

Public Document Pack



To: All Members of the Council

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 9 December 2014

COUNCIL MEETING

The Members of the **COUNCIL** are requested to meet in Council Chamber - Town House on **WEDNESDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2014 at 10.30am.**

JANE G. MACEACHRAN
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

- 1 Admission of Burgesses
- 2 Members are requested to agree that any exempt business on this agenda be considered with the press and public excluded
- 3 Requests for Deputations

MINUTES OF COUNCIL

- 4(a) Minute of Meeting of Council of 8 October 2014 - for approval (circulated separately)
- 4(b) Minute of Meeting of Urgent Business Committee of 27 November 2014 - for approval (Pages 1 - 2)

BUSINESS STATEMENT, MOTIONS LIST AND OTHER MINUTES

- 5(a) Business Statement (Pages 3 - 14)

5(b) Motions List (Pages 15 - 16)

5(c) Minutes of Meetings of Appointment Panel of 10 and 30 October and 4, 7, 10 and 11 November 2014 - for approval (Pages 17 - 28)

REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES IN TERMS OF STANDING ORDER 36(3)

6(a) Planning Development Management Committee of 6 November 2014 - Provost Skene's House (Pages 29 - 60)

GENERAL BUSINESS

7(a) Council Diary and Committee Membership (Pages 61 - 68)

7(b) Fairer Aberdeen Fund Annual Report 2013-14 and 6 Month Progress Report (Pages 69 - 104)

7(c) Community Planning Aberdeen - Update (Pages 105 - 108)

7(d) Camping in Designated Places Update (Pages 109 - 112)

7(e) Legal Services Restructure Update (Pages 113 - 160)

7(f) Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2013/2014 (Pages 161 - 210)

7(g) Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Housing Capital Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20 - referred simpliciter by Finance, Policy and Resources Committee of 4 December 2014 (Pages 211 - 244)

7(h) Treasury Management - Mid Year Review - referred by Finance, Policy and Resources Committee of 4 December 2014 (Pages 245 - 250)

7(i) Business Rates Appeals Sub-Committee - referred by Finance, Policy and Resources Committee of 4 December 2014 (Pages 251 - 260)

7(j) Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre (Pages 261 - 262)

7(k) Aberdeen Sports Village - Pitches Phase (to follow)

7(l) Proposed Changes to Head of Service Roles within Corporate Governance and Recruitment and Selection Process to Vacant Head of Service Role (to follow)

QUESTIONS

8(a) Councillors Samarai and Dickson (Pages 263 - 264)

Councillor Samarai -

- (1) To ask the Chief Executive what the current deficit is for Bon Accord Care?
- (2) To ask the Chief Executive what the projected year end deficit is for Bon Accord Care?
- (3) To ask the Chief Executive why care at Bon Accord Care has moved from A grade at the time of transfer to C grade?
- (4) To ask the Chief Executive if any of the current discussions with Bon Accord Care include changes to staff terms and conditions?

Councillor Dickson -

- (5) To ask the Chief Executive if the status quo remains what is the projected financial deficit for Bon Accord Care in 2015/16?

MOTIONS

9(a) Lord Provost George Adam

“That Aberdeen City Council agrees to take forward approaches from associates of the local fishing industry to create an appropriate and lasting memorial to the men and women who lived, worked and died in it, in peace time and war, and to commemorate the major contribution which fishing has made to the city’s life and heritage. Officers are instructed to report on the establishment of a small working group, the scope of a commission and confirmation of a budget with a view to obtaining additional contributions to build on external funds already secured.”

9(b) Councillor Corall

“That this Council -

1. Acknowledges that the costs of the proposed redevelopment of the Art Gallery and its associated Museums Collection Centre are exceeding considerably their original estimates;
2. Instructs officers to immediately halt the tendering exercise for the proposed renovation in light of its affordability and major opposition from the citizens of Aberdeen;
3. Agrees that steps are taken to ensure the present Art Gallery building is wind and watertight;
4. Instructs that an urgent inquiry be undertaken to ascertain why the new build at Granitehill will miss its completion date of December 2014;
5. Instructs that elected members are made aware of the additional costs of alternative storage and the reasons why; and
6. Agrees that alternative disabled access be designed and implemented as a matter of urgency.”

9(c) Councillor Reynolds

“That this Council calls upon the Scottish Government to review and change its policy on overseas travel for MSPs, civil servants and all employees of organisations funded from the public purse, in line with that applicable to local authorities, whereby international flights are by economy tickets only and only in the most exceptional of circumstances and by ministerial permission could premium economy or business class be authorised.”

BUSINESS THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO CONSIDER IN PRIVATE

10(a) A96 Park and Choose Car Park/Dyce Drive Link Road - Tender Report (Pages 265 - 268)

10(b) Waste Management Services Contract Variation - referred by Zero Waste Management Sub Committee of 2 December 2014 (Pages 269 - 300)

Website Address: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

To access the Information Bulletins for Council please use the following link:

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13013&path=13004>

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Martyn Orchard, tel. (52)3097 or email morchard@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Agenda Item 4(b)

URGENT BUSINESS COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 27 November 2014 - Minute of Meeting of the URGENT BUSINESS COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Laing, Convener; and Councillors Allan (substituting for Councillor Boulton), Cameron, Cooney, Corall (substituting for Councillor Jackie Dunbar), Dickson, Greig (substituting for Councillor Yuill), McCaig, Malik (substituting for Councillor Crockett), Noble, Taylor, Thomson and Young.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found at:-

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=334&MId=3576&Ver=4>

DETERMINATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1. In terms of Standing Order 28(6)(vi), and in accordance with Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Committee was informed that it had to determine (1) that the item on the agenda was of an urgent nature; and (2) that the Committee required to consider the item and take a decision thereon.

The Committee resolved:-

to agree that the item was of an urgent nature and required to be considered this day.

REQUEST FOR DEPUTATION

2. The Committee had before it a request for deputation from Mr William Lonsdale of Garthdee Community Council which had been submitted in terms of Standing Order 10(1).

The Committee resolved:-

to hear the deputation.

GARTHDEE - PROPOSED CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE - EXTENSION - CHI/14/018

3. (A) In terms of Standing Order 10(2), the Committee received a deputation from Mr William Lonsdale of Garthdee Community Council.

Mr Lonsdale provided a historical summary of the decisions the Council had made in respect of the Robert Gordon University campus in planning terms, and the resultant Garthdee Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), through its various committees. He emphasised that the residents of Garthdee and Kaimhill had been suffering as a result of parking issues for the past two and a half years, and that there had been an eleven month delay to the proposed extension of the CPZ as a result of the Council's roads officials not taking the matter forward timeously. He also emphasised that the Robert Gordon University was liable for the cost of the extension of the CPZ, and therefore residential permits should be provided free of charge.

Mr Lonsdale called on the Committee to instruct the appropriate officers immediately to prepare the necessary draft order, setting out all terms of the amendment proposed to the Garthdee CPZ, to progress with the public advertisement and statutory consultation, including a public meeting, and to report the results of the statutory consultation to a future meeting of the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee with a view to implementing the amendment, if approved, before 21 November 2015.

The Committee thanked Mr Lonsdale for his contribution.

(B) The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure which outlined the findings of the on-street parking surveys carried out on the streets proposed for inclusion within the extension to the existing Garthdee CPZ following the opening of the extension to the Robert Gordon University campus.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) note the results of the on-street parking surveys; and
- (b) instruct the appropriate officers to commence the necessary legal procedures of preliminary statutory consultation for the traffic regulation orders required. If no significant objections are received, then to progress with the public advertisement and report the results to a future meeting of the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee.

Councillor Laing moved, seconded by Councillor Malik:-

That the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Greig moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor McCaig:-

That the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report and agree that a public meeting be held as part of the process.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (7) - Convener; and Councillors Allan, Cooney, Malik, Taylor, Thomson and Young; For the amendment (6) - Councillors Cameron, Corall, Dickson, Greig, McCaig and Noble.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

- **JENNIFER LAING, Convener.**

**COUNCIL
BUSINESS STATEMENT
17 DECEMBER 2014**

Please note that this statement contains a note of every report which has been instructed for submission to Council. All other actions which have been instructed by the Council are not included, as they are deemed to be operational matters after the point of decision.

Reports which are overdue are shaded

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
1.	Council 06.02.14 Article 2	<p><u>Aberdeen Sports Village - Sports Pitch and Ancillary Services</u></p> <p>The Council instructed the Director of Education, Culture and Sport to report back to Council with a proposal to further develop the sports pitch and ancillary services which would provide the North East with a true Olympic style village.</p>	<p>The Pitches Phase of the Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV) development involves a proposal to build an artificial pitch and possibly upgrade an existing pitch at the far end of the site on Golf Road, along with the development of associated ancillary facilities. This is Council owned land, but is not currently part of the ASV lease.</p> <p>ASV are developing business cases for four possible options for this development. To ensure that the business case development and appraisal process is as robust as possible, the Council has provided a temporary Licence to Occupy to enable ASV and their Contractors onto this land to carry out site investigation works. These site investigation works will be paid for by ASV and the Council has provided a letter of comfort confirming that it will reimburse ASV for these costs (up to a maximum value of £10,000) if</p>	Director of Education and Children's Services	25.06.14

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
			<p>the overall pitch development is not approved by the Council to proceed.</p> <p>ASV was awarded £250,000 in June 2014, following a successful Cashback application. This funding will go towards the development of an artificial rugby pitch on the site.</p> <p>It is hoped that the business case development process will be at a stage where it can be brought for consideration by the Council in December 2014.</p> <p>A report is listed to follow on the agenda.</p>		
2.	Council 05.03.14 Article 21	<p><u>Broad Street Civic Square Assessment</u></p> <p>The Council, amongst other things, resolved (1) to agree that option C - full pedestrianisation of Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street - best meets the objectives of the project and acknowledge that this option is reliant on additional traffic management measures; (2) to instruct officers to report back on the details of the draft Traffic Regulation Order within six months; and (3) to instruct officers to also report back within six months on the outcomes of the future year traffic and air quality model testing for 2023; and (4) to instruct officers to investigate the feasibility of reopening the</p>	<p>At its last meeting the Council approved the planning application for Marischal Square and noted that the proposal to pedestrianise Broad Street was not being considered as part of the determination of the application. Officers are continuing to investigate options, including appropriate traffic modelling, for creating a more user-friendly pedestrian environment to form a civic space on Broad Street in advance of the pedestrianisation of Union Street. That work is being carried out in tandem with the development of the city centre masterplan and development framework.</p>	Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure	20.08.14

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
		<p>Castlegate to traffic and opening Queen Street at the junction of West North Street and include their findings in the above report, and enter into discussions with Muse Developments with regard to maximising views of Provost Skene's House from Broad Street.</p>			
3.	<p>Council 14.05.14 Article 24</p>	<p><u>Big Noise Centre</u></p> <p>The Council, amongst other things, instructed the Chief Executive to liaise with all Directorates of the Council to consider how the introduction of a Big Noise Centre in the city, its principles and experience could be integrated into all aspects of the Council's work and that a report on this be submitted to Council.</p>	<p>The Chief Executive and Directors are addressing this matter as part of their discussions on the development of the revised organisational structure.</p> <p>The Partnership Agreement has been signed between the City Council and Sistema Scotland; work is ongoing to have Big Noise Torry up and running next year.</p> <p>Sistema Scotland has advertised for a Team Leader and an Operations Manager; interviews are scheduled in early September and will take place in conjunction with community members, and the Head Teachers of the local schools, the latter who will be on the interview panel. These are crucial appointments and the interview process will be thorough. Induction for the successful candidates is planned for October/November/December.</p> <p>Adverts for musicians will be placed later in the calendar year and Sistema</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>20.08.14</p>

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
			<p>Scotland will open recruitment for volunteers in March, with a view to appointments being confirmed in May, with induction immediately following.</p> <p>A report will be submitted for the Information Bulletin.</p>		
4.	<p>Council 21.08.13 Article 17</p>	<p><u>Street Begging</u></p> <p>The Council, amongst other things, instructed officers to commence without delay consultation with the Scottish Government on a potential byelaw to prohibit street begging, and report back to every Council meeting on the progress or otherwise of the consultation with the Scottish Government.</p>	<p>The Council, at its meeting of 25 June 2014, resolved:-</p> <p>(i) to note the decision of the SNP Scottish Government to reject the request for the Prohibition of Begging in Designated Areas Byelaws 2014 as set out in the letter dated 20 June 2014;</p> <p>(ii) in light of the response from the Scottish Government declining to support a proposed byelaw, to instruct officers to develop alternative sustainable solutions to the use of the proposed byelaw working in partnership with Police Scotland and other appropriate stakeholders; and</p> <p>(iii) to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the appropriate Scottish Minister seeking financial and non-financial support to develop sustainable solutions to tackle street begging.</p> <p>Officers are now liaising with partners to explore options for alternative solutions.</p>	<p>Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure</p> <p>Director of Corporate Governance</p>	08.10.14

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
			<p>Once preferred options have been identified, the support of the Scottish Government will be sought.</p> <p>The street begging partnership group met on 3 September 2014. Partners are already using a broad range of approaches to reduce street begging ranging from supportive to enforcement. The group are currently exploring need to deliver additional out-reach support services and proposals may be brought forward for consideration depending on the outcome from the survey of unmet needs.</p> <p>Strategies to reduce street-begging are developed and delivered through the multiagency street-begging forum. One meeting has been held since refusal of the bye-law and a further meeting was planned but due to lack of response from partners this meeting has been delayed. A further street-begging survey has been drafted and should be completed during December 2014. It is intended that the information collected will help inform any changes to current strategies and resources required. No additional actions requiring additional resources have been identified since refusal of the bye-law.</p>		

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
5.	Council 14.05.14 Article 32	<u>Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre (AECC) Development</u> The Council requested officers to finalise the financial options to deliver the development at minimum cost to the Council and that such options be reported to Council at its meeting in October 2014.	A report is on the agenda.	Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure	08.10.14
6.	Council 20.08.14 Article 6	<u>Corporate Parenting Champions Board and Sistema Partnership Board</u> The Council agreed to receive reports on the remit and membership of the Corporate Parenting Champions Board and the Sistema Partnership Board at its meeting on 8 October 2014.	The Corporate Parenting Champions Board met in September 2014 and requested officers to report back on its remit, this will therefore be considered by the Council once the Board has considered the matter further.	Director of Education and Children's Services	08.10.14
7.	Council 21.08.13 Article 9	<u>Establishment of Short-term Halting Sites for Gypsies/Travellers and Proposed Byelaw Regarding Camping in Designated Areas</u> The Council instructed officers to commence without delay consultation with the Scottish Government on a potential byelaw to prohibit camping on sensitive areas such as public places. In addition, the Council (a) instructed officers to prepare a detailed design with cost estimates for construction and ongoing costs for a short-term halting site at Howes	The Asset Management team are continuing to identify alternative and additional sites both in the public and private sector. The Council, at its meeting on 14 May 2014, agreed to move forward with the byelaw as appended to the report. A report is on the agenda.	Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Director of Corporate Governance	Every Council meeting

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
		<p>Road; (b) instructed officers to prepare a planning application including details of costings (capital and revenue) for establishing the site; (c) approved the process for consultation as set out in the report acknowledging that strong views and opinions were likely to be part of the process; and (d) instructed officers to continue to conduct property searches with a view to establishing a further site or a more suitable site within the city.</p> <p>The Council instructed officers to report back to every Council meeting on the progress or otherwise on the consultation with the Scottish Government on the potential byelaw and on the suitability or otherwise of other potential sites.</p>			
8.	Council 31.10.13 Article 14	<p><u>City Centre Regeneration Board</u></p> <p>The Council approved the creation of a City Centre Regeneration Board and instructed the Board to report back to Council at its meeting on 25 June 2014 with recommended project(s) to regenerate the city centre, and to provide updates on progress to Council each cycle.</p>	<p>The Council, at its meeting of 25 June 2014, resolved:-</p> <p>(i) to note the work of the City Centre Regeneration Board;</p> <p>(ii) to approve the proposed nine month programme for the preparation of the City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme; and</p> <p>(iii) to approve the outcome of the evaluation process and the appointment of Tenderer B, in line with the recommendation of the City Centre Regeneration Board.</p>	Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure	Every Council meeting

