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## ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



To: Councillor Laing, Convener; Councillor John, Vice Convener; and Councillors Allard, Copland, Duncan, Lumsden, Alex Nicoll, Wheeler and Yuill.

Town House,  
ABERDEEN, 9 February 2021

## **STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE**

The undernoted item is circulated in connection with the meeting of the **STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE** to be held remotely on **THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021 at 2.00 pm.**

FRASER BELL  
CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

## **BUSINESS**

10.3 Letter to COSLA - Council Delivery Plan (Pages 3 - 8)

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Stephanie Dunsmuir, [sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk) or 01224 522503

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## STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE 12 NOVEMBER 2020

### COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN - ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 - CUS/20/193

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Customer Services presenting the Council Delivery Plan 2019-20 Annual Report which built on the summary of progress captured in the Council Delivery Plan 2020/21, which had been presented to Council on 3 March 2020. The report summarised the deliverables for 2019-20, and outlined outcomes derived from the Council's Commissioning approach and Intentions, against which the Plan was a key element, representing a statement on how the Council has delivered on its contribution to each.

#### **The report recommended:-**

that the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the information contained in the annual report at Appendix A.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note the report and welcome the significant achievements and progress highlighted throughout the annual review of the Council Delivery Plan 2019/20;
- (ii) to note that the annual review described the Council's major contribution, through the approved commissioning approach, to the delivery of the City's Local Outcome Improvement Plan; and
- (iii) to agree that the Co-Leaders of the Council write to COSLA requesting an update on progress they had made with the Scottish Government regarding the reform of local government finance including business rates and the replacement of Council Tax and for any reply to be discussed at the next meeting of the Strategic Commissioning Committee.

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25 November 2020

Sally Loudon  
Chief Executive  
COSLA  
Verity House  
19 Haymarket Yards  
Edinburgh  
EH12 5BH

**By Email:** [Sally@cosla.gov.uk](mailto:Sally@cosla.gov.uk)

Dear Ms Loudon

At the meeting of Aberdeen City Council's Strategic Commissioning Committee on 12 November, the Committee considered the Council Delivery Plan 2019/20 Annual Report which built on the summary of progress captured in the Council Delivery Plan 2020/21, which had previously been presented to full Council on 3 March 2020.

The Committee noted the report and welcomed the significant achievements and progress highlighted throughout the annual report, however agreed that the Co-Leaders of the Council write to COSLA requesting an update on progress made with the Scottish Government regarding the reform of local government finance, including business rates and the replacement of Council Tax, and further agreed that any reply should be discussed at the next meeting of the Strategic Commissioning Committee to be held on 11 February 2021.

Future delivery against the Plan has the potential to be affected by any financial shortfall, and clearly the impact of COVID-19 has both immediate and long-term implications for Local Government's ability to continue to deliver essential services.

We would, therefore, be grateful if you could provide us with an update on any discussions to enable further consideration of the matter at the next meeting of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Jenny Laing  
Co-Leader, Aberdeen City Council

Councillor Douglas Lumsden  
Co-Leader, Aberdeen City Council

Aberdeen City Council  
Town House  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1FY

**Co-Leaders** Councillor Douglas Lumsden / Councillor Jenny Laing  
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**From the Chief Executive, Sally Loudon**



2 December 2020

Councillor Douglas Lumsden & Councillor Jenny Laing  
Co-Leaders  
Aberdeen City Council  
Town House  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1FY

By email: [CouncilLeader@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:CouncilLeader@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

— Dear Cllr Lumsden and Cllr Laing,

Thank you for your letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> November. It is good to hear that your Annual Report has been well received by your Committee and I am very happy to respond to the Committee's request for an update on progress on reform of Local Government Finance from a COSLA perspective.

As you recognise in your letter, there are significant challenges posed to every Council from the impact of COVID-19, both immediate and for Local Government's ability to deliver essential services over the longer term. You will be aware from discussions at Leaders, that the issue of taking forward reform of Local Government Finance, at a time when we are grappling with the unprecedented pressures caused by the pandemic, has been uppermost in their minds. At their meeting in October, Leaders considered what was practical to progress this year in terms of work on a fiscal framework, given these exceptional circumstances.

Leaders agreed that the key priority for the short term is to secure the best outcome for the 2021/22 Local Government Settlement and that once a Settlement has been agreed, work with the Scottish Government on a stable and sustainable funding framework must recommence as soon as possible.

Leaders were also clear that a timeframe was needed for the areas you referred to in your letter - specifically work on the reform of business rates and on Council Tax so that there is a clear intent for work to proceed, agreed with Scottish Government.

Once the parliamentary process is complete for the Scottish Budget, Leaders also agreed that work on areas such as discretionary taxes as a means of revenue raising and supporting local economic investment must recommence, as well as developing workable options which encourage innovative investment in economic recovery.

Officers in COSLA's Local Government Finance Team will take this work forward as their key priority and will work closely with officers from Councils and the Scottish Government to agree a timetable for this package of work.

I trust that this reassures your Committee that COSLA is very much focussed on Local Government Finance reform - responding to the impact of the pandemic does not prevent or negate this critical work but has simply delayed aspects of it.

Your Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sally Loudon'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Sally Loudon  
**Chief Executive COSLA**