that the council operates successfully in an increasingly complex and challenging environment, and although diverse, each service is essential to the running of the council and the delivery of its vision, values and priorities.

Administration and Legal Services provides essential support for the core democratic and governance arrangements of the council as well as providing a full range of legal advice and support, managing electoral events and licensing and registration services to the public.

Communications and Strategy provides accurate, timely information for employees and residents. The service is responsible for the council's publications, its websites, intranet and social media. It also co-ordinates all Media enquiries. The service incorporates the Research and Improvement Unit as well as the Community Engagement Team, which provides support to the Community Planning Board, and provides a single interface for community engagement including neighbourhood planning.

Finance Services provides sound financial stewardship to ensure the council's priorities are effectively funded and expenditure, including procurement, is appropriately monitored, controlled and reported. Finance Services is split between transactional activities including payables, procurement, risk management and insurance, revenues and benefits, customer services and development and money matters advice; and Strategy which includes budget strategy, budget monitoring and providing financial support to all Resources.

Information Technology Services supports all council services through the maintenance of over 5,000 computers and servers running over 200 business applications across council Resources. This delivery is supported by council wide networks covering telephone, printing, mail and internet technologies.

Personnel Services is responsible for delivery of the full spectrum of personnel policies and practices across the council. This includes employee learning and organisational development; consultation; and supporting unemployed people into jobs, training or further education. The service also manages payroll, health, safety and wellbeing and is responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of equality and diversity legislation, good practice, and advancing equality for all.

The Resource is also responsible for **Audit and Compliance Services**, which provides assurance on the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance arrangements, as well as ensuring compliance with European grant award requirements.

Paul Manning
Executive Director
Finance and Corporate Resources

Section Two – Key areas of focus for the year ahead

2.0. Overview

The Resource has identified the main challenges, risks and new developments which will have significant impact on the delivery of services in the coming year. These are outlined briefly below.

2.1. Covid 19- response and recovery

Through the initial period of 2020-21, the Council responded to the Global Pandemic, ensuring that essential services could safely be delivered, and the most vulnerable members of our community were safe. The Council now moves onto the period where we return to full service delivery, where appropriate, and recover from the period of service disruption. This will include new ways of working.

Finance and Corporate Resources will provide core support for services as they look to return to full capacity. This includes providing key financial advice, as well as the necessary advice and support around the workforce and their safety. The Resource will also support our Elected Members, ensuring their meetings run effectively, and they are provided with information to allow decisions to be taken on shaping service delivery going forwards.

Covid19 has had a significant effect on the financial position of many families and therefore front-line services for communities and people are expected to continue to provide valuable support as the effects of the pandemic carry forward into 2022-23 this includes the provision of financial advice and support to resident.

2.2. Deliver effective Employability Services to support Economic Recovery

Covid19 has had a significant impact on the economy and as a result there has been a substantial increase in unemployment. There are new groups of unemployed people seeking support, different from those groups the original employability programmes were designed for. Service delivery now needs to be redesigned to be delivered in a Covid19 safe way, with a move away from face to face support. In addition, programmes will have to address new need in addition to offering enhanced assistance to those traditionally supported in this area. Opportunities for employment and work placements are likely to be significantly reduced, so creative approaches to the provision of occupational experiences and effective use of funding streams to maximise support are required. The current economic picture is mixed, with some areas of the economy struggling to fill vacancies and others recovering more slowly. The impact of Brexit is also having an effect on the supply of skilled and qualified labour.

The council is working closely with its partners to make effective use of funding streams to support those most in need of employability support, and to develop programmes which meet demands and anticipated workforce and labour market shortages.

2.3. Financial Strategy

The Resource leads on financial planning and reporting for the Council. Over recent years, the challenges for Local Government finance have continued, around balancing pressures of meeting additional demand and costs of delivering services. A key part of the financial management process is the development of Financial Strategies, developing financial plans which deliver the council's visions, values and priorities, while recognising and responding to financial constraints. Financial strategies are prepared annually and approved by members leading to the final approval of annual budgets. This process includes consideration and approval of efficiency and savings options and considers requirements for investment. One of the key features for future strategies will be the output from our programme of Transformational Reviews, which is covered at section 2.4. The strategic approach to financial planning also includes planning for Capital programmes of work.