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
			Minutes of meetings of the City Centre Regeneration Board will be on the agenda when available.		
9.	Council 31.10.13 Article 17	<u>Community Planning Aberdeen - Development Plan</u> The Council agreed to receive six monthly updates on progress with the implementation of the Development Plan.	The Council received the last six month progress report at its meeting on 14 May 2014. A report is on the agenda.	Director of Corporate Governance	17.12.14
10.	Council 25.06.14 Article 14	<u>Legal Services Restructure</u> The Council noted with disappointment that the new structure had only been operational for a few months; and in light of the delay in implementing the new structure and the insufficiency of evidence from services that they are satisfied with the new structure and the quality of service being provided, therefore instructed the Director of Corporate Governance to report back to the Council at its meeting in December 2014, providing evidence of levels of customer satisfaction and the financial outturn in terms of expenditure on external legal resources.	A report is on the agenda.	Director of Corporate Governance	17.12.14

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
11.	Finance and Resources 12.11.09 Article 22	<p><u>Community Planning Partnership - Fairer Aberdeen Fund</u></p> <p>The Finance and Resources Committee instructed the Director of Corporate Governance to provide twice yearly updates in February and October to the Aberdeen City Alliance (now Community Planning Aberdeen) and the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee on the outcomes achieved through the investment of the Fairer Scotland Fund (now Fairer Aberdeen Fund).</p>	<p>This item now falls under the remit of the Council following the decision to disband the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee.</p> <p>The Council received the last six month progress report at its meeting on 14 May 2014.</p> <p>A report is on the agenda.</p>	Director of Corporate Governance	17.12.14
12.	Council 25.06.14 Article 17	<p><u>Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in the Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership Area</u></p> <p>The Council instructed the Chief Executive to submit a report to Council setting out progress and recommendations from the scrutiny process.</p>		Director of Education and Children's Services Transitional Director - Social Care and Wellbeing	04.03.15
13.	Council 14.05.14 Article 30	<p><u>Corporate Parenting</u></p> <p>The Council instructed officers to report back on the implementation and review of the Corporate Parenting Policy in May 2015.</p>		Director of Education and Children's Services	13.05.15

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
14.	Council 08.10.14 Article 16	<u>Bon Accord Care Annual Report</u> The Council noted the Bon Accord Care Annual Report for 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014, and agreed to receive each annual report from Bon Accord Care Ltd.		Transitional Director - Social Care and Wellbeing	October 2015
15.	Council 08.10.14 Article 13	<u>Standing Orders on Contracts and Procurement</u> The Council noted that legislation which would require to be reflected in revisions to the Standing Orders on Contracts and Procurement was expected during 2015 and that a report would be submitted thereafter.		Director of Corporate Governance	Late 2015
16.	Council 06.03.13 Article 16	<u>Welfare Reform</u> The Council, amongst other things, approved the steps taken by officers to develop a policy and practice response and agreed to receive further reports in due course as measures were implemented.	The Scottish Welfare Fund has been successfully introduced and is operating well and meeting deadlines for decisions. Further changes to welfare reform are planned for later this year. The Hub joint project with the DWP is now open and being developed further over the coming weeks. Agreement has been reached with The Citizens Advice Bureau regarding the basis for a service level agreement. Claims for discretionary housing payments continue to be processed within the agreed scheme. The Financial Inclusion Manager has been appointed and took up his post on July 2013.	Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure	As and when required

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Council/Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
			<p>A progress report was noted by the Council on 21 August 2013. A further report was contained within the Information Bulletin for the Council meeting on 14 May 2014.</p> <p>An update will be provided at the end of the 2014/15 financial year.</p>		

This page is intentionally left blank

**COUNCIL
MOTIONS LIST**

17 DECEMBER 2014

Please note that this statement tracks all Notices of Motion (relevant to Council) submitted by members, until the point of disposal. The motion will remain on the statement until the Council has agreed to remove it.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Motion</u>	<u>Date of Council Meeting</u>	<u>Decision of Council</u>	<u>Action taken/Proposed Future Action</u>	<u>Responsible Officer</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
1.	<p><u>Motion by Councillor Thomson</u></p> <p>“That this Council:-</p> <p>(1) Restates its commitment to the Local Authority Covenant which ensures that Aberdeen City Council supports the local armed forces community.</p> <p>(2) Recognises the enormous contribution that the Armed Forces make and the sacrifices that the Armed Forces and their families make every day for the safety and security of our country.</p> <p>(3) To recognise the contribution made by our Armed Forces, agrees to request a report examining what more Aberdeen City Council can do to support our armed forces and veterans community across the services it provides.</p>	20.08.14 Article 10	The Council (i) instructed officers to submit a report to the next Council meeting; and (ii) accepted the offer from the Armed Services Advice Project to deliver a presentation to members at a future meeting.	At the Council meeting of 8 October 2014, members noted a report which advised that it was intended that representatives of Royal British Legion Scotland, other signatories to the Covenant and other relevant organisations be invited to meet with the Lord Provost as the Council's Veterans Champion both to discuss the envisaged protocol and what additional actions the Council might take in order to support the armed forces and veterans community in Aberdeen. A further report would then be brought to a future meeting of the Council.	Chief Executive Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure	4 March 2015

<u>No.</u>	<u>Motion</u>	<u>Date of Council Meeting</u>	<u>Decision of Council</u>	<u>Action taken/Proposed Future Action</u>	<u>Responsible Officer</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
	<p>(4) Instructs officers to engage with neighbouring authorities on their allocation of housing to members of the Armed Forces.</p> <p>(5) Instructs officers to meet with Legion Scotland and to establish a protocol for an ongoing relationship between the Council, Legion Scotland and other pertinent organisations.</p> <p>(6) Congratulates and welcomes the Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP) provided by the Scottish Citizens Advice Bureau which is a focal point for the city's armed forces community for access to advice, information and support."</p>					

APPOINTMENT PANEL

ABERDEEN, 10 OCTOBER 2014. - Minute of Meeting of the APPOINTMENT PANEL. Present:- Councillor Young, Convener; and Councillors Cameron, Laing, McCaig, Milne, Noble, Samarai and Thomson.

Officers in Attendance:- Angela Scott, Chief Executive; Mike Lawson, Michelle Shek (part of the meeting) and Sandie Scott (part of the meeting), Human Resources and Organisational Development; and Martyn Orchard (part of the meeting), Legal and Democratic Services.

Also in Attendance:- Ken Dalgleish, Aspen People.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Panel resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public from the meeting so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 1 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Panel had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 29 September 2014.

The Panel resolved:-
to approve the minute.

POST OF DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

2. With reference to the minute of its meeting of 29 September 2014, the Appointment Panel met to interview candidates for the post of Director of Corporate Governance.

Prior to interviews commencing, the Panel was advised about a candidate withdrawal.

The Panel interviewed the candidates who had been short-listed for the post, following which the outcomes of the full range of assessment information relevant to each applicant were considered.

The Panel resolved:-
to make no appointment and that the post be re-advertised accordingly.
- **WILLIAM YOUNG, Convener**.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPOINTMENT PANEL

ABERDEEN, 30 October 2014. - Minute of Meeting of the APPOINTMENT PANEL. Present:- Councillor Young, Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Donnelly, Jackie Dunbar, Graham, McCaig, Samarai and Thomson.

Also in attendance:- Gayle Gorman, Director of Education and Children's Services; Jeff Capstick, Human Resources and Organisational Development; and Roddy MacBeath, Legal and Democratic Services.

APPOINTMENT OF CONVENER

1. The Panel was requested to appoint a Convener.

The Panel resolved:-

to appoint Councillor Young as Convener.

APPLICATIONS FOR POST OF HEAD OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORK/ CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER

2. The Panel had before it (1) the job profile for the post of Head of Children's Social Work/ Chief Social Work Officer; (2) a list of applicants; (3) copies of each application form; and (4) a guidance note prepared by the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development and Aspen, indicating the extent to which each applicant met the essential criteria for the post.

Prior to consideration being given to selecting a short list, the HR Advisor to the Panel referred to an issue, about which no detail could be provided, which would be resolved by officers during the next week. The outcome may be that the selection process could not proceed; however, the Panel was assured that early advice would be provided were this to be the case.

The Panel resolved:-

to invite a short list for interview as agreed at the meeting, and to note the comments of the HR Advisor.

- **COUNCILLOR WILLIE YOUNG, Convener.**

This page is intentionally left blank

APPOINTMENT PANEL

ABERDEEN, 4 November, 2014. - Minute of Meeting of the APPOINTMENT PANEL. Present:- Councillor Laing, Chairperson; and Councillors Cameron, Cormie, Dickson, Grant, Reynolds, Samarai, Thomson and Young.

Also in Attendance:- Pete Leonard, Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure, Gordon McIntosh, Corporate Director, Jeff Capstick, Human Resources and Organisational Development; Ken Dalglish, Aspen People; and Martin Allan, Legal and Democratic Services.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Panel had before it the minute of its meeting of 3 October, 2014.

The Panel resolved:-
to approve the minute.

POST OF HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2. With reference to the minute of its meeting of 3 October, 2014, the Appointment Panel met to interview candidates for the post of Head of Economic Development.

The Panel interviewed the candidates who had been short-listed for the post, following which the outcomes of the full range of assessment information relevant to each applicant were considered.

The Panel resolved:-

- (i) to offer the post of Head of Economic Development to Richard Sweetnam subject to satisfactory checks being undertaken, including references; and
- (ii) that the post be re-advertised in the event that the preferred candidate was not appointed.

- **JENNY LAING, Convener**.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPOINTMENT PANEL

ABERDEEN, 7 November, 2014. - Minute of Meeting of the APPOINTMENT PANEL. Present:- Councillor Boulton, Chairperson; and Councillors Cameron, Cormie, Dickson, Laing, Lawrence, Samarai, Thomson and Young.

Also in Attendance:- Angela Scott, Chief Executive; Mike Lawson, Human Resources and Organisational Development; Ken Dalgleish, Aspen People; and Karen Rennie, Legal and Democratic Services.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Panel had before it the minute of its meeting of 3 October, 2014.

The Panel resolved:-
to approve the minute.

POST OF HEAD OF COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

2. With reference to the minute of its meeting of 3 October, 2014, the Appointment Panel met to interview candidates for the post of Head of Communication and Promotion.

Prior to the interviews commencing, the Panel acknowledged that one candidate had withdrawn their application.

The Panel interviewed the candidates who had been short-listed for the post, following which the outcomes of the full range of assessment information relevant to each applicant were considered.

The Panel resolved:-

- (i) to offer the post of Head of Communication and Promotion to T. Sulaiman subject to satisfactory checks being undertaken, including references; and
- (ii) that the post be re-advertised in the event that the preferred candidate was not appointed.

- **MARIE BOULTON, Convener**.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPOINTMENT PANEL

ABERDEEN, 10 NOVEMBER, 2014. - Minute of Meeting of the APPOINTMENT PANEL. Present:- Councillor Thomson, Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Jackie Dunbar, Laing, McCaig, Samarai, Taylor, Young and Yuill. Officers in Attendance:- Jeff Capstick, Gayle Gorman, Ami McQuarrie (part of the meeting), and Allison Swanson.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Panel resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public from the meeting so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 1 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Panel had before it the minute of its meeting of 27 October, 2014.

The Panel resolved:-
to approve the minute.

POST OF HEAD OF INCLUSION

2. With reference to the minute of its meeting of 27 October, 2014, the Appointment Panel met to interview a candidate for the post of Head of Inclusion.

The Panel interviewed the candidate who had been short-listed for the post, following which the outcomes of the full range of assessment information relevant to the applicant was considered.

The Panel resolved:-
to offer the post of Head of Inclusion to H Shanks subject to satisfactory checks being undertaken, including references.
- **ROSS THOMSON, Convener**.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPOINTMENT PANEL

ABERDEEN, 11 NOVEMBER, 2014. - Minute of Meeting of the APPOINTMENT PANEL. Present:- Councillor Taylor, Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Donnelly, Jackie Dunbar, Laing, McCaig, Samarai and Young. Officers in Attendance:- Gayle Gorman, Mike Lawson, Ami McQuarrie (part of the meeting), and Allison Swanson (part of the meeting). Also in Attendance:- Catriona Mackay, Aspen People.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Panel resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public from the meeting so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 1 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Panel had before it the minute of its meeting of 27 October, 2014.

The Panel resolved:-
to approve the minute.

POST OF HEAD OF POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES

2. With reference to the minute of its meeting of 27 October, 2014, the Appointment Panel met to interview candidates for the post of Head of Policy, Performance and Resources.

Prior to interviews commencing, the Panel heard from Ms Mackay about candidate withdrawals.

The Panel interviewed the candidates who had been short-listed for the post, following which the outcomes of the full range of assessment information relevant to each applicant were considered.

The Panel resolved:-
to offer the post of Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to E. Couperwhite subject to satisfactory checks being undertaken, including references.
- **ANGELA TAYLOR, Convener.**

This page is intentionally left blank

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

6 NOVEMBER 2014

PROVOST SKENE'S HOUSE, BROAD STREET, ABERDEEN - 140755

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development **which recommended:-**

That the Committee express willingness to approve the application for the removal of the steps and balustrade to the front of Provost Skene's House; the re-profile and renewal of surface finishes between the balustrade and Provost Skene's House; and the relocation of the stone arch on the site, subject to notification to Historic Scotland, and the following conditions:-

(1) That no part of the works hereby authorised shall be undertaken unless the following information has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the planning authority, in consultation with Historic Scotland. Thereafter, all works shall be carried out in full accordance with the details so agreed, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the planning authority:- (a) large-scale drawings and plans showing the re-positioned archway and adjoining walls; (b) a detailed methodology/specification for the careful dismantling of the 20th century rubble wall and the repositioning of the archway; (c) details for salvaging and re-use of the armorial panel, currently within part of the wall beside the archway; (d) details of the provenance, significance and estimated age of the freestanding wall to the north-east of Provost Skene's House, along with proposals/recommendations for its removal, retention or re-siting as appropriate; (e) full specification, together with large scale elevation/section drawings and plans, for the detailed treatment for the existing Provost Skene's entrance courtyard, as well as the outdoor spaces adjoining its other three sides, as part of the wider public realm scheme for the Marischal Square Project. This should include details of any new surfacing, planter walls, seating, lighting and other alterations to the outdoor spaces immediately adjoining Provost Skene's House; and (2) no development shall take place within the area indicated (in this case the area of the whole development) until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. The programme of archaeological work will include all necessary post- excavation and publication work - in the interests of protecting items of historical importance as may exist within the application site.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Donnelly:-

That the application be approved in accordance with the recommendation contained within the report.

Councillor Jennifer Stewart moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Corall:-

That the application be refused, on the grounds that the proposal would adversely affect the character and special historical interest of Provost Skene's House.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Donnelly, Lawrence and Jean Morrison; for the amendment (8) – Councillors Corall, Cormie, Dickson, Greig, Jaffrey, Jennifer Stewart, Sandy Stuart and Thomson.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the amendment and refuse the application.

In terms of Standing Order 36(3), the Convener indicated that he wished the matter to be referred to Council for determination, and was supported in this regard by Councillors Boulton, Donnelly, Jean Morrison and Lawrence.

