

# Report

Report to:	<b>Finance and Corporate Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>1 September 2021</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Finance and Corporate Resource Plan - Quarter 4 Progress Report 2020/2021</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide the Resource Plan Quarter 4 Progress Report 2020/2021, for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

## 2. Recommendations

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

- (1) that the Finance and Corporate Resource Plan Quarter 4 Progress Report 2020/2021, summarised at paragraph 4.2. of this report and detailed at Appendix 1, be noted;
- (2) that the key achievements made by the Resource to date, detailed in paragraph 4.3. of this report, be noted; and
- (3) that the additional scrutiny of changes in blue/red/amber/green (BRAG) status between Quarter 2 and Quarter 4 as summarised at paragraph 4.5 and detailed at Appendix 2 of this report, be noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. The Finance and Corporate Resource Plan 2020/2021 was approved by 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. It provides details of the context within which the Resource operates and establishes actions and measures for the year ahead based on the objectives set out in the Council Plan Connect 2017 to 2022.
- 3.3. As Elected Members are aware, 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.

## 4. Quarter 4 Progress Report 2020/2021

- 4.1. Progress against all 2020/2021 Resource Plan measures is contained in the Quarter 4 Progress Report, attached as Appendix 1. This report has been produced from the Council's performance management reporting system IMPROVe, and uses a traffic light 'BRAG' (blue/red/amber/green) 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

- 4.2. Measures which are classified as 'red' are considered in detail at section 4.4. of this report. To ensure adequate scrutiny of performance across all Resources, the Council's Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum may consider 'red' and '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 Covid19:

Status	Measures			
	Statistical	Project	Total	%
Blue	N/A	10	10	21%
Green	12	9	21	45%
Amber	2	4	6	13%
Red	0	0	0	0%
Report later/Contextual	8	2	10	21%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Data correct as at 24 May 2021)

- 4.3. Key achievements for 2020/2021 are noted below:-

- 4.3.1.

Connect Priority	Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and tackle disadvantage
Resource Objective	Achievement
Deliver effective Employability Services to support Economic Recovery	<p>Implemented a pan-Lanarkshire local employability partnership to support the Lanarkshire Labour Market, particularly in light of the impact of Covid19. Designed to support those at risk of losing their job and those made redundant seeking new opportunities.</p> <p>The Council's Modern Apprentice programme has new intakes annually. Programmes last between 2 to 4 years, across a variety of occupational groups – construction, roads, business administration, social care, childcare, IT and Housing. During 2020/2021 the Council recruited 61 new apprentices and gave 6 members of staff the opportunity to upskill in Digital Skills qualifications. Apprentices qualify once all requirements of their qualification are complete – during 2020/2021, 75 apprentices achieved their qualification and were employed by the Council. All apprentices are paid the council Living Wage and recruitment of apprentices is used to support workforce planning.</p>

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

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

<b>Connect Priority</b>	<b>Ensure communities are safe, strong and sustainable</b>
<b>Resource Objective</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
Facilitate communication and consultation on the council, its policies and its services	Developed a new Covid19 Health and Safety Guidance that permits necessary procedures to be developed across all Resources/Services 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.
Improve customer experience of council services	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 37,500 text messages issued to remind/inform parents of the Free School Meals financial supports available. 3,500 SMS issued to Taxi/Private Hire drivers to advise of financial support available and application process, which resulted in 1,447 support grant applications for drivers with 1,360 payments made totalling £2,040,000. 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.

- 4.3.2. 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.

<b>Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value</b>	
<b>Resource Objective</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
Provide sound financial stewardship and effective financial strategies	The financial accounts 2020 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 2021.

<b>Delivering the Plan and achieving Best Value</b>	
<b>Resource Objective</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
	Throughout this financial year, support and advice has been provided by finance teams managing the impact and recovery from the Covid19 pandemic.
	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
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 is 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.
	During the year demand for e-learning soared with employees completing a total of 253,909 e-learning modules. This compares to 83,418 in the previous year.
	Procurement Service has completed the Scottish National Procurement Competency Framework for all officers and assistants and embedded training requirements into appraisals.

#### 4.4. Areas for improvement

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

#### 4.5. Scrutiny of change in BRAG status

A further analysis introduced to aid scrutiny of performance, is to highlight and explain all measures that have changed BRAG status from Quarter 2 to Quarter 4. On analysis of the measures falling into this category, many of the narrative updates input into the system clearly explained the reason for the change in status – the results of many of the measures were affected by the Covid19 pandemic. A summary of the measures falling into this category of further scrutiny is included at Appendix 2. It should be noted that the measures with a 'report later' status (4 measures – 19%) will be followed up and reported to Committee in the 2021/2022 Quarter 2 progress report.

### 5. Employee Implications

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

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. 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.

## **7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

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

## **8. Other Implications**

- 8.1. 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.
- 8.2. 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.

## **9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 9.1. 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)**

22 July 2021

### **Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives**

- ♦ The Resource Plan has been structured upon the Vision, Values, Ambitions and Objectives in the Council Plan Connect 2017/2022

### **Previous References**

- ♦ Finance and Corporate Resources Committee - 7 August 2020 – Quarter 4 progress report 2019/2020
- ♦ Finance and Corporate Resources Committee – 20 January 2020 – Quarter 2 progress report 2020/2021

### **List of Background Papers**

- ♦ Council Plan Connect 2017 to 2022
- ♦ Finance and Corporate Resource Plan 2020/2021

### **Contact for Further Information**

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

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