The costs of responding to, and recovering from, the Covid19 pandemic added pressures to the council's budgets in 2020-21 and is expected to do so into 2022-23 and beyond.

2.4. Develop a programme of Service Reviews supporting Service Recovery In Service recovery plans, change is explicit, and this needs to be reflected in the guidance to support our revised Transformational Review programme. It is important that managers and leaders are equipped to lead transformation, and that review and improvement processes are adopted and welcomed. Through the recovery process, there is the opportunity to shape Council services which are responsive, flexible and fit for purpose in our new environment. A transparent process which is understood by all involved, the early involvement of those affected, and honest evaluation of options will be key features of our approach.

2.5. Involving Our Communities Working alongside our communities to create and deliver new council and Community plans has given people in South Lanarkshire a stronger voice in what matters to them and how we should shape our services going forward. We want to maintain the momentum around this work by continuing to develop sustainable structures which involve local people effectively in influencing decisions which have an impact upon them and their lives and supporting them to take positive action themselves to improve outcomes.

Our ambition is that all communities in South Lanarkshire have the opportunity to identify their local priorities and can see these reflected in the way we engage and work with them. Supporting community groups to represent the views of their neighbours and to work together to address issues that matter to them will be a key feature of the delivery of our new plans.

2.6. Strategic digital developments The Council is investing heavily in digital technologies to improve the delivery of services to citizens, streamline and standardise business processes, and improve collaboration and partnership working (for example Health and Social Care Partnership - HSCP). This investment is targeted on delivering significant productivity improvements and cost savings. Information Technology (IT) has a major part to play in digital transformation by implementing and supporting new technologies at pace and at scale.

IT projects will continue to be prioritised based upon need, business case and alignment with Council Priorities. Partnerships with Local Government Digital Office, NHS Lanarkshire, Scottish Government and key suppliers will be leveraged to share best practices and accelerate rollout and adoption of new digital solutions. IT will continue to maintain high levels of availability of IT estate and high levels of support to officers and elected members.

Key IT activities will include completing the rollout of agile working for council staff, replacement of legacy business applications (for example Housing & Property, Social Work) and the rollout of digital connectivity solutions to support digital inclusion.

2.7. Oracle replacement As part of the council's transformation of services, the current Oracle system (People Connect/HRMS, FMS) will be migrated to Fusion, Oracle's cloud based solution. Oracle Fusion will provide a modern platform for all HR, Payroll and Finance functions and benefit users across the whole council.

In addition to delivering significant improvements to business processes, the new system will support agile working, employee self-service and engagement as well as greater levels

of automation and improved management information. Finance processes will be streamlined with improved spend control.

This migration project will involve a major investment both in terms of finance and staff time and will provide a platform for future service improvements and efficiencies.

2.8. Embed Equalities and Workforce Planning in Recovery Process

Current research and analysis of data indicates that Covid19 is likely to adversely impact specific groups in our society more than others. Our Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has identified similar issues, namely the disproportionate effect on older people, women, children and people with disabilities, and people from Black and Minority ethnic backgrounds. In addition, the full socio-economic impact of lockdown as a result of Covid19 has not yet become apparent, although it is anticipated that there will be greater impact on those with low skills, low incomes as well as those who are 16-24 years of age and those who are over 50 years of age.

There have been significant changes to our own council's ways of working and how the workforce carries out service delivery. Increasing use of technology and working from home options have changed service delivery operations and how teams work together. Consultation with service users, members of the public and employees is needed in order to ensure that performance is maintained, and people's priority needs are met. Flexibility in our approach to work and employees will be needed to accommodate the possibility of further local lockdowns, increased savings requirements, and the need to be efficient and responsive without creating disadvantage. Our recovery plans need to take account of both fair work and fair service delivery to our communities. The Council published its Mainstreaming Equalities Report in 2021, to meet its statutory requirements setting out our performance in relation to the Public Sector Equalities Duties and our plans for the future. These plans include a focus on our recruitment and retention practices, our support for groups who are digitally excluded, and have been impacted adversely by Covid19. New programmes to support employment and training opportunities for care experienced young people, those young people with additional support needs, and those with disabilities, are underway.

2.9. Renewing corporate planning

Post-Covid, there is a need to look afresh at the council's strategic planning and reporting, to ensure that key plans are focused on the topics that matter most. The new Council Plan which will come into effect in 2022 will be closely aligned to the new Community Plan, with both documents articulating a common vision and set of outcomes to be achieved over the next 5 years. Work will be undertaken in 2022-23 to review guidance, templates and performance reporting arrangements to support the new vision and priorities set out in the Council and Community Plans and on preparations for the new Council following the Local Government Election in May 2022. Key preparations will include a review of procedural documentation and the decision-making structure, arrangements for members induction and training, members ICT provision and the first statutory meeting of the Council.

2.10. Community Wealth Building

Community Wealth Building (CWB) is an alternative approach to traditional economic development, which seeks to develop resilient, inclusive local economies, with more local employment and a larger and more diverse business base. There is growing interest in CWB across the UK and especially in Scotland, where it has been endorsed by the Scottish Government as an important plank of how Scotland can deliver on its wellbeing economy aspirations. Finance and Corporate Resources will lead on the implementation of our Community Wealth Building strategy, working with Elected Members, partners and stakeholders to realise the ambitions of the strategy through 2022 and beyond.

Section Three – Resource Outcomes

3.1. Resource Outcomes

Finance and Corporate Resources has established the following Resource outcomes to support the delivery of Connect Outcomes in 2022-23.

Connect Outcomes	Resource Outcomes
Communities and Environment	• Individuals and communities in South Lanarkshire are engaged and able to participate in decision-making processes
Education and Learning	• No Resource Objectives for this Outcome
Health and Wellbeing	• No Resource Objectives for this Outcome
Children and Young People	• No Resource Objectives for this Outcome
Housing and Land	• No Resource Objectives for this Outcome
Our Economy	• A people-centred approach to recovery is implemented to help individuals, communities, businesses and the social and third sector thrive

3.2. Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value

In working towards the six Outcomes, the council aims to continually improve and ensure effective and efficient use of resources, and our business will be conducted with integrity, transparency and will operate to the highest standards.

Finance and Corporate Resources has established the following Resource outcomes to support Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value.

Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value	• The council demonstrates high standards of governance and sound financial stewardship • Customers experience high quality and improving council services • The workforce has the skills, flexibility and capacity to deliver the council's priorities • Digital and ICT services meet the needs of the council and its customers

Section Four – Measures and actions

4.0. Performance measures and action plan

This section of the Resource Plan is divided into two parts: part (a) sets out our main performance measures against our outcomes; and part (b) describes the key actions we will take in the coming year to respond to the challenges ahead and improve services and outcomes.

4.a. How we will measure our performance

The impact of Covid19 continues to have a significant effect on performance for some services. The table below shows our key performance measures, with data for the last 2 years and the target for 2022-23. To provide additional context for the targets, an indication of pre-Covid performance is provided within the notes column where possible. The impact of the pandemic may mean that some targets are below the level of performance seen pre-Covid.

Resource Outcome: A people-centred approach to recovery is implemented to help individuals, communities, businesses and the social and third sector thrive.						
Measure	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23 Target**	**Links**	**Service**	**Notes**
1. Number of unemployed people supported via council-operated employability programmes (local target)	1,348 people	1,934 people	1,200 people	C06.01	Personnel	Given the current labour market the pool of unemployed people is lower than it has been in the past, and those who are eligible have multiple barriers and require more intensive, longer-term support. In essence we are working longer with a smaller number of individuals
2. Number of unemployed people gaining sustainable employment (local target)	410 people	1,146 people	600 people	C06.13	Personnel	
3. Number of unemployed people accessing further education or training (local target)	211 people	219 people	200 people	C06.02	Personnel	
Resource Outcome: The council demonstrates high standards of governance and sound financial stewardship						
Measure	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23 Target**	**Links**	**Service**	**Notes**
4. Pay invoices within the target of 28 days (local target)	90.9%	93.4%	90.0%	07.02 LGBF	Finance (Trans)	
5. Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year - in year (incl water) (local target)	94.9%	95.5%	95.5%	07.02	Finance (Trans)	
6. % of Non-Domestic rates	98.6%	97.5%	97.5%	07.02	Finance	

income achieved (local target)					(Trans)	
7. Sundry Income collection (local target)	97.8%	98.1%	97.0%	07.02	Finance (Trans)	
8. Liquor licensing processing target - 97% within service targets (local target)	100%	92%	97%	07.01	Admin and Legal	This year's targets are realistic, based on the service's experience, anticipated workload and desire to drive continuous improvements
9. Registration processing target - 97% within service targets (local target)	100%	93%	97%	07.01	Admin and Legal	
10. Citizenship processing target - 97% within service targets (local target)	100%	100%	97%	07.01	Admin and Legal	
11. Complaints processing target - 97% within service targets (local target)	100%	100%	97%	07.01	Admin and Legal	
Resource Outcome: Customers experience high quality and improving council services						
Measure	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23 Target**	**Links**	**Service**	**Notes**
12. Customer Service Centre - % of calls answered (local target)	92%	93%	90%	07.01	Finance (Trans)	
13. Customer Service Centre – average queue time (local target)	93 seconds	158 seconds	120 seconds	07.01	Finance (Trans)	
14. Benefits administration – average processing times for new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction claims (local target)	13 days	13 days	14 days	07.01	Finance (Trans)	
15. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction – accuracy of processing (local target)	92.6%	94.4%	93.5%	07.01 LGBF	Finance (Trans)	
16. Scottish Welfare Fund – average processing times for Crisis Grants (National target)	2 days	2 days	2 days	07.01	Finance (Trans)	
17. Scottish Welfare Fund – average processing times for Community Care grants (National target)	12 days	16 days	15 days	07.01	Finance (Trans)	

4.b. What actions we will take

Resource Outcome: Individuals and communities in South Lanarkshire are engaged and able to participate in decision-making processes			
Action	**Steps we will take to deliver our actions**	**Links**	**Service**
1. Increase routes for communities to participate in decision making and priority setting	Monitor and develop the bespoke locality planning partnership in each of the four localities	C01.01	Community Engagement Team
	Develop a comprehensive set of neighbourhood planning structures across all identified priority communities in South Lanarkshire	C01.01	Community Engagement Team
	Support communities and Resources in the roll out of a 1% mainstream participatory budgeting process	C01.01	Community Engagement Team
Resource Outcome: A people-centred approach to recovery is implemented to help individuals, communities, businesses and the social and third sector thrive.			
Action	**Steps we will take to deliver our actions**	**Links**	**Service**
2. Progress the Community Wealth Building (CWB) strategy for South Lanarkshire	Implement a programme of development sessions for the CWB Commission to widen the scope of the strategy by March 2023.	06.05	Comms and Strategy
	Establish a monitoring and reporting framework for the CWB action plan by the end of April 2022.		
3. Deliver effective Employability Services to support Economic Recovery	Deliver the Young Persons Guarantee Programme. A guarantee to young people aged 16-24 to support and progress them into fair work opportunities, training or further education and volunteering.	C06.10	Personnel
	Kickstart Programme – support DWP flag ship programme as the largest employer in the area providing fair work opportunities for 50 young people to work within the council in various occupations.	C06.10	
	Support Modern Apprentices to enter fair work opportunities within the council ranging from care, admin and craft occupations.	C06.10	
	Deliver targeted recruitment programmes to support the local jobs market addressing skills shortages such as HGV Drivers, Personal Carers, Customer Service etc.	C06.10	
	Deliver targeted employer recruitment incentives to support those aged 25 plus enter and sustain fair work opportunities and support parents and families with complex barriers to employment.	C06.10	
Resource Outcome: The council demonstrates high standards of governance and sound financial stewardship			
Action	**Steps we will take to deliver our actions**	**Links**	**Service**
4. Lead financial planning and reporting for the council	Financial Strategy to be agreed by June 2022	07.02	Finance (Strategy)
	Budget proposals to be considered by members by December 2022	07.02	Finance (Strategy)

	Budget agreed by March 2023	07.02	Finance (Strategy)
	Capital programme for 2023-24 to be agreed by March 2023	07.02	Finance (Strategy)
5. Compliance with internal audit standards	Undertake an external assessment of Internal Audit to provide assurance that the function continues to operate in compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.	07.02	Internal Audit
Resource Outcome: Customers experience high quality and improving council services			
Action	**Steps we will take to deliver our actions**	**Links**	**Service**
6. Monitor the progress of transformation projects through reporting framework to CMT	Evidence of reporting to CMT of progress of all transformational projects	07.01	Personnel
Resource Outcome: Customers experience high quality and improving council services			
Action	**Steps we will take to deliver our actions**	**Links**	**Service**
7. Deliver more convenient and accessible forms of customer contact	Increase the availability and use of online forms and streamline customer contact processes	07.01	Finance (Trans)
	New digital contact methods will be explored to improve contact channels	07.01	Finance (Trans)
	Relaunch myaccount to promote customer self-service options for a range of Council Tax activity such as viewing account balance, making payments, and applying for discounts and exemptions	07.01	Finance (Trans)
8. Lead on the renewal of strategic planning and work to further align the Council Plan with the Community Plan	Finalise the new Community Partnership Plan (CPP) by June 2022	07.01	Comms and Strategy
	Promote the new CPP plan across South Lanarkshire throughout 2022		
	Develop a comprehensive monitoring process for CPP actions		
	Submit new Council Plan for approval by July 2022.		
Resource Outcome: Digital and ICT services meet the needs of the council and its customers			
Action	**Steps we will take to deliver our actions**	**Links**	**Service**
9. Take forward IT strategic developments	Migrate to new Integrated Housing and Property Management system by November 2022	07.04	IT
	Implement approved actions from Year 3 of the SLC Digital Inclusion Strategy to support most deprived citizens to access benefits of being online	07.04	IT
	Complete procurement exercise to identify partner to meet SLC Digital Connectivity requirements	C07.04	IT
	Develop and deliver training plan to upskill IT staff in new technologies	07.04	IT

	Complete first phase of migration to Oracle Cloud Fusion system by February 2023	C07.04	IT
Resource Outcome: The workforce has the skills, flexibility and capacity to deliver the council's Priorities			
Action	**Steps we will take to deliver our actions**	**Links**	**Service**
10. Adjust the Council Workforce Plan to match the changed environment	Resource Workforce Plans updated taking account recovery from COVID and set out requirements moving forward. These will be used to configure the Council Workforce Plan and will reported to Committees by September 2022	C07.03	Personnel

Section Five – Resourcing the Plan

5.0. Introduction

In this section we consider the resources needed to implement our plan, including funding and staffing.

5.1. Revenue Budget 2022-23

The Resource has a Net Revenue Budget of £41.029 million for 2022-23. The table below allocates this budget across the services:

NET Budget by Service	**2022-23**	
Detail	**£ million**	**%**
Finance Services (Transactions)	18.747	45.7
Finance Services (Strategy)	2.023	4.9
Information Technology Services	5.095	12.4
Administration and Legal Services	4.113	10.0
Communications and Strategy (inc Community and Engagement and Central Research)	3.473	8.5
Personnel Services	7.223	17.6
Audit and Compliance	0.355	0.9
Total	**41.029**	**100**

5.2. Capital Budget 2022-23

The following capital budget of £2.444 million is allocated to the Resource for 2022-23:

Capital Programme 2022-23	
Project	**£ million**
IT Infrastructure – Business As Usual	0.450
Digital Transformation Review Fund	0.200
Oracle Fusion	1.794
Total	2.444

5.3. Resource Employees

Finance and Corporate Resources has 938 employees as at March 2022. We support these employees to deliver their duties through a range of policies including personal appraisal and a robust training framework.

Service	Number of employees
Finance Services (Transactions)	381
Finance Services (Strategy)	60
Information Technology Services	114
Administration and Legal Services	100
Communications and Strategy	42
Personnel Services	227
Other (Audit and Compliance)	14
Total	**938**