Planning Development Management Committee

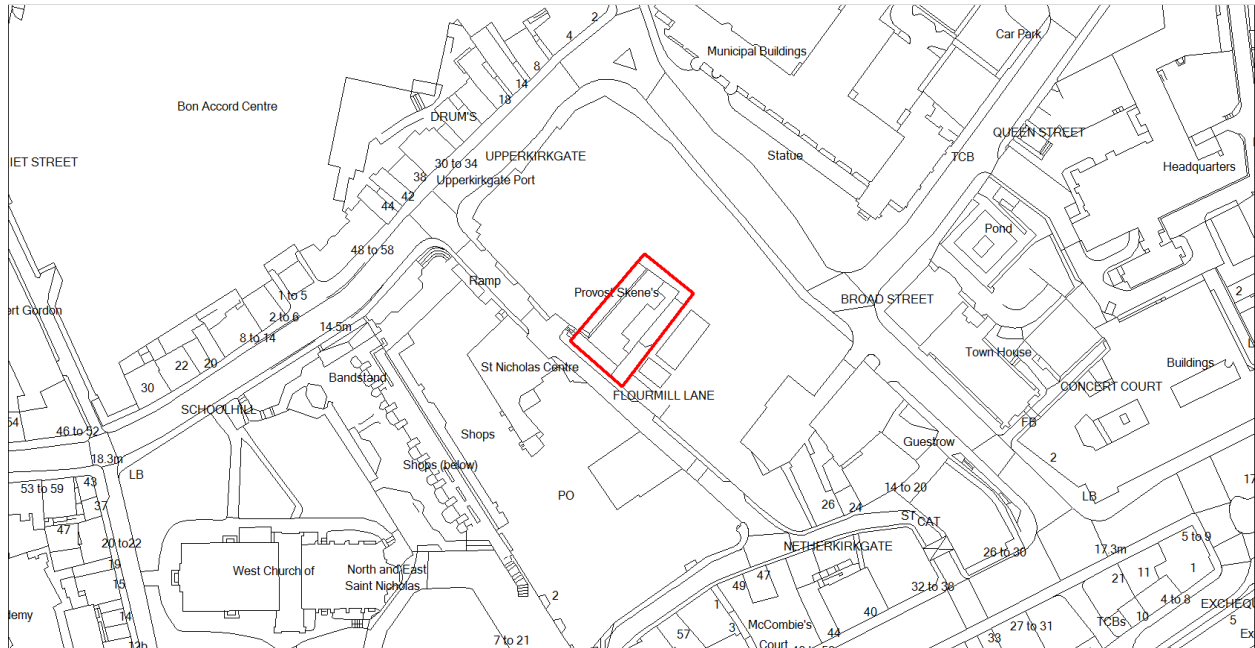
PROVOST SKENE'S HOUSE, BROAD STREET,
ABERDEEN

REMOVAL OF STEPS AND BALUSTRADE TO
FRONT OF PROVOST SKENE HOUSE, RE-
PROFILE AND RENEW SURFACE FINISHES
BETWEEN THE BALUSTRADE AND PROVOST
SKENE HOUSE AND RE-LOCATION OF
STONE ARCH

For: Muse Developments Ltd

Application Type : Listed Building Consent
Application Ref. : P140755
Application Date: 20/05/2014
Officer: Gavin Evans
Ward : George Street/Harbour (A Morrison/N Morrison)

Advert : Listed Building
Advertised on: 11/06/2014
Committee Date: 6 November 2014
Community Council : No response received



RECOMMENDATION: Willingness to approve, subject to notification to
Historic Scotland

DESCRIPTION

This application relates to works affecting Provost Skene's House, a category A listed building which is located in a roughly central position within the former St Nicholas House site, which itself lies between Broad Street to the north-east and Flourmill Lane to the south-west. Historic Scotland's listing description identifies Provost Skene's House as having 16th century origins, but dating largely from the 17th century. It is recognised as the oldest surviving house in Aberdeen and one of the few remaining examples of early burgh architecture in the city.

Originally, the house was located in a row of similar town houses with a broadly south-west facing aspect over long garden feus towards St Nicholas Kirk. The north of the house fronted Guestrow and access would have been taken through a close to the narrow south-east facing entrance façade.

The listing description makes reference to the archway having been moved here from Union Terrace Gardens in the 1930s, with the random rubble wall constructed in the 20th century to form an entrance courtyard. This rubble wall incorporates a plaque/armorial panel, positioned to the left-hand side of the archway.

RELEVANT HISTORY

Application P140698, which sought detailed planning permission for a *'Mixed use development including office, hotel, retail, restaurant, leisure, civic space including car parking, access, landscaping, infrastructure and public realm improvements'*, was referred to the full Council meeting of 8th October, at which time members expressed a willingness to grant planning permission, subject to conclusion of a legal agreement to secure financial contributions towards the Council's Strategic Transport Fund (STF), and subject to conditions as contained in the report.

PROPOSAL

This application proposes the removal of the existing archway and random rubble wall and steps, both 20th century additions to the site, and to grade the local ground levels of the redeveloped St Nicholas House site to marry in with the existing ground floor level of the house.

The archway, though dating from the 17th century, was not sited at Provost Skene's until post-1930. It is proposed that this archway be relocated within the site, being turned 90 degrees repositioned to adjoin the southern corner of the building and to define the entrance to the redeveloped site from Flourmill Lane.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and the supporting documents listed below relating to this application can be viewed on the Council's website at

<http://planning.aberdeencity.gov.uk/PlanningDetail.asp?ref=140755>

On accepting the disclaimer enter the application reference quoted on the first page of this report.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application has been referred to the the Planning Development Management Committee because more than 5 representations have been received. Accordingly, the application falls outwith the scope of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

CONSULTATIONS

Roads Projects Team – No observations.

Environmental Health – No observations.

Education, Culture & Sport (Archaeology) – Request that a condition be attached, securing the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority.

Historic Scotland – Generally content with the proposals, which form part of the major regeneration project for the former St Nicholas House site. The LBC application relates specifically to the proposed public space/gardens beside Provost Skene's House, including site levelling to align with the existing entrance to Provost Skene's. In the context of this wider scheme, HS are satisfied that the removal of the 20th century courtyard rubble wall and steps, together with the re-positioning of the archway, would not diminish Provost Skene's House's special interest as an outstanding surviving example of Aberdeen's early burgh architecture.

HS suggest that further submissions be made on a number of points of finer detail, either prior to determination or through the use of suspensive conditions (requiring action before works can commence):

- Submission of large scale elevation drawings and plan showing re-positioned archway and adjoining walls.
- Submission of methodology /specification for the careful dismantling of 20th century rubble wall and repositioning of the archway.
- Submission of details for salvaging and re-using the armorial panel, currently within part of the 20th century wall beside the archway. This could be similarly incorporated in a section of wall adjoining the proposed repositioned archway.
- Clarification of the significance of the freestanding wall to the north east of Provost Skene's House (shown as a dotted line in the currently submitted

plans). In the event of this being original or of historic significance to Provost Skene's, we suggest that proposals for its retention be provided.

- Submission of full specification, together with large scale elevation/section drawings and plans, for the detailed treatment for the existing Provost Skene's entrance courtyard, as well as the outdoor spaces adjoining its other three sides, as part of the wider public realm scheme for the Marischal Square project. This should include details of any new surfacing, planter walls, seating, lighting, and other alterations to the outdoor spaces immediately adjoining Provost Skene's House.

Community Council – No response.

REPRESENTATIONS

92 written representations have been received. The objections raised relate to the following matters –

- Fabric should not be affected in any way whatsoever
- The existing courtyard provides a charming setting for Provost Skene's House
- Removal of these features would destroy part of the character of the building
- Objections relating to the design and appearance of the Marischal Square development
- New development on the St Nicholas House site should be more sympathetic to Provost Skene's House
- The archway, which is understood to originally be from a house in Guestrow, should be retained in the surrounding area
- Call for the St Nicholas House site to be re-designated as open space, with Provost Skene's House at its heart
- Suggests that a new brief for the site be drawn up, incorporating civic open space with Provost Skene's House retained in its entirety
- Reference to poor stewardship of historic buildings in the past
- Risk of a precedent being set for alterations to other notable listed buildings
- Queries whether the developer will seek to challenge the listed status of Provost Skene's House
- To accept such a proposal would be un-democratic

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy and Guidance

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

SPP sets out national planning policies for operation of the planning system and for the development and use of land. Principal policies relating to sustainability

and placemaking are of relevance, as are subject policies, including those on valuing the historic environment.

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)

This sets out Scottish Ministers' policies for the historic environment, and complements Scottish Planning Policy. In its section relating to Listed Building Consent, SHEP outlines general duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. It is highlighted that listed buildings, once lost, cannot be replaced, and that they can be robbed of their special interest either by inappropriate alteration or by demolition. In recognition, there is a presumption against works that would adversely affect the special interest of a listed building or its setting. Listed buildings will, however, require alteration and adaptation from time to time if they are to remain in beneficial use, and will be at risk if such alteration and adaptation is unduly constrained. In most cases such change, if approved carefully, can be managed without adversely affecting the special interest of the building.

Section 3.48 of SHEP states that, *'where a proposal involves alteration or adaptation which will sustain or enhance the beneficial use of the building and does not adversely affect the special interest of the building, consent should normally be granted'*.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2014

The SDP sets out a series of key objectives for the growth of the City and Aberdeenshire. The SDP recognises the importance of the city centre as an asset, and highlights that its regeneration is vital for the economic future of the area, stating a need to attract more major office developments to the city centre. A stated objective of the Plan is provide opportunities which encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate for and attractive to the needs of different industries. This must be balanced against another key objective to make sure new development maintains and improves the region's important built, natural and cultural assets.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan

D1: Architecture and Placemaking

In order to ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Landmark or high buildings should respect the heights and scale of their surroundings, the urban topography and the city's skyline, and should aim to preserve or enhance important views.

D5: Built Heritage

Proposals affecting Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings will only be permitted if they comply with Scottish Planning Policy. In relation to development affecting archaeological resources, further details are set out in the 'Archaeology and Planning' supplementary guidance document.

Supplementary Guidance

City Centre Development Framework

Other Relevant Material Considerations

Bon-Accord Quarter Masterplan

Historic Scotland 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' guidance note: 'Boundaries'.

EVALUATION

Where a proposal affects a listed building Sections 14(2) and 59(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 places a duty on planning authorities in determining an application for listed building consent to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. This is the primary consideration in the determination of applications for listed building consent.

In assessing the impact of these proposals on the special interest of the listed building, it is appropriate to first consider where that special interest lies. In the case of Provost Skene's House, its special interest relates to it being a rare example of an early Aberdeen town house, dating from the 17th century onwards. The historic external and internal fabric of the building is therefore of particular importance. It is noted, however, that the works proposed, which are entirely external, would not result in any direct physical impact on the original fabric of the building pre-dating the 1930s, after which the archway, wall and steps were introduced. Whilst the archway itself possesses historic interest, dating as it does from the 17th century, it was relocated from Union Terrace Gardens in the 20th century and was not an original part of the building, though it is understood it may have its origins in a now-demolished building on Guestrow. Its historic interest is therefore not directly related to that of Provost Skene's House, offering scope for re-siting in an appropriate alternative location without adversely affecting the special interest of Provost Skene's House.

The submitted heritage statement contends that the rubble wall was of entirely new construction in the 1930s, however images dating from the Queen Mother's opening of the building in 1953 show a balustrade at the development frontage, where the wall is currently sited. It is understood that the wall may have been added as part of the development of St Nicholas House, erected in 1968. Whilst the wall is of a sympathetic design and configuration, it nevertheless does not form part of the essential special interest of the building. The setting of Provost Skene's House is not mentioned in the listing description, which is reflective of the significant change from its original setting which has occurred over time. The removal of the wall, archway and steps, and the associated re-grading of the development site levels to marry in with the ground floor level of the house would improve its accessibility, and the removal of the wall allows opportunity for Provost Skene's House to be integrated into the redevelopment of the wider site, with an enhanced setting provided through a reconfigured landscaped space.

The applicants propose that the archway be utilised in defining the threshold of the development to Flourmill Lane. This would involve the existing archway being turned through 90 degrees and relocated to adjoin the southern corner of the building. In doing so, the archway and its historic interest can be retained as a prominent and useful part of the wider redevelopment, without detriment to the setting or historic interest of Provost Skene's House. Clearly any re-siting of historic fabric must be done carefully, and this necessitates further consideration of any methodology for this work. It is noted also that an armorial panel currently located in the wall beside the archway might be retained and utilised as a feature in the redevelopment. Such details can be secured before any works are undertaken through the use of an appropriately worded condition.

It is noted that Historic Scotland's consultation response suggested that further details of the freestanding wall to the north-east of the house be provided, in order that an informed assessment of its historic interest can inform any proposals for removal, re-siting or retention, as appropriate. This information can be similarly secured through use of a condition attached to any listed building consent.

The archaeological condition requested by the Council's Lead Curator of Local History and Archaeology was included within those stated in relation to the associated application for planning permission, though it is recognised that different works are considered by these two applications, and therefore it remains appropriate to state such a condition on any approval of listed building consent.

Matters raised in representations

Matters relating to the impact of the proposed works on the character and special interest of Provost Skene's House have been addressed in this report, which establishes that the listing of a building does not preclude alterations and that Scottish Government policy supports alterations which are underpinned by a clear understanding of the historic fabric and which would not adversely affect the special interest of a building.

Objections relating to proposals for the wider redevelopment of the St Nicholas House site are not relevant to this assessment, the purpose of which is to assess the impact of the proposed works on the special interest of this historic building. The planning merits of the wider proposal have been assessed through a separate application for planning permission, and cannot legitimately be revisited through assessment of this application.

Comments relating to the re-designation of the St Nicholas House site as open space in the Local Development Plan are not relevant to consideration of this application, which is based on the provisions of the Development Plan (meaning both the Strategic Development Plan and the Local Development Plan in tandem) as it stands, along with any other material considerations. Similarly, suggestions that a new brief for the site be drawn up are not within the remit of the planning authority in consideration of this application for listed building consent.

The historic interest of the existing archway is recognised, though it has also been established that the historic interest of this feature is not directly related to Provost Skene's House, as it was not present on the site until well into the 20th century. Nevertheless, the historic interest of the archway warrants its relocation and retention, as set out in this report.

Comments relating to a perceived poor stewardship of historic building in the past are noted, but similarly are not relevant to this assessment. Approval of any works to a listed building would not set a precedent for other works elsewhere, as each application will be considered on its own merits, based on the nature of the works proposed and their relative impact on the special interest of a historic building. Any person can propose a building for listing, seek a review of an existing listing, or seek to have a building delisted. Historic Scotland is responsible for assessment of such proposals, and any move to de-list a building would be considered by Historic Scotland in due course. That process runs independently of the planning authority's assessment of an application for listed building consent. As members will be entirely aware, applications for planning permission or listed building consent are not determined solely based on the weight of public opinion for or against a proposal, and whilst any matters raised in written representations are relevant to that assessment, the planning authority must have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan in coming to a determination.

Conclusion

The proposal would have negligible impact on the original fabric of the listed building, relating principally to the removal and re-siting of non-original features. Whilst the existing wall, steps and archway contribute towards the building's current setting, it has been demonstrated that the setting of Provost Skene's House has been subject to various changes over time, and it has been established that its current setting is not central to the building's special historic interest. The redevelopment of the wider St Nicholas House would allow for a new and enhanced setting, which would place emphasis on the entrance façade of Provost Skene's House and allow for better integration with the surrounding spaces. Taking these matters into account, the proposed works are not considered to result in adverse impact on the building's architectural or historic interest. The retention of the existing archway and its incorporation within the wider redevelopment is consistent with the principles of SHEP, SPP and the provisions of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan in relation to historic buildings. In summary, the proposal is not considered to adversely affect the special interest of Provost Skene's House, and appropriate conditions can ensure submission of further information detailing the specifics of the works and an appropriate methodology, for the further agreement of the planning authority, in consultation with Historic Scotland, prior to commencement of works. It is therefore recommended that members express a willingness to approve the application, subject to notification being given to Historic Scotland, giving them the opportunity to call-in the application for their own determination.

RECOMMENDATION

Willingness to approve, subject to notification to Historic Scotland

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

These works allow for the redevelopment of the wider St Nicholas House site as part of an office-led mixed use scheme, consistent with the Strategic Development Plan's stated aim to attract major office development to the city centre. The works proposed relate to exterior elements such as boundary walls, steps and ground level treatments, and it has been demonstrated that those features affected are non- original, having been introduced to the site post-1930. The works are therefore not considered to adversely affect the special historic interest of Provost Skene's House. The historic interest of the archway, though not an original part of the house, is recognised and its retention and reuse as part of the proposal is welcomed as being consistent with the principles expressed in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). The proposal is considered to demonstrate due consideration for its context, and would allow for the enhancement of the setting of Provost Skene's House by better integrating the historic building with its surroundings as part of the wider redevelopment scheme. In demonstrating compliance with SPP, the proposal accords with policy D5 (Built Heritage) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP). As the proposed alterations would allow for the beneficial use of the building to be sustained, and the special interest would not be adversely affected, section 3.48 of Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) supports the granting of consent. The proposed works would underpin a wider redevelopment which has, in broad terms, been found to accord with the relevant provisions of the City Centre Development Framework (CCDF) and the Bon-Accord Quarter Masterplan (BAQMP).

CONDITIONS

it is recommended that approval is granted subject to the following conditions:-

(1) That no part of the works hereby authorised shall be undertaken unless the following information has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the planning authority, in consultation with Historic Scotland. Thereafter, all works shall be carried out in full accordance with the details so agreed, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the planning authority:

(i) large-scale drawings and plans showing the re-positioned archway and adjoining walls

(ii) a detailed methodology/specification for the careful dismantling of the 20th century rubble wall and the repositioning of the archway.

(iii) Details for salvaging and re-use of the armorial panel, currently within part of the wall beside the archway.

(iv) Details of the provenance, significance and estimated age of the freestanding wall to the north-east of Provost Skene's House, along with proposals/recommendations for its removal, retention or re-siting as appropriate

(v) Full specification, together with large scale elevation/section drawings and plans, for the detailed treatment for the existing Provost Skene's entrance courtyard, as well as the outdoor spaces adjoining its other three sides, as part of the wider public realm scheme for the Marischal Square Project. This should include details of any new surfacing, planter walls, seating, lighting and other alterations to the outdoor spaces immediately adjoining Provost Skene's House.

(2) No development shall take place within the area indicated (in this case the area of the whole development) until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. The programme of archaeological work will include all necessary post- excavation and publication work - in the interests of protecting items of historical importance as may exist within the application site.

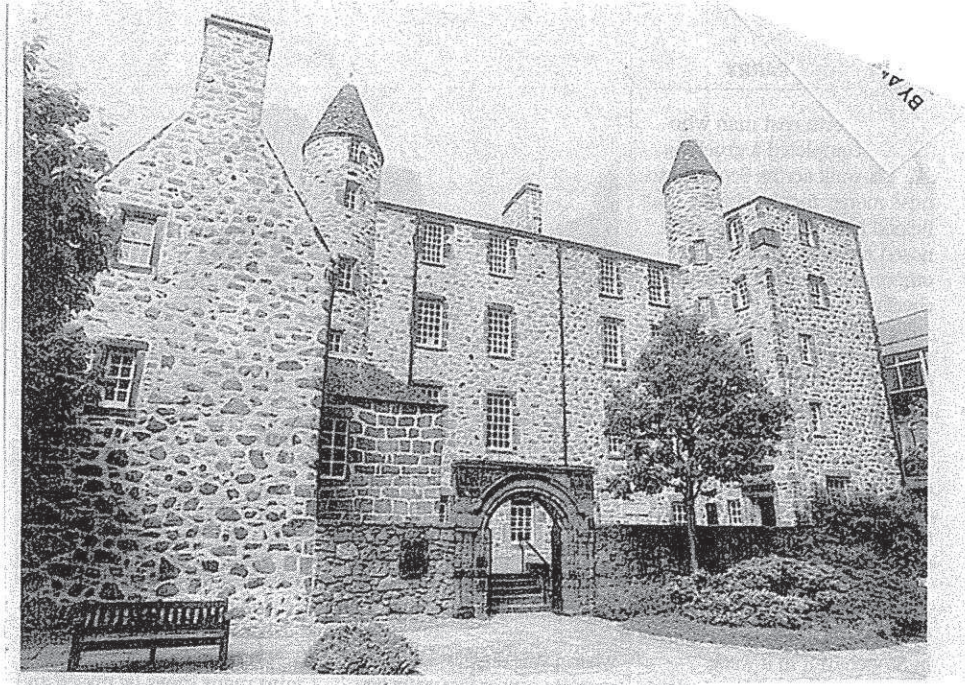
Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.

To Whom it may concern.

RE PLANNING REFERENCE 140755

Look at this —



What you see is

ICONIC

UNIQUE

HISTORIC

COMPLETE

Why then is MUSE proposing changes
in removing the historic archway, stairs, walk & paving?

Please leave it as it is — design around
it but stop the desecration of our history

— and please modify the glass
fronted buildings planned too — let us see it.
Margaret Hadley.

DATE ACKNOWLEDGED	17-1-14
CASE OTHER NUMBER	551-01
NOT	
RECEIVED	
POSTAL NUMBER	551-01
DATE RECEIVED	1 JUL 2014
POSTAL NUMBER	551-01
DATE RECEIVED	

Objection submitted by

Mrs Margaret Hadley
 5 Kirk Crescent North
 Cults
 ABERDEEN
 AB15 9RP

fel



46, PRIMROSE HILL DRIVE,
ABERDEEN.

AB 24 4 ER.

1ST JUNE, 2014.

To, ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL,

RE ARTICLE IN "EVENING EXPRESS" OF
29TH MAY, 2014 "BIG TO AXE STEPS AND
BALUSTRADE FROM HISTORIC SITE."

I AM OBJECT STRONGLY TO THE REMOVAL
OF THESE STEPS AND BALUSTRADE FROM
PROVOST SREWE'S HOUSE AS THEY ARE AS
MUCH PART OF THE HOUSE AND TO REMOVE
THEM WOULD SPOIL THE SURROUNDINGS. THIS
HOUSE IS A VERY MUCH LOVED HOUSE WITH
SO MUCH HISTORY AND IT WOULD BE A TRAVESTY
TO DECIMATE ITS SURROUNDINGS.

FOR THESE DEVELOPMENTS TO REWIND FACIALS
AND RELOCATE. A STONE ARCHWAY SHOWS THAT
THEY HAVE NO FEELINGS TOWARDS THE
HISTORY AND SURROUNDINGS OF PROVOST SREWE'S

HOUSE. NOTHING WAS SAID OR SHOWN IN
THE PLANS SUBMITTED BEFORE APPROVAL FOR
BUILDING.

PLEASE, PLEASE LEAVE THE STEPS AND
BALUSTRADE ETC., AS PART OF PROVOST SKENE'S HOUSE
IT DESERVES TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT.

YOURS SINCERELY,
[REDACTED] (MRS)

SEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 27 May 2014 15:36
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Stuart Sim

Address : 17 Rowan Terrace, Hatton, Peterhead, AB420HU

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I heavily object to the alterations to this fabulous historic building. The council should be working to preserve the historic buildings in the city. Not hide them behind a monstrous class box or butcher them to suit the ends of a company who is not interested in heritage but only in making a quick buck.


IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

CEE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 27 May 2014 15:26
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755
Name : Frances McIntosh
Address : Balmoral Terrace

Telephone :
Email : 
type :

Comment : This historic building should not be tampered with. Absolutely NO to the moving of the stone arch.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

5TE

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 26 May 2014 18:28
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Pamela Swanson
Address : 163 Hardgate
Aberdeen
AB11 6XQ

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : For goodness sake leave it alone! Something else from Aberdeens history which people feel the need to tamper with. Will there be NOTHING left in this city that hasn't been touched, demolished or amended!!!!!!!!!!

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

External cladding.
+ Chilling

Land Use

3 Double Road

Fish filleting property - cat U to allow for fish retailing.
Empty for 3 yrs, prior to that potentially

Food processing plant - making sausages/cheese rolling etc.

1990 → consent in 1995 to allow for retail.

Certificate of lawful proposed use.

- cladding of building

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 24 June 2014 16:32
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : JAMES SINCLAIR

Address : 57 CASTLE STREET

Telephone :

Email : 

type :

Comment : NO WALL OR ARCHWAY SHOULD BE TOUCHED BY GREEDY DEVELOPERS WHO WOULD DESTROY YET MORE OF ABERDEEN'S HISTORY. THESE PEOPLE HAVE ONLY ONE GOAL - TO MAKE MONEY FOR THEMSELVES. OUR PAST HISTORY IS PRICELESS AND THIS PROPOSAL MUST NOT BE GIVEN APPROVAL.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 07 June 2014 10:17
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Suzanne Kelly
Address : 204 Victoria Road
Aberdeen AB11 9NP

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : This is a listed building of architectural, historic and cultural importance to the city; the building and its footprint should not be altered or encroached upon for any purpose. It is certainly possible to create the new proposed building without doing so. Proceeding with this application shows a complete contempt for the city's heritage, and the city is aware of public feeling - that no building should be created in place of St Nicholas House, and the area should be left as an open square to enhance the Provost's house. Since a building is to go ahead on the St Nicholas site, it is up to the architects to create their building without damage or alteration to the existing, protected Provost's House

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 07 June 2014 14:16
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755
Name : Iona macdonald
Address : 174 skene street aberdeen ab10 1qn

Telephone :

Email : 

type :

Comment : This is an unacceptable proposal and cannot be allowed to proceed any further through the planning process. provost skene's house must remain untouched and aberdeen city council have a civic duty to protect it.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 07 June 2014 23:09
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : IAN SMART

Address : 16

Rosehill Place

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : No way, Leave it alone. It's a listed building.

These proposals are against the wishes of the people of Aberdeen.

Tamper with our heritage in this way and you will lose the confidence of your people.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 June 2014 18:31
To: PI
Subject: comment on planning application 140755

COMMENT ON PLANNING APPLICATION 140755

'Removal of steps and balustrade (sic) to front of Provost Skene House, renew surface finials between the balustrade (sic) and Provost Skene House and relocation of stone arch.'

So far as I was able to ascertain, under less than satisfactory viewing conditions at Marischal College, this plan seems to propose the dismantling of the arch, wall and steps which lead to the raised stone courtyard area on the south facing side of Provost Skene's House.

Why the planners keep referring to a 'balustrade', when it looks like a wall to me I do not know. Perhaps they were working from an old photograph which shows the Queen Mother opening the House in 1953, when indeed there was a balustrade in place and, furthermore, no arch.

The arch, which at present forms a most characterful entrance to the small, pleasantly secluded courtyard, will be salvaged and re-erected on the south-west corner to run alongside Flowermill Lane. The courtyard, of course, will disappear to allow for the further extension of the Marschal Square development in the form of two additional rectangular planted areas.

It really is remarkable that the planners, given the vast area at their disposal, stretching from Flowermill Lane to Broad Street and from the Upper Kirkgate to Carnegies Brae, cannot achieve, by their own lights, a satisfactory design without nibbling away at the edges of the Skene House in this way.

Perhaps they would argue that the arch and wall etc. while old are not part of the original building and, consequently, are fair game for demolition. This is to miss the point of conservation which is not to reduce everything to its absolutely original state but to have the wit to distinguish additional features, which have gathered over time and enhance the original, from those harmful accretions which damage the original and should be removed.

In the present case the arch, wall and intimately sheltered courtyard, so formed, are clearly in the former category of enhancement. They provide for a valuable period of adjustment to a more historically aware state by the visitor before entering Provost Skene House itself and should be preserved at all costs.

I, therefore, object to this application.

Yours sincerely,

Roddy Millar

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 24 June 2014 01:38
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Bryony Revell

Address : 78 Union Grove, Aberdeen, AB10 6SA

Telephone :

Email : 

type :

Comment : I object to any changes to the existing structure and building composition of Provost Skene's House, including archway, exterior wall and the neighbouring water pond. The area has an opportunity to be retained and restored as a historic and quirky part of our city, not dwarfed or 'upgraded' with glass and steel and offensive office developments right next to it.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 24 June 2014 08:58
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : E Bulman

Address : 21 Fairview Circle

Telephone :

Email : 

type :

Comment : I object to any alteration to provost skene house. This building is of historic quality and must not be butchered by modern day enthusiasm

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 23 June 2014 16:15
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Melanie Torrance
Address : 48 St Michael's Road
Newtonhill
AB39 3RW

Telephone : [REDACTED]
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : I must object to the proposed removal of the archway, stairs and wall of Provost Skene's house in order to make way for the adjacent new development. This building is of historical significance, and should be being showcased, not damaged and hidden from sight. Aberdeen City Council would be guilty of vandalising our heritage were this to go ahead.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 25 June 2014 00:47
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Nicolas Le Blgre

Address : 176 (Top Left) Crown Street

Telephone :

Email : 

type :

Comment : I am greatly concerned by MUSE's application to remove the steps and balustrade of Provost Skene House, and re-locate the stone arch.

My first concern is that MUSE wishes to remove these items in order to build the development as closely as possible to this historic house. MUSE should be required to keep a distance of several meters around all sides of Provost Skene's house, in order to allow visitors to appreciate the unique historic property from different perspectives, albeit in the shadows of MUSE's development.

Secondly, though I realize the balustrade and archway at Provost Skene's house are not original parts of the building, the archway was however taken from a neighbouring house on the Guestrow. The Guestrow was one of Aberdeen's most important streets, and it is important to keep the archway in Guestrow (not moved elsewhere, as it was when in Union Terrace Gardens) as a vestige of Guestrow's importance to the city.

These are my essential comments with regard to MUSE's application. More generally, however, I think it sad that the city has dropped an opportunity to promote one of its unique and historic sites. Promotion has as much to do with marketing as it does with literal visibility, and no one will be able to see Provost Skene's House in the new plans. St Nicholas House was demolished largely because of its reputation as an eyesore and for hiding Provost Skene's house. MUSE's development is essentially swapping an old bad idea for a new bad idea, and is prioritizing a boring development that really could be found in any city around Europe, rather than a unique, almost 500-year old building that contains a great deal for which Aberdeen should be proud. I have lived in Washington, D.C., Toronto, Paris, and Japan, so I say this as someone who has traveled the world and witnessed other councils in action. I know what attracts people to visit and stay in a city, and MUSE's development only detracts from both Marischal College and Provost Skene's house, two things that attract people to visit and stay.

Thank you for considering these comments.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 24 June 2014 18:00
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Emma Rochford
Address : 86 Rose Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1UE

Telephone [REDACTED]
Email : [REDACTED]
type :

Comment : This is a historic listed building that should be preserved as it is for future generations and as the developer said it would be.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

PI

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 24 June 2014 18:43
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 140755

Comment for Planning Application 140755

Name : Innes Heron
Address : Crud Yr Awel
Taliesin
Machynlleth
SY20 8JW

Telephone [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : The arch and balustrade are an integral part of the existing building and of historical importance and should remain in place as part of any development.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail (including any attachment to it) is confidential, protected by copyright and may be privileged. The information contained in it should be used for its intended purposes only. If you receive this email in error, notify the sender by reply email, delete the received email and do not make use of, disclose or copy it. Whilst we take reasonable precautions to ensure that our emails are free from viruses, we cannot be responsible for any viruses transmitted with this email and recommend that you subject any incoming email to your own virus checking procedures. Unless related to Council business, the opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and they do not necessarily constitute those of Aberdeen City Council. Unless we expressly say otherwise in this email or its attachments, neither this email nor its attachments create, form part of or vary any contractual or unilateral obligation. Aberdeen City Council's incoming and outgoing email is subject to regular monitoring.

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 December 2014
DIRECTOR	Director of Corporate Governance (Acting)
TITLE OF REPORT	Council Diary and Committee Membership
REPORT NUMBER	CG/14/169
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To approve the Council diary of meetings to December, 2015, and a reallocation of committee seats amongst the Administration groups.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Council is recommended:-

- (1) To approve the Council diary of meetings to December, 2015; and
- (2) To suspend Standing Order 22(1) and allocate one Labour Group seat on the Planning Development Management Committee to the Independent Alliance Group and one Labour Group seat on the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee to the Conservative Group.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications of significance.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 Council agreed on 20 August, 2014 (Article 6 of the minute refers) to approve a diary of meetings to June, 2015. As the Education and Children's Services Committee on 2 December, 2014, approved school holidays for the period to 2020, the diary for the balance of 2015 has been prepared and is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 5.2 In addition, the Labour Group wishes to allocate one of its places on the Planning Development Management Committee to the Independent

Alliance Group and one of its places on the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee to the Conservative Group.

6. IMPACT

Corporate – Approval of the diary for the remainder of 2015 will allow officers to better plan the submission of reports to meetings.

Public – Similarly, approval of the diary will allow partners and members of the public a clearer picture of the Council's reporting cycles for the remainder of 2015.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Approval of the diary for the remainder of 2015 will help to reduce risk by setting out the reporting cycles for a longer period thereby improving the planning of the submission of reports.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Roderick MacBeath
Senior Democratic Services Manager
Legal and Democratic Services
macbeath@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 523054

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/day
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 <u>PUBLIC HOLIDAY</u>	14	15	16 Planning Development Management Committee (10am)	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Planning Development Management Committee (Visits) (am)	24	25
	27	28	29	30	31	1

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 Planning Development Management Committee (10am)	14	15
16	17	18 <u>SCHOOL TERM STARTS</u>	19 Council (10.30am)	20 Planning Development Management Committee (Visits) (am)	21	22
23	24	25 Licensing Board (10.30am)	26 Appeals Committee (10am)	27 Communities, Housing and Infrastructure (2pm)	28 Corporate Health and Safety Committee (10am)	29
30	31 Pensions Panel (10am)					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/day
		1 Licensing (10am)	2 Disability Advisory Group (10.30am) Property Sub Committee (2pm)	3 Education and Children's Services (2pm)	4	5
6	7	8 OFFSHORE EUROPE	9 OFFSHORE EUROPE	10 OFFSHORE EUROPE	11 OFFSHORE EUROPE	12
13	14 <i>Elected Members Development Day</i>	15 Finance, Policy and Resources Committee (2pm)	16 Local Licensing Forum (2pm) Housing Cases Review Sub Committee (2pm)	17 Planning Development Management Committee (10am) OPAG (2pm)	18	19
	21	22	23 Appeals Committee (10am)	24 Shareholder Scrutiny Group (10am) Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee (2pm)	25 Planning Development Management Committee (Visits) (am)	26
27	28	29	30			

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/day
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Licensing Board (10.30am) Zero Waste Management Sub Committee (2pm)	7	8 Council (10.30am)	9 <u>SCHOOL TERM ENDS</u>	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 <u>SCHOOL TERM STARTS</u> Pensions Panel (10am)	27 Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee (2pm)	28 Appeals (10am)	29 Planning Development Management Committee (10am) Disability Advisory Group (10.30am)	30	31

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/day
1	2 <i>Elected Members Development Day</i>	3 Licensing Committee (10am)	4	5 Planning Development Management Committee (Visits) (am)	6	7
8	9	10	11 Housing Cases Review Sub Committee (2pm)	12 Education and Children's Services Committee (2pm)	13	14
15	16	17 Property Sub Committee (2pm)	18 Local Licensing Forum (2pm) OPAG (2pm)	19 Petitions Committee (2pm)	20	21
22	23	24	25 Appeals (10am)	26 Shareholder Scrutiny Group (10am) Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee (2pm)	27 Corporate Health and Safety Committee (10am)	28
29	30					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/day
		1 Zero Waste Management Sub Committee (2pm)	2	3 Finance, Policy and Resources Committee (2pm)	4	5
6	7 <i>Elected Members Development Day</i>	8 Licensing Board (10.30am)	9 Disability Advisory Group (10.30am)	10 Planning Development Management Committee (10am)	11	12
13	14 Pensions Panel (10am)	15 Appeals (10am)	16 Council (10.30am)	17 Planning Development Management Committee (visits)(am)	18 <u>SCHOOL TERM ENDS</u>	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26
27	28	29	30	31		

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 th December 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Fairer Aberdeen Fund Annual Report 2013-14 and 6 Month Progress Report (1 st April - 30 th September 2014)
REPORT NUMBER:	CHI/14/057
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with the Annual Report 2013-14 and 6 month progress report from 1st April to 30th September 2014 of the Fairer Aberdeen Fund programme and to advise on projects currently being funded in this financial year.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Council is asked to:

- a) Consider and advise the Fairer Aberdeen Board of the Council's comments on the Annual Report for 2013-14, at Appendix 1.
- b) Note the information at Appendix 2 outlining Fairer Aberdeen Fund progress between April 1st and Sept 30th 2014.
- c) Note the information at Appendix 3 listing the initiatives being funded in 2014-15.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Fairer Scotland Fund was created by the Scottish Government in December 2008, aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation. The first two years of the fund were ringfenced within the Council's budget for the Community Planning partnership in order to support partners to work together to tackle area- based and individual poverty; and to help more people access and sustain employment opportunities

In 2013-14 the Council agreed a sum of £1.625m to be managed by the Fairer Aberdeen Board on behalf of Community Planning Aberdeen. The same sum was agreed for 2014-15.

The Fairer Aberdeen Board comprises of the Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen, Cllr Jenny Laing, three Aberdeen City Councillors (Councillors Yvonne Allan, Gordon Graham and Jim Noble), one representative from Aberdeen Council for Voluntary Organisations, one representative from NHS Grampian, one representative from Police Scotland, seven representatives from priority regeneration areas (appointed through the Regeneration Matters Group), and three representatives from the Aberdeen Civic Forum. In December 2013 it was agreed that the name of the Board would be changed to Fairer Aberdeen. During 2014-15 the Board will be reviewing its membership roles and responsibilities.

An application process is in place to ensure funding is allocated to appropriate programmes and projects. Organisations funded by the Fairer Aberdeen Board are required to meet specific terms and conditions and comply with State Aid regulations, where required, and to comply with "Following the Public Pound " financial guidance.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Personnel

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund provides funding for a Support Team currently comprising 1 FTE Programme Coordinator and 1 FTE Development Worker. This small team is responsible for fund allocation, reporting, evaluation of Fairer Aberdeen Fund programmes, projects and initiatives, partnership building, advising applicants, supporting the Regeneration Matters community representatives group, administering and managing the Fairer Aberdeen Fund on behalf of the Fairer Aberdeen Board.

The initiatives and programmes being funded support frontline services that are provided by the Council, Community, Voluntary and other public sector partners with 90% of the fund allocated to voluntary and community organisations. Approximately 30 FTE staff posts are funded in 50 projects. In 2013-14 943 volunteers contributed over 101,000 volunteer hours with a value of just under £1.5m*, almost doubling the value of the Fund.

*Volunteering time is generally valued as the average hourly pay rate in the area, in Aberdeen this was £14.45. (Office of National Statistics, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE))

Sustainability and Environment

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund plays an important part in providing services that tackle poverty and contribute to improving sustainability by improving the environment and wellbeing for the cities most

disadvantaged communities and vulnerable individuals. The programme responds to locally identified issues and addresses unemployment, providing financial inclusion services, improving health and literacies and enabling more sustainable and safer communities.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 The Finance and Resources Committee of the 12th November 2009 agreed that half yearly updates should be provided on the outcomes achieved through the investment in Fairer Aberdeen Fund. This report includes the Annual Report for 2013-14 and the 6 month report for 2014-15.

6. IMPACT

The main purpose for the fund is targeting disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups and individuals. The Fairer Aberdeen Board has agreed the following outcomes:

- Maximising income
- Getting people into work
- Improving mental health and well being
- Building stronger safer communities
- Increasing skills and creativity

During 2014-15 the Board will be reviewing priorities and outcomes in line with the Single Outcome Agreement and local needs.

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund also contributes to a wide range of objectives contained within the Councils policy statement, 'Aberdeen – the Smarter City' in relation to "challenging inequalities wherever they exist and bringing our communities closed together."

Fairer Aberdeen Fund initiatives also contribute to the delivery of the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and have an important role in responding to Welfare Reform changes.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Failure to continue to address the needs of Aberdeen's most disadvantaged communities would have a detrimental effect for the individuals and communities involved and potentially increased costs in the long term for public services. Supporting people into employment, maximizing people's income, providing early intervention in relation to education and health is not only a better outcome for individuals but reduces the costs involved in responding to the effects of poverty in the long run.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The information contained at Appendices 1 and 2 is based on the monitoring reports that funded projects are required to produce as part of the terms and conditions for Fairer Aberdeen Fund grant.

Appendix 3 details the projects that had funding agreed by the Fairer Aberdeen Board at its meeting of 13th March 2014.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Susan Thoms

Fairer Aberdeen Fund Programme Coordinator, tel 01224 523833

sthoms@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Dave Kilgour

Strategist, tel 01224 523035

dkilgour@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Fairer Aberdeen Fund Annual Report 2013-14



“

The Fairer Aberdeen Board is one of the best examples of communities being involved in decision making”



For further information please contact:

Susan Thoms
Fairer Aberdeen Fund Coordinator
☎ 01224 523833
✉ sthoms@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Anne Knight
Fairer Aberdeen Fund Development Officer
☎ 01224 523532
✉ aknight@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Design and photography by Susan Thoms
Additional photos by funded projects

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund (formerly the Fairer Scotland Fund) is allocated by Aberdeen City Council to tackle poverty and deprivation. The Fund is dispersed and managed by the Fairer Aberdeen Board, a sub group of the Community Planning Partnership, made up of representatives from regeneration areas, the Civic Forum, the Council, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland and ACVO (Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations). In 2013-14 funding of £1.72m was made available to support initiatives fitting with the main priorities decided by the Board.

Over the year £1,642,000 was awarded to 50 projects, and 6 capital developments, supporting work in regeneration areas and across the City with vulnerable groups and individuals. Grants ranged from £2,000 to £170,000 in value.

A total of 25,285 people were involved in, or benefited from, funded initiatives, and 5,000 of them were under 16 years old.

An impressive 943 volunteers contributed 101,625 hours of volunteering time with a value of just under £1.5m*, almost doubling the value of the Fund.

*Volunteering time is generally valued as the average hourly pay rate in the area, in Aberdeen this was £14.45. (Office of National Statistics, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE))



The Fund focuses on neighbourhoods that fall within the most deprived 0-15% in Scotland, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, as well as supporting vulnerable groups and individuals.

PRIORITY THEMES AND KEY ACTIONS

Maximising income

- Improving access to affordable financial products and services
- Supporting the delivery of financial education initiatives
- Delivering coordinated advice and information services

Getting people into work

- Providing access to support and skills needed to return to work
- Supporting personal development and training
- Delivering in work support

Improving mental health and wellbeing

- Reducing health inequalities
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Increasing access to affordable healthy food

Building stronger, safer communities

- Improving access to services in regeneration areas
- Increasing community safety
- Supporting community involvement and participation

Increasing skills and creativity

- Supporting learning and creative opportunities
- Improving literacy and numeracy

PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS

Cummings Park

Middlefield

Northfield

Seaton

Tillydrone

Torry

Woodside

PRIORITY GROUPS

People living in poverty

Lone parents and families with children

Unemployed people

Children and young people

People with health issues

Older people

Minority groups with an identified need

Maximising Income

St Machar Credit Union improves access to affordable financial services and products. The Credit Union aims to help people who are financially excluded and those on low incomes reach financial stability, through regular savings and accessing low cost loans. They are then encouraged to access mainstream financial products such as house insurance and basic bank accounts, while continuing to use their own credit union accounts

Over the year there were 2,778 adult credit union savers and 1,211 junior savers, and total savings deposited were £1,175,840. They provided 2,643 affordable loans totalling £1,413,052, an average of £535 per loan. 14 community collection points operated and 38 volunteers contributed 13,725 hours of volunteer time.



North East Scotland Credit Union (NESCU) Access Project improves access to affordable financial services and products. They develop credit union membership, by providing and promoting easy access savings accounts for adults and juniors and low cost loans within the community. NESCU aims to assist in decreasing levels of financial exclusion within its communities, providing people with a simple to operate savings and borrowing account and knowledge about financial planning for the future.

Over the year there were 1,370 adult credit union savers and 757 junior savers, and total savings deposited were £821,250. They provided 520 affordable loans totalling £527,980, an average of £1,015 per loan. 5 community collection points operated and 37 volunteers contributed 4,980 hours of volunteer time.

24% of the Fund (£416,000) was allocated to initiatives that support people to maximise their income. The main themes under this priority are access to affordable financial services and products and coordinated provision of quality advice and information services.

A new project to receive funding in 2013-14 was the Food Banks Partnership, an initiative set up to maximise the benefits of food banks, through coordination and networking between organisations involved in food bank work.

Funding was also allocated to support the development of Credit Unions in schools through subsidising initial membership for every school pupil attending St Machar, Torry and Northfield academies, providing £10 initial membership for each pupil to join a Credit Union. This initiative will be progressed by St Machar Credit Union, North East Scotland Credit Union (NESCU) and Grampian Credit Union through the academic year.

Over the year a total of 4,148 adults and 1,968 juniors saved with NESCU and St Machar Credit Union, depositing £1,997,090 in savings. They provided 3,163 affordable loans totalling £1,941,032.

2,265 people received money advice or income maximisation advice, with a total financial gain of £2,052,518, an average of £906 per person.

There were 1,848 referrals to the Cash In Your Pocket database, which supports people to access financial inclusion support.

16,308 people benefited from 8 funded initiatives and a total of 181 volunteers contributed 32,885 hours of volunteer time.

Cash In Your Pocket (CIYP) acts as a central hub for the operation of its financial inclusion partners, and provides a one-stop referral system to allow access to the full range of organisations that can assist with financial inclusion issues, and other related help, to people experiencing financial difficulty and disadvantage across the City. The staff team coordinates meetings and provision regarding financial inclusion throughout Aberdeen City, acting as a forum for discussing activity, and ensuring duplication and gaps in provision are kept to a minimum.

The project aims to ensure better coordination of, and access to, employability and financial inclusion support services, and to work with partners and community projects to ensure that community priorities are met in relation to accessing financial inclusion services.

Over the year CIYP ran community events in partnership with other organisations such as Aberdeen City Council Tenants Participation, Adult Learning and Fairer Aberdeen, working with other services to pull together a programme of events across the city's regeneration areas. Mastrick was the



The creation of a directory of services available to the citizens of Aberdeen will be incredibly valuable as the whole city comes to terms with the unpredictable consequences of Welfare Reform."

first focus for this coordinated approach, with over 130 people attending at Mastrick Community Centre. A number of smaller events were also organised in Woodside, Torry and Manor Park.

Cash In Your Pocket was successful in bidding to the National Lottery for funding to provide a telephone and frontline service, which can use the referral system to ensure those in need reach help. This will start in 2014 and will provide much needed respite for some of those individuals faced with financial problems across the city.

1,848 individuals were referred to the Cash in Your Pocket Partnership with 71% of people reporting a positive outcome following referrals. There were 60 organisations involved in dealing with referrals and 64% of referrals were processed in the same day by the CIYP Team. 31 organisations actively participated in Cash In Your Pocket Partnership meetings.

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Money Advice Outreach Project

provides advice and information to clients living in regeneration areas through face-to-face work in communities, providing local drop-in sessions and appointments. They help clients maximise their income from welfare benefits and reduce levels of debt, including through creditors arrangements, sequestration and negotiation.

The project aims to bring added service, through working with other statutory and charitable organisations including Credit Unions and Cash In Your Pocket, and by linking up with other CAB services that are available.

Over the year 1,020 clients received money advice and income maximisation advice with a total financial gain of £748,521, an average of £734 per client.

Aberdeen Illness and Disability Advice Service

offers confidential and independent advice to anyone affected by illness, disability or a long term health condition, in the most suitable location for the client, including hospital wards and home visits.

The roll out of welfare reform legislation has led to the need for the CIYP team to build a new set of working relationships with different support providers. These range from the Scottish Welfare Fund, to food banks and other social enterprises involved in supporting the same client group. Over the past year CIYP has worked with a broader range of stakeholders to not only promote knowledge about the CIYP services but also to create new links with other networks. Meetings with MPs, MSPs and NHS contacts have assisted in improving the understanding of the CIYP service and ensuring a joined up approach to the client base. Considerable success has been achieved by the CIYP team in embedding CIYP as an initial point of referral for financial and welfare issues; and in building up the cross fertilisation of referrals to the most appropriate constituent organisation in as short a time as possible. This is vital for individuals who are under financial stress.

Over the year they made progress in building up their volunteer base and were able to see 12-15 clients a day at the client's preferred location. Several volunteers have previous experience and training in debt and benefits advice, outreach work and social work. 575 clients were seen and the total financial gain was £1,093,075, an average of £1,901 per person. 10 volunteers contributed 2,422 hours of volunteer time.

The **Care and Repair Funding Officer** provides advice and financial assistance to older people, people with disabilities and people living in regeneration areas, irrespective of tenure. They aim to maximise household income including applying for benefits and annuities to supplement income and raising charitable funding on behalf of individuals to carry out repairs, improvements or adaptations to the home. They also support social housing tenants living in the regeneration areas, who are financially excluded or suffering from mental health problems, to carry out repairs or improvements that are not covered by their tenancy agreement.

Over the year 335 households were assisted with income maximisation and charitable funding, achieving a total financial gain of £210,922, an average of £630 per household. 32% of households assisted lived in regeneration areas, and 23% lived in social housing. A total of 434 householders accessed the subsidised gardening service and 2 volunteers contributed 940 hours of volunteer time.

WEA Count Us In aims to improve financial literacies in the courses delivered through two WEA projects, Reaching Forward and Reach Out.

Over the year they ran two 12 week programmes, one 10 week programme and a four week summer programme made up of mainly one off events. Activities included employability, IT drop in, gardening, football, arts, hill walking, basic IT, environmental issues and outdoor activities. Some of the courses had financial literacy as the main focus, for example cooking on a budget, budgeting skills and residential planning, with the others having financial literacies embedded within them.

114 learners took part in sessions and learnt skills to improve their financial literacy and 2 volunteers contributed to the 362 volunteer hours undertaken at Reach Out.



This post is an asset to Care and Repair services, with the Funding Officer being able to specialise in fundraising for individuals to carry out repairs, improvements and adaptations to the home and at the same time ensuring householders are claiming their appropriate benefits."

Food Banks Partnership



Aberdeen Food Banks Partnership

is led by CFINE (Community Food Initiatives North East). It aims to provide food for those in food poverty, and to prevent local food banks competing to obtain food from the same sources, through coordination, information and networking between organisations. The Partnership hopes to engage and involve additional organisations involved in food bank work and provide practical support and advice to those in need, and access to support and services to address issues around health and well-being, financial capability and education, confidence, skills acquisition and employability.

As a new initiative the Partnership faced some challenges but largely met its targets. It was identified that there was a need to further refine and develop data collection and recording as the data collected is understated due to challenges in securing accurate data from some partners, partly



More people are coming to food banks as they are subject to delays in payment of benefits and sanctions by Job Centre Plus. They have exhausted their savings to pay the bedroom tax and to keep financially afloat, while they wait for the outcome of their appeals. They often have debt, are in debt to payday loan companies and so on. ”

reflecting the levels of workload and pressure that partners are under with increasing numbers of beneficiaries attending.

It was found that people in desperate need are not, certainly on the first visit, receptive to being directed to other support, they are focused on feeding themselves. Building relationships is the first step to having a discussion about other support that might be accessed.

The food bank work is generating considerable interest from volunteers which led to the need to establish a waiting list. CFINE is committed to providing a positive experience for volunteers and this takes considerable time from development staff giving support and training. There was an increasing workload and pressure around the collection, organisation, recording and distribution of produce, a logistical exercise absorbing considerable staff and volunteer time.

Over the year 78 tonnes of free produce was distributed and 7,800 food parcels given out to 6,500 beneficiaries. 141 referrals came from Social Welfare Fund applicants, and the value of crisis grant payments was £3,766.



Ethel is in her late 50s; she has worked all her life and looked after her husband who was on benefits due to illness. The company she worked for closed down and her husband died. She used savings to bury her husband and to pay the bedroom tax. She was faced with a huge reduction in income as she no longer had her husband's contribution to the household and the rent and household bills were the same. She was on ESA herself, but following a medical she was moved to JSA which was considerably less. The changeover of benefits took approximately 6 weeks and during that time she exhausted all her savings and literally had nothing. Ethel can't read or write, which limits the jobs she can apply for. In discussion she related that when she was a child she had looked after her disabled mother and her siblings, and that school had passed her by. The Scottish Welfare Fund did help with a crisis grant of £18 for food and £40 for gas and electricity. However this could not sustain her for long and she has been receiving food parcels as a short term measure until her benefit is paid. In the interim, the Food Bank referred Ethel to the Job Parents project where she gets individual support with a view to returning to work, which is all she wants to do.

Getting People into Work

16% of the fund (£275,000) was allocated to initiatives that help people get back into work. The main themes under this priority are access to support and skills needed to return to work, including initial engagement, personal development activity and in work support.

A Support Fund is available to help overcome financial barriers and this was accessed by over 150 people, providing clothing for interviews, transport, training and qualifications.

Over the year a total of 292 people moved into work. 11 access centres in areas of high unemployment offered weekly employment support drop in sessions. 154 young people were involved in activities designed to increase their opportunities to move into positive destinations, and 85 young people moved onto employment, education or training. A total of 746 participants were involved in 6 initiatives and 14 volunteers contributed 764 hours of volunteer time.

Pathways support people into employment by providing tailored support for people from the first stages of job seeking through to securing and maintaining employment. They identify and encourage participation of hard to reach residents in priority areas through weekly drop-ins, work clubs, established links with partner agencies and individually tailored one to one Keyworker support.

A team of Employment Keyworkers provide support in all aspects of job search; from initial development of CVs, identification of job goals and barriers, identification and matching to suitable vacancies, help with completing application forms, and preparation for interviews. All participants are also offered in-work support once they start work to ensure job retention.

A new drop-in at Mastrick Housing Office was established and weekly drop-ins were delivered in all the regeneration areas, with additional drop-ins arranged in areas identified as needing extra support. Keyworkers were in each priority area at least twice a week, offering advice and help with job searches and providing laptops to enable people to complete online applications with their support.

Over the year 491 people received support, which was considerably more than their target. Of these 257

moved into work, 190 into full time employment and 67 into part time employment. 5 volunteers contributed 150 volunteer hours.

“ I can't believe the support I got from Pathways for job searching, advice and financial support with training and gaining my SIA Licence. I could not have done it without you.”

NESS (North East Sensory Services) Employment Service provides an employment service to blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing people who live in Aberdeen City and are of working age. They provide specialist support enabling people to access relevant employment, education and training opportunities and to sustain opportunities which have already been accessed.

The service offers a comprehensive package of one to one support, with tailor-made provision to enable people



to enter or remain in the job market with confidence and follow a career path that is right for them regardless of their starting point. Group work and activities are offered, to develop skills and confidence and local employers provided with relevant information, advice and support.

The service was a runner up for a 2013 SURF (Scotland's Independent Regeneration Network) award in the Support to Work category. It also won a Clydesdale Bank's Spirit of the Community Awards, to recognise the important role it plays in the local community.

Over the year 69 clients were supported; 12 of them moved into work; 29 moved onto education and training; and 8 took up work placement and volunteering opportunities. A further 28 received support to retain employment or to look at alternative options.

One client had been made redundant from Remploy after 25yrs exemplary service. As well as the Confidence Building course, he completed our Employment Skills course and successfully gained temporary work with a solicitor in their archive department. Since completing that contract, he has enrolled on specialist IT training here at NESS and attends weekly for regular job-search sessions. He has recently started an IT course and is undertaking voluntary work at Momentum, helping out with administrative work in their office on two mornings a week. He has also been supported to participate in a mock interview to improve his skills in this area. He is one of the most committed clients who always attends appointments and who is making great efforts to get back into work.

shmuTRAIN

shmu (Station House Media Unit)

delivers **shmuTRAIN**, offering employability support and skills development training to young people aged 14-19, using community & digital media to engage young people, increase motivation and develop core skills such as confidence, communication and team work. The aims of the programmes are to support young people to move on to a positive destination.

The shmuTRAIN Early Interventions programme targets young people (14-16) who show an increased risk of not progressing on to education, training or employment after leaving school. It combines community media training with employability support.

Over the year 64 young people took part, 36 of them moved onto positive destinations; 7 into employment, 27 into education and 2 into training. 23 participants secured an interview for college and 5 for work.

The shmuTRAIN Positive Transitions programme targets and engages young people (16-19) who are not in education, employment or training, through 12-week full-time courses offering positive hands-on experiences, which participants build upon to develop both personal and vocational skills which help them move on to a sustained positive destination.



During the year shmuTRAIN developed a strong partnership with BP/Aramark and now have a formal agreement where a trainee will be offered a 3 month placement working at their HQ in Dyce, a total of 4 placements over the financial year.

The trainees will learn catering skills and be provided with full training, including first aid, manual handling, food & hygiene and COSHH. At the end of every 3 months the placement will be reviewed and if BP/Aramark are happy with the progress made during the placement then a full-time post will be offered.

Over the year 27 young people participated in the 4 courses held. 16 of them moved into work, 4 into education, 5 into training and 11 into volunteering. 28 secured an interview for work and 3 for college; while 27 showed improved communication skills and readiness for work.

We first started working with Aaron at the beginning of 2012 on our Early Interventions programme in Torry Academy. His attendance was sporadic at school, however, and his level of engagement in the course was not as high as we had hoped for. Aaron left school in the summer of 2012 and did not progress on to a positive destination. In December 2012 we contacted Aaron and invited him to join our Positive Transitions course starting in January 2013.

Aaron does not noticeably suffer from lack of confidence and easily made friends on the course; indeed, his outgoing personality helped to bond the group quickly. He did have some early problems with attendance however, and a pattern emerged which revealed that while he happily attended the media modules, he often found excuses for not attending the employability sessions. We had a long and productive chat about what he wanted to achieve in life and how he might do that. He agreed that he needed to make some changes, as his attention flitted from one potential career to the next with no apparent goal. We worked on building an action plan to help him focus on what he wanted to achieve.

While this course was running, the shmuTRAIN Coordinator, Brian Webb, attended a local Rotary Club meeting to deliver a presentation on the employability work carried out by shmu and to discuss the merits of young people and the benefits of employing them. Brian talked about the barriers facing young people and how, in our experience, many are motivated and enthusiastic and just need someone to give them a much needed opportunity. As a result Charlie, who owns his own small drain cleaning company, approached Brian to say that the presentation had a significant impact on him; he had experienced trouble hiring young people in the past and had purposefully discounted them in his recruitment process. However after Brian's presentation he was keen to give young people a chance again. A few weeks later he contacted us with an opportunity which Aaron was very interested in. We explained the importance of taking this opportunity seriously; not only was this a great opportunity for him personally, but also for shmu as an organisation as we wanted to prove to Charlie – and others - that young people like Aaron are worth investing in.

Aaron started work on 1st July and has progressed well, learning new skills, gaining a good understanding of health and safety issues and has worked hard. "His three-month probationary period is coming to an end", explained Charlie, "and he is where we would expect a bright young lad to be at this stage in his role. For our company to thrive we need to look to the future. If Aaron continues to show initiative and interest then he will continue to learn the core skills required to enable him to run a CCTV rig. Norman, my Operations Manager, who has been with me for 26 years, started working with me at the age of 18, learning everything about drain maintenance and coordinating site operations safely. For the last 15 years I have been looking for the next Norman. I think I have found him"

Prince's Trust Team Programme

provides a 12 week personal, social and employability skills development programme for participants aged 16-25 who are disadvantaged, with a high proportion having complex needs including offending behaviour, drug and alcohol issues, behavioural issues, problems with literacy, numeracy, mental health and homelessness.

One of the teams chose to undertake their Community Project by improving the nursery garden at Middlefield Community Project. Their Team Challenge included organising and delivering a sports day at Aberdeen Sports Village for Middlefield Nursery children; preparing and delivering a presentation and pamphlet to Middlefield Community flat about the Prince's Trust Team programme; and preparing a PowerPoint presentation about the programme for Aberdeen Foyer Board members.



We received very positive feedback from organisations and companies involved in the community project, team challenge and work placements. They noted the positive attitudes, enthusiasm and work ethic of the young people."

Particular successes included the Team 40 participant who did so well during his work experience that he was offered full-time employment on completion of the programme and also 8 young people who chose to take part in the Young Leaders programme, an intensive and challenging programme which will build on the skills and attributes they developed during their time on the Prince's Trust Programme. As part of this they were also selected to volunteer during the Commonwealth Games, which will be a very positive and worthwhile experience for them.



Over the year 42 people took part with 18 of them completing the programme successfully. 21 participants progressed on to employment, training, education or volunteering. 22 achieved SQA units, 29 achieved Food Hygiene certificates and 31 achieved First Aid certificates. 24 took part in a community challenge, and 5 volunteers contributed 252 hours of volunteer time.

Dynamics is a series of courses run by WEA for young adults between the ages of 16-25 who are finding the transition from school to work, training or further education particularly challenging. Courses include cooking, IT, cultural tours, outdoor activities, budgeting skills, job search skills, interview skills and general good citizenship.

Over the year they ran 3 courses lasting 10 weeks each. In total 21 young people participated and 3 moved on to employment, education or training. Others have returned to the course to take on a mentoring role with new participants, or have been integrated into other WEA Reach Out provision. 2 volunteers contributed to the 362 hours of volunteer time undertaken at WEA's Reach Out project.

Employability is run by WEA to deliver basic IT courses with a focus on IT for employability. These include getting familiar with Microsoft Office packages as well as online job searches and applications. Learners are supported to access follow on courses where appropriate. They are also able to use the informal drop in provision to consolidate their learning.

Over the year 3 courses were run as well as drop in sessions. Participants learnt how to create CVs and cover letters as well as developing interview and presentation skills. A total of 32 learners took part and 5 moved onto employment or volunteering. 2 volunteers contributed to the project.



Participants find it difficult to understand their own potential so we work on raising self-esteem and confidence levels to the point where participants feel confident enough to phone potential employers and blow their own trumpets."

Improving Health and Wellbeing

The Community Food Development Project is run by CFINE (Community Food Initiatives North East) to maintain and develop existing Community Food Outlets (CFOs) and establish and develop new CFOs in Aberdeen. They provide support and training for existing volunteers and recruit, support and train new volunteers both in the CFINE warehouse and office, and in the CFOs. They also organise and promote training events and courses, and raise awareness of cooking and health.

During January and February a volunteer with a food science degree undertook some research on Community Food Outlets, which found that 83% of customers questioned said that using the CFO had helped save them money, 47% said they used the CFO because it was convenient, and 61% felt that they ate more healthily as a result of shopping at the CFO.

Over the year they supported 71 community food outlets, 35 of them in sheltered housing complexes, with a total of £72,000 worth of sales. They provided work experience placements for 38 people, 114 volunteers were involved, 52 of them took part in manual handling and health and hygiene training, and a total of 19,146 volunteer hours were contributed.



18% of the Fund (£310,000) was allocated to initiatives that improve health and wellbeing. The main themes under this priority are reducing health inequalities; improving mental health and wellbeing; and increasing access to affordable healthy food.

Over the year 71 Community Food Outlets operated in local communities, 35 of them in Sheltered Housing complexes, and 78 tonnes of free food was distributed through FareShare.

615 people accessed 4,296 sessions of counselling provision, 244 of them were under 16 years old, and counselling was provided in 7 regeneration neighbourhoods.

1,294 people benefited from 13 initiatives, and 387 volunteers contributed 30,545 hours of volunteer time.

Seaton Recovery Project provides an accessible facility for residents in Seaton who have substance misuse issues, offering a rehabilitation and recovery programme tailored to individual needs. Clients are encouraged and supported to work through personal issues that have arisen through substance misuse and also deal with issues which may have contributed to drug and alcohol use in the past.

Staff help clients with form-filling, appointments, telephone calls, finances, benefits, housing, health and mental health issues - signposting clients to appropriate agencies and organisations. Working in partnership with other agencies, clients are also encouraged to develop new skills that will benefit their personal development and increase their life chances and future employment opportunities.

Over the year 74 people were involved, with 47 new and existing clients using the service and support on a regular basis. 16 people attended classes to support personal development and life skills, and 8 people attended classes to improve employability skills. In all, 46 people were referred to specialist debt and financial support and advisory services and 3 volunteers contributed 297 hours of volunteering time.



The Project has been inundated with new clients; the majority have been people in crisis. Once they register with us they receive a voucher for Seaton Food Bank and they can use our phone and get staff support to help with sorting out sanctions and referring to other agencies such as Welfare Rights, or the Credit Union.”

M26 provides activities and drop-in sessions for men aged 26+ in Tillydrone. This volunteer run project supports individuals to develop a range of skills, including confidence building, anxiety management and assertiveness, and encourages them to positively improve health and wellbeing. Participants are supported to plan and deliver the provision including activities, classes and sessions that promote a healthy life style and encourage volunteering.

10 men were involved over the year, 2 have stopped their methadone use, 2 moved into full time employment and 3 into part time work. 3 volunteers contributed 704 volunteer hours.

Street Alternatives



Street Alternatives is run by Aberdeen Cyrenians to provide a volunteer led service offering practical support to people in Aberdeen City who are sleeping rough or who have no access to cooking or personal care facilities. They offer practical help and assistance including hot, nutritious two course meals, clothing and access to showers and laundry facilities. They encourage service users to access the Advice and Information Service to address their homelessness situation, and signpost service users to other agencies including residential projects, supported accommodation units, Marywell Homeless Health Centre, GPs, Penumbra Supported Living Service, substance misuse services, Aberdeen City Council Homelessness

Service, Aberdeenshire Council Homelessness Service and various temporary accommodation units.

A Volunteer Coordinator is employed to recruit, induct, train and support the large pool of volunteers. The volunteers then in turn manage the Street Alternative sessions; cooking the meals from scratch, organising incoming donations and food rotation, supporting the Fundraising team to generate income, assisting at events and appealing for gifts in kind.

Over the year 20 people attended sessions held 4 times a week. 177 volunteers, 4 of them previous or current service users, contributed 4,839 hours of volunteering time.



Street Alternatives helped me a lot when I was out on the street. Staff went out of their way to help me with the council and fill in forms. Street Alternatives gave me somewhere warm to go. Even if you're on the street, having Street Alternatives means you have somewhere to go for a wash and a shave, get your clothes washed and get food. You get a welcoming friendly smile when you arrive."

Michael came to Aberdeen Cyrenians looking for advice as he had found himself homeless and sleeping rough. Initially the Advice, Information and Support team referred Michael to the Street Alternatives service to ensure that his immediate needs could be addressed. This allowed him to get a meal, shower and laundry four times a week.

During these Street Alternative sessions the Advice, Information and Support drop-in worker could get time to sit with Michael to look at the reasons that had led to his homelessness and help to advise him what to do next. From his time in Street Alternatives Michael gained trust in staff and engaged with the support offered to him, which allowed the staff to help him appeal the no duty decision from the local authority. Street Alternatives provides a regular relaxed environment in which the staff can build relationships with service users and begin the process of addressing the various issues such as debt, relationship breakdown, substance misuse, and benefit issues that may be contributing to their homelessness.

Now Michael is a success story of how Street Alternatives and Aberdeen Cyrenians can help people move on from homelessness and rebuild their lives. The Street Alternatives service was the stepping stone and helping hand Michael needed on the way to finally gaining his own property.

Pathways to Wellbeing provides immediate access to a locally based generic counselling service, improving mental health in the community through the delivery of a point of need counselling service with easy access and minimal waiting times. The high number of sessions delivered was an indication of the complex needs presented by clients, resulting in a higher number of average sessions per client.

Each client is asked to complete an Evaluation Form at the end of their counselling. These evaluations showed that all clients had found the counselling to be beneficial and reported a reduced attendance at their GP as a result of counselling.

Over the year they provided counselling in 6 regeneration areas, and 92 people accessed 723 counselling sessions delivered. 5 volunteers contributed 150 hours of volunteering time.



This service was crucial for me. At times I felt I was on the verge of a breakdown and things had got out of control. The counsellor helped me to manage my feelings and see there was a way out.”

ACIS Youth Counselling is run by Mental Health Aberdeen (MHA) and provides a counselling and information service for young people aged between 12 and 18 to address a range of emotional and health issues that can cause distress. They offer an early intervention service for young people in the hope that they can be supported to address childhood trauma thus avoiding significant difficulties as adults, and offer a trustworthy source for young people in emotional distress.

The waiting list for the service continued to grow during the year. MHA were successful in attracting private sector money to develop a training programme for volunteers with the aim of increasing the number of therapists available to offer counselling to young people.

178 young people accessed the service, 1,125 counselling sessions were provided and 6 volunteers were involved in delivering the service, contributing 246 hours of volunteer time.

Torry Adult Counselling & Torry Talk is run by Mental Health Aberdeen, and delivers counselling to clients in Torry, referred by GP practices and other health workers, social work, education, police and other agencies, as well as self-referrals.

During the year it was decided to

integrate the youth provision of this project with ACIS Youth which allowed them to greatly increase the youth provision in Torry, and provide a more integrated service to the schools with a greater variety of counselling available.

128 adults completed a course of counselling and 48 young people accessed the service. A total of 689 counselling sessions were provided for adults and 562 for young people. 2 volunteers contributed 95 hours of volunteering time.

Calsayseat Counselling is provided by Mental Health Aberdeen to provide a counselling service within Calsayseat surgery, addressing all mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, substance misuse, relationship issues, parenting issues, phobias, as well as problems related to unemployment, and literacy and numeracy issues.

The service continued to be oversubscribed. MHA provided additional resources and moved clients to alternative provision within the organisation, where appropriate.

Over the year 151 people took part in counselling, and 63% of them showed a decrease in depression as shown in the Hospital Anxiety Depression monitoring forms. A total of 1,197 counselling sessions were provided, and 3 volunteers contributed 271 hours of volunteering.



Tillydrone Health & Well Being Project aims to increase relaxation and wellbeing by providing Complementary Health sessions including Reflexology, Reiki and Indian Head Massage accessible to everyone within the area of Tillydrone and delivered by a qualified and experienced Complementary Health Practitioner.

During the year there were more people coming forward who had been affected by welfare reforms and with a high level of stress. As well as practical help they are encouraged to book a health treatment. After attending the health treatments they all said that it had helped to improve their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. From the end of January a crèche was offered at one of the weekly sessions allowing parents of younger children to be able to access the service.

60 people accessed the 396 sessions provided, and 1 volunteer contributed 20 hours of volunteer time.

Printfield Feel Good Project aims to increase relaxation and wellbeing by providing Complementary Health sessions including Reflexology, Reiki



I feel less anxious and stressed, more able to cope with life.”

and Indian Head Massage accessible to everyone within the area of Woodside and delivered by a qualified and experienced Complementary Health Practitioner.

Over the year 24 people accessed the 90 sessions provided.

Give Kids A Chance (GKAC) is run by Children First and they aim to support disadvantaged young people between the ages of 10 – 18 years to become involved in activities to increase their self-confidence and self-esteem and develop social and practical skills. They coordinate access to a range of activities in Aberdeen; some of them run solely for the benefit of GKAC participants. The project also has links with a wide number of independent sports clubs and activity providers. Up to 100 young people are supported at any one time. They attend on a regular weekly basis and work towards achievement goals in their chosen activities.

Over the year approximately 20 activities were on offer, including Sooyang, music, dance, drama, ice skating, football, boxing, trampoline, horse riding, Sea Cadets, snooker, crafts, golf and BMX biking. GKAC received 82 new referrals, 90% of them from regeneration areas.

Healthy Roots maintain and develop Manor Park, a community-run park in Middlefield, by cutting the grass and hedges, weeding flower beds and repairing any damage that occurs in

the park. They aim to improve the park by planting more flower beds, installing more benches to create more sitting areas, and developing and promoting the new allotments area.

Over the year 288 participants were involved, 103 of them under 16 years old. The number of visits to the park totalled 32,000, 16 Park Rangers were recruited and 16 allotments leased. 41 volunteers contributed 1,901 hours of volunteering time.

Outdoor Explorers at Ashgrove Family Centre encouraged young children and families to build confidence, team work, healthy living and physical development, through making use of the local environment by planting, growing, harvesting, photography and exploring new and exciting challenges. They provided support to children with challenging behaviours to overcome anxieties, help build positive relationships with their peer group and promote a nurturing, safe and stimulating place to explore. Over the year funding was used to buy outdoor waterproof clothing, cameras and camping equipment.



Home-Start

Home-Start coordinates home visiting support to families in the regeneration areas who are identified as at risk and hard to reach, working to prevent further crisis and family breakdown. Volunteers aim to develop parent and child confidence leading to happier, healthier more enjoyable family relationships, reduced isolation and increased resilience to cope with challenges in their lives. They offer emotional and practical support as needed, building on positive existing attributes, role modelling and encouraging increased parent/child activities and routines. They identify additional suitable support for health, further education and financial issues, and accompany people to appointments where necessary. The Health Development Co-ordinator through the "Recipe for Life" project works with families on budgeting, practical cookery, breast feeding and weaning, oral health and general advice on healthier lifestyles.

Over the year 35 families in regeneration areas were supported. 31 families reported reduced isolation, 27 reported reduced levels of family conflict or stress, and 8 families no longer required Social Work support. 14 families were supported with financial issues, 9 people moved into training or volunteering, and 28 children accessed play and learning opportunities. 32 volunteers contributed 2,876 hours of volunteering time.



Pat lives in Northfield and was referred to Home-Start when her children were small. She really appreciated the support she was given, and as her children got a little older she decided that she would like to volunteer and help other families.

While being supported by Home-Start Pat started to attend local adult education classes and when she started volunteering she also decided to start attending Aberdeen College on a part time basis. Pat went on to complete an HNC in social sciences and was able to combine both the college learning with the practical experience she gained volunteering with Home-Start.

During her time as a volunteer Pat has supported many Home-Start families and has made such a difference to them.

Pat went on to attend RGU and this summer she completed a BA Hons in Applied Social Sciences and is now working with Aberdeen Cyrenians as a support worker.

Pat says that she will always appreciate that Home-Start was there for her. She knew she wanted to make changes in her life and she has worked really hard to do so. We are grateful for the time she has given Home-Start as a volunteer.

One of our families required a great deal of emotional and practical support regarding domestic violence and police issues; bereavement support following the death of a young child; support to attend a variety of GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child) and other professional meetings; and help with budgeting, shopping and cooking. At a recent Children's Panel meeting the supervision order was lifted and Home-Start was praised for the intensive support given. All children in the family are being given bereavement counselling and the volunteer ensures that they are able to get to the appointments, and encourages mum and the children to follow through on the work done with the counsellors by giving space to talk about their feelings about the child's death. We expect this support will start to reduce in the year ahead. Mum recently said to us "The volunteer is like a mum to me – she asks if I'm okay and if I say yes and I'm not she knows straight away that I'm not telling the truth".

“

I feel that Home-Start is the only agency that doesn't judge me, but listens to me.”

Building Stronger, Safer Communities

19% of the fund (£331,000) was allocated to initiatives that help build stronger safer communities. The main themes under this priority are improving access to services in regeneration areas, Community Safety and supporting community involvement and participation.

Over the year a total of 2,935 people participated in activities and services provided in Community Projects and Flats. Cummings Park, Seaton and Tillydrone Community Flats are wholly funded by Fairer Aberdeen, and a number of organisations use these venues to deliver services within the areas. The number of attendances to use their facilities including phone, computers, making enquiries and getting information totalled 13,267.

There were 1,016 hours of additional police patrols engaging with sex workers. The numbers of calls to the Police regarding on street prostitution for Aberdeen City reduced from 50 to 40 and for the Local Policing Areas of City Centre and Seaton from 41 to 26.

Operation Begonia is delivered by Police Scotland and provides dedicated, directed patrols with the aim of tackling prostitution; by encountering, identifying and engaging with sex industry workers and offering safety advice and fast track appointments to key partners who can help to address the background causes leading to the behaviour.

The project aims to enable and empower sex industry workers to address problems that have led to them becoming involved in this dangerous work and reduce the number of women operating in the locality, thus benefitting local residents and businesses in the long-established and renowned 'red light' area of Aberdeen.

During the year patrols began to be used for both on and off street sex workers, as numbers of women encountered on the street reduced to 15. There were 1,016 hours of additional patrol time undertaken and the number of calls to the police regarding on street prostitution for Aberdeen City reduced to 40, compared to 85 in the previous year, and calls relating to the City Centre and Seaton area were 26 compared to 70 last year.

13 women completed consent forms and were referred to partner agencies and 9 were issued with panic alarms.

Relationship Revolution is delivered by Choices and works to break the cycle of gender based violence and sexual exploitation in victims and perpetrators, and potential victims and perpetrators, in areas of high level recorded incidence in the city. They deliver an early intervention programme to raise awareness and challenge prejudice and stereotypes amongst young people. Participants are provided with tools to assist them identify, avoid and navigate violent and exploitive relationships and signpost them to additional support services. They also provide a therapeutic support service for young people affected by violence or exploitation, along with support for the adults in the young person's life. Training in support and development of a young person's mental health and resilience is provided for staff groups working with vulnerable young people.

Over the year 892 participants were involved, 126 educational workshops and 116 drop in clubs held. Around 90% of young people reported being able to identify violent and exploitive relationships and increased knowledge of support services following participation in the workshops. 30 young people took part in 3 or more sessions of counselling. There were 17 young people trained and supported to volunteer and 401 volunteer hours contributed.

Free To Succeed - Closing the Gaps

works with HMP Aberdeen to provide an effective throughcare service by supporting women offenders pre and post release.

The transition from HMP Aberdeen to HMP Grampian will mean that they are in contact with more women. It is estimated that 70% of the population of HMP Grampian will be from Aberdeen City, so those returning to the City after release will continue to be supported.

The project was recognised by the Butler Trust, which promotes excellence in correctional settings, and a commendation was received from HRH the Princess Royal (Patron of the Butler Trust) at Buckingham Palace for "dedication and skill in supporting the care and resettlement of women offenders, in custody and after release."



Over the year they worked with 9 women, helped to source voluntary or paid employment for 6 clients and provided positive activities within the prison setting for all clients. They supported clients to settle into suitable accommodation and helped them to resolve financial issues. 14 volunteers contributed 1,970 hours of volunteer time.

“ Spending time with you just helps with the boredom. It helps to sort my head out. Nobody else gives me this amount of time. I've stopped drinking and I have a job now.”

Community Flats and Projects

Tillydrone Community Flat provides a resource for community activity; a venue for a range of organisations that offer support, information and advice; and supports community capacity building and learning.

During the year they started two new adult learning classes, after a survey was conducted to see what type of activities people were interested in.

Creative Communities workshops were provided by Aberdeen City Council's Creative Learning Team, building on the previous year's successful partnership. They held a workshop at the Gala Day, and 4 workshops at the flat with a crèche provided, as well as workshops in the wider community. They used this project to launch a regular art group at the flat on Friday mornings, which has attracted new people to the flat. They are now going to work in partnership with the Creative Writing and History Group to create an exhibition of their work.

They also piloted a Family History group and have successfully run four blocks of this class. The participants now meet each week to dedicate time to research their family history with the support of the tutor.

29 agencies used the Flat to deliver advice and support services for a range of issues including Health, Education, Employability and Financial Inclusion. There were 2,140 recorded uses of the Flat facilities, including use of the washing machine, phone and access to computers. A total of 402 participants were involved, 79 of them under 16 years old. 111 people were involved in adult learning activities, 8 people were on the Tilly Tattle editorial group and 16 volunteers contributed 700 hours of volunteer time.



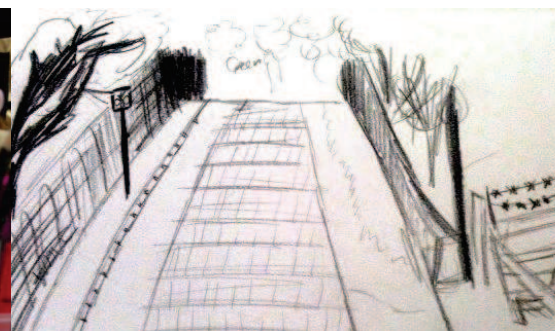
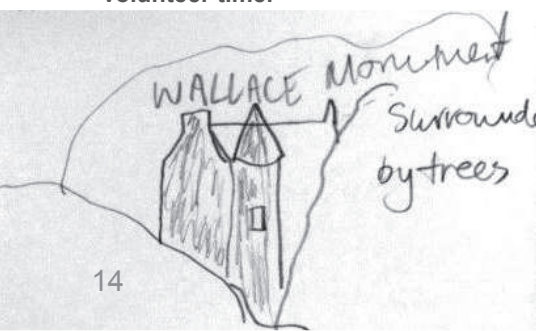
“

Tillydrone Community Flat continues to be a hub for community activity in the area. We have been busier than last year and have exceeded our predicted usage for the year by over 5 times. There has been a big increase in numbers of people accessing the flat for support with benefits and the bedroom tax.”

Printfield Community Project

provides a resource for community activity; a venue for a range of organisations that offer support, information and advice; and supports community capacity building and learning. Services for families and residents include After School Childcare, youth services, Adult Learning classes and tenants support.

Over the year they upgraded the project premises; acquired funding to provide school holiday activities for 80 children and young people aged 5-16 years; and increased the capacity of their Out of School Care. 32 adult learners attended 5 adult learning courses, and 40 people were involved in the Woodside Network, which held 10 meetings though the year. A total of 190 participants were involved, 138 of them under 16 years old, and 32 volunteers contributed 600 volunteer hours.



STAR (Seaton Taking Action on Regeneration) Community Flat

provides a resource for community activity, a venue for a range of organisations that offer support, information and advice and supports community capacity building and learning.

Local residents see the flat as a one stop advice shop to go when seeking help and advice with their problems. Some residents use the computers to search for jobs and print off CVs, others rely on the free phone line to call about medical appointments, housing issues or benefit queries. This service was used 327 times within the year.

The provision of food bank vouchers was a new development for the flat and approximately 20 vouchers were issued per week, making the service more accessible for those in need.

Pathways used the flat as a base to meet Seaton residents to help them with creating their CVs, job search and job applications, whilst also identifying training needs and helping with appropriate funding.



The Credit Union operates weekly sessions providing saving and loan facilities and is always busy with regular customers. CFINE provides competitively priced fruit and vegetables with their fruit and vegetable and stew packs proving popular. The flat sells fresh haddock at competitive prices and the weekly ordering service is popular, with new customers using the service and 15 to 30 fish packs are ordered per week. The art and craft class included new activities and techniques such as collage, glass etching and wood

burning, and a new Silver Darlings project focused on sewing and cooking, with the cooking class based around a fishy theme to tie in with the fish that that is delivered weekly.

Silver City Surfers continued to be busy and their regular sessions and drop in facilities were complimented by a range of free basic skills computer classes provided by Aberdeen City Council.

Over the year there were 3,220 attendances at sessions provided by 11 partner agencies, 31 people attended sessions supporting people to get back into work and 60 people attended adult learning sessions. A total of 510 people were involved and 7 volunteers contributed 455 hours of volunteer time.

Cummings Park Community Flat

provides a resource for community activity, a venue for a range of organisations that offer support, information and advice, and supports community capacity building and learning.

A 'Cumming-In' community open day encouraged an attendance of 91 people. The volunteers led the event by contacting people, liaising with partners, organising donations for the raffle, running a BBQ and bouncy castle, and consulting people on what they would like to see done to improve the local environment.

A Litter Pick session was held with Northfield Academy's Eco group and Bramble Braes p7s, supported by Aberdeen City Councils environmental team.

The Big Dig was a community garden event. Local people of all ages, staff



and partners, and 3 volunteers from an oil company spent the day digging, painting the fence and creating the garden. Since then there have been boxes made, fences built, gravel laid, locks fitted, fruit trees and vegetables planted and maintained. Volunteers continue to grow vegetables and fruit for the benefit of the community. The garden has received an ECO friendly award from ACC which they are very proud of.

15 partner agencies delivered services from the Flat over the year. The total number of participants was 1,441 with the number of contacts accessing activities being 894 and the number of uses of the Flat facilities, including phone, computers and enquiries being 456.

There were 91 adult learners involved; the Flat was open for 25 sessions per week, and 24 volunteers contributed 1,225 volunteer hours.



Middlefield Youth Flat supports young people, especially those with low literacy skills, low self-esteem and lack of confidence. Youth workers provide positive adult support that meets the needs of the young people by understanding the barriers they face and supporting them in working to overcome these.

Over the year the Flat was open for 246 days, providing 1,235 sessions with a total of 164 young people attending. There were 24 day trips and 1 residential trip organised and 8 Youth Committee meetings held. 45 young people had individual learning plans in place and 19 were in work or training.

Supporting Volunteers and Under 11s work is delivered by Middlefield Community Project, to encourage local people to volunteer to plan, organise and participate in play schemes & clubs. Training is provided, including First Aid, Health and Hygiene and Child Protection, and volunteers are given opportunities to learn skills and build their confidence and self-esteem to improve their chances of moving on to education or employment. The project also provides positive on going activities to children and families who are often unable to access these themselves due to not being able to afford entrance fees or transport costs. In this way the project can ensure children have positive choices.

Over the year 40 participants were involved, there were 38 sessions provided for P1-3 and 40 for P4-6, as well as 16 parent and child swimming sessions. 2 volunteers contributed 430 hours of time and 2 volunteer training events were provided.

A **Family Support Worker** supports vulnerable families at Fersands Family Centre, providing regular one to one support and advice on a wide range of issues including housing, employment and child protection. They involve parents in group discussions and activities aimed at making them feel less isolated and increasing their parenting skills. Linking with Social Work and other professionals that can offer support to the families, they provide opportunities for families to benefit from, or become more involved

in, community activities or volunteering. They help individuals to access employment or educational chances, offer direct practical support and play a key role in representing families during family case meetings.

Over the year 42 families received support and 3 parent groups ran weekly. More intensive, long term support was provided to 14 families who have social work involvement and where child protection issues had led to compulsory measures of supervision or, in some cases, where children have had to be accommodated by the local authority.

Youth Work Support at Fersands Community Project provides a wide range of youth work services to encourage young people to experience new activities, gain new skills, build relationships and learn about health issues, employment and other issues relevant to them. They provide free alternative activities including day trips and residential camps which take the young people into different environments, new situations and new challenges, helping them become more independent and to work as a team.

Over the year 90 young people participated, 70 of them were under 16 years old. The Job Club was attended by 12 people, and 12 volunteers contributed 300 hours of volunteer time.



The **Twos Group** at Fersands Family Centre provides a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment to deliver good quality play and learning experiences to encourage motivation, and enthusiastic learning. They target

the most vulnerable families and work with parents, health visitors, education support workers and Social Work to maximise the child's development opportunities.

30 children attended and 3 pre nursery groups were held per week. 11 volunteers were involved.

Big Bang Drumming Group at Aberdeen Lads Club provides percussion workshops for young people, to create a performance band to enhance participants' confidence, self-esteem and social skills.

14 young people were involved over the year and 2 volunteers contributed 80 hours of volunteer time.



ACT Attack provides drama classes as a means to help promote a sense of value, self-worth, and self-confidence in young people, and give them an appreciation of Arts, drama and music while having fun and enjoying themselves.

Over the year sessions were held weekly at St George's Church and Riverbank School in Tillydrone, as well as a week long course during the Easter holidays and a two week course during the summer. 32 young people were involved and they wrote and produced their own work as well as a DVD. 7 volunteers contributed 180 hours of volunteer time.

Increasing Skills and Creativity

Creative Communities is delivered by ACC's Creative Learning Team to explore new cultural opportunities, develop inclusive projects that link with regeneration, heritage, public art, new media and volunteering. It aims to break down barriers to participation in cultural activity, promote community engagement in culture and the arts, and create projects recognised locally and nationally.

Following a number of consultation events the Creative Communities programme was delivered across the

15% of the fund (£253,000) was allocated to initiatives that help increase skills and creativity. The main themes under this priority are supporting learning and creative opportunities, improving literacy and encouraging volunteering.

Over the year 904 people participated in Arts activities and 990 in Adult Learning. Of these, 124 people were involved in producing community media, 90 producing weekly radio shows in 6 regeneration communities and 34 producing a total of 20 community newsletters. A further 40 young people were actively involved in producing Youth Radio and TV.

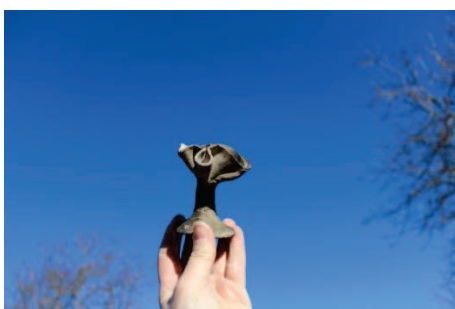
A total of 3,050 people, 969 of them under 16 years old, participated in 9 initiatives, and 228 volunteers contributed 31,089 hours of volunteer time.



seven priority neighbourhoods, and offered opportunities to take part in a varied programme of arts workshops, projects and events which ran from August 2013 to March 2014. Each neighbourhood had a different artist leading a unique participatory project. A printed brochure and event flyers were produced along with frequently updated social media to promote the project.

The Creative Communities 2013/14 culminated in a celebration event on 29 March 2014. The event invited participants, artists and partners to celebrate achievements from throughout the project and enabled a further sampling of project highlights. There was also the showing of the 'Step into My Parlour' film featuring groups from Cummings Park and Northfield.

The **Cultivate Creative Volunteer Training Programme** was delivered from the Creative Learning Team's workshop base at Rosemount Learning Centre. The two accredited training programmes successfully ran



“

Thank you so much for a wonderful afternoon at the outdoor kiln firing. My boys had a great time listening to the stories and making their clay tiles. It was so lovely to have an event like this on in Woodside - great community feeling all at the end of our road - perfect!”

parallel to the delivery of the Creative Communities outreach workshops and events across the regeneration areas.

Fourteen individuals signed up to the accredited training course over the 2 programmes and 11 individuals successfully gained their SQA Volunteering Skills Award level 4.

Cultivate volunteers made a significant contribution to the Creative Communities programme in regeneration areas. Throughout the two programmes, Cultivate volunteers contributed a total of 736 hours to the training, preparation, supporting and delivery of creative activities, workshops and events in Torry, Northfield & Cummings Park, Seaton and Woodside.

Over the year 904 people participated, 380 of them under the age of 16 and 870 of them from regeneration areas. 398 people attended Creative Communities events and 437 attended workshops. 11 events were led by volunteers and 14 volunteers contributed 786 volunteer hours.

Station House Media Unit (shmu)

Connecting Communities Through Community Media is delivered by SHMU and supports the production of community media in regeneration areas, exploring and addressing local community issues and developing skills by providing training and support. Community media aims to develop opportunities for underrepresented voices to be heard across the city; creating a wide range of benefits for individuals and communities, fostering a spirit of engagement and partnership working; developing transferrable skills in participants; and contributing towards increased social capital.

Over the year 90 volunteers were supported to produce radio programmes. Weekly hour-long community radio programmes, representing key issues and news, continued to be supported, produced and broadcast by residents of 6 regeneration areas. They were broadcast live during the day, and then repeated in the evening. These community shows are discussion based, magazine format programmes which offer a platform to each community to discuss the issues affecting their area, while also offering an insight to life within the target communities.

The Community Newsdesk continued to gather information on events and activities specific to each of the seven target neighbourhoods and broadcast daily bulletins through the What's On guides on Breakfast Show, Packed Lunch and Cruise Control. Daily community news bulletins also continued to be incorporated into the key community shows.

34 volunteers were supported to produce community magazines 3 times a year in 7 regeneration areas, all had editorial teams that received regular support. In all 140 organisations worked in partnership with SHMU over the year, and a total of 803 participants were involved, 258 of them under 16 years old. 124 volunteers contributed 18,176 hours of volunteer time.



“

One of our new volunteers who joined an editorial team about 6 months ago has written their first article, which was allocated a full page in the last edition. This was a major step forward for the individual concerned who has an offending history and has been suffering from alcohol and substance misuse. This person was so delighted that they came into shmu on the day the magazines were due back from the printers just to collect a hard copy so this could be passed onto their support worker. They have also signed up for the next Journalism Course.”

Youth Media provides creative opportunities for young people (between the age of 12-19), primarily from the regeneration areas of Aberdeen, to train and take part in all aspects of the production of regular radio and television programmes (researching, writing, presenting, performing, filming, vision mixing and editing). SHMU supports young people in personal development, notably through increased confidence, communication and self-expression.

Youth Radio Project members spent the year working on their Youth Achievement Awards, 14 worked towards Bronze awards and 7 worked towards Gold awards. The group also continued to record their volunteering hours using the Saltire Award. 12 Youth Radio Project members and 1 Youth TV member achieved Saltire Awards in recognition of their volunteering hours, of these, 6 Youth Radio Project members received the Saltire Award for 500 hours of volunteering last year – the highest level awarded.

Over the past year, every Saturday from 10 am to 1pm, young people worked as a team to produce and broadcast a radio show that presents a young person's perspective on a variety of issues and themes. Issues explored included education, health,

employment, community safety and peer relationships. In addition, young people had the opportunity to present individual weekly shows from 4pm to 5pm Monday to Friday. These shows explored the participant's diverse taste in music and allowed for the exploration of other current topics of interest.



The group showed great commitment to the project and clearly demonstrated their ability to work as part of a team contributing towards raising awareness to other young people through the medium of radio. The broadcasts covered events such as the Aberdeen International Youth Festival and the Celebrate Aberdeen Parade. **There were 28 young people volunteering on a weekly basis, presenting 8 hours of live radio broadcast per week, with a total of 314 hours of live broadcasts during the reporting period.**

Two Youth Radio Project members produced a special one-hour radio show, titled 'Lessons from Auschwitz', following their visit to the former Nazi extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The show was produced for broadcast on Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January, and the young volunteers hoped the programme helped to encourage discussions about the Holocaust in their schools and communities.



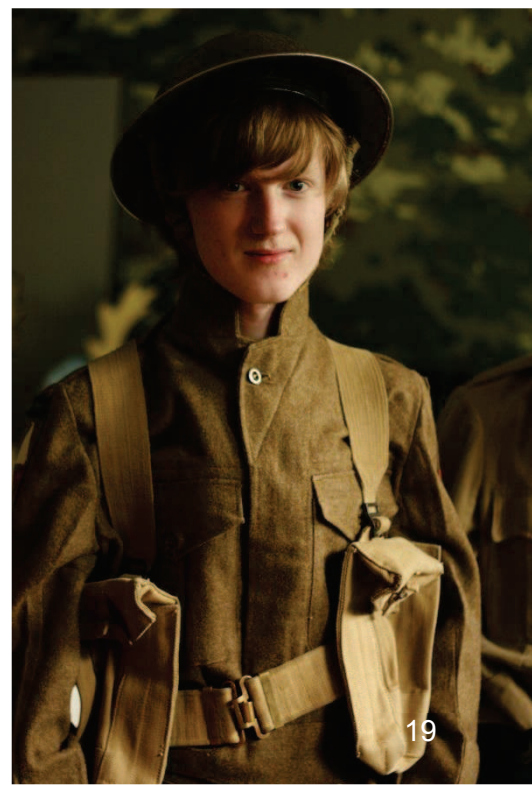
In early 2013 one of the shmu volunteers from the Torry area approached us with a film idea – to capture World War 2 veterans stories. The idea was to make this a local intergenerational project where young people from Torry interviewed older people from the Torry area. The young people were brought together from shmu and they all volunteered their time out with the other shmu projects they were involved in. The project worked in partnership with the Gordon Highlanders Museum to connect with the veterans and the group also spoke to older people who had been young children growing up in Aberdeen during WW2. The Gordon Highlanders arranged an education session to give the group an introduction to the history of the Highlanders. The interviews and filming all took place over a very hectic 2-3 week period in early August with editing taking place at the end of August. The group were supported by tutors at SHMU but did the majority of filming, directing and planning themselves.

All of this hard work was rewarded on the 10th September at the official screening at The Belmont Cinema as part of the 50+ Festival. There were over 70 people in the audience including some of our young people and a few of the veterans and older people who had appeared in the film. The audience were treated to a question and answer session after the screening providing an opportunity to ask the young people questions about their experience making the film. When asked what making the film meant to them, one of the young people commented that it had really helped to boost her confidence. The group also agreed that it gave them a much greater insight into the realities of war and of just how close to home it came and found the subject matter all the more interesting hearing it from a local perspective. It also made them see and think of older people in a different light, now knowing some of the fascinating and sometimes harrowing stories behind them. It made them grateful to be living in a time of relative peace; knowing that the veterans were their age when they were conscripted.

As a result of this project shmu has had interest from schools wanting to use the film in their history lessons to give pupils a greater insight into the local history relating to the war. There has also been a lot of interest in continuing this project, in gathering more stories and encouraging the intergenerational aspect by including knowledge transfer whereby young people will teach older people to use the camera equipment, about sound and lighting and film directing.

The Youth TV project has a core group of 10 young people from the regeneration areas who have been participating in weekly training sessions. The group worked on monthly plans to produce live and pre-recorded issue-based broadcasts that are relevant to the participants and the audience alike, and issues included bullying and exam stress. **Over the year the participants produced 11 live broadcasts, 13 TV shows which can all be viewed on You Tube, and an intergenerational World War II film which was screened at the Belmont Cinema.**

A total of 92 young people participated in Youth Media, 57 of them under 16 years old. 42 volunteers contributed 8,585 hours of volunteer time.



Positive Lifestyles is a programme run by St Machar Parent Support Project to help parents identify issues and support them to engage with the relevant agencies to deal with these before they reach crisis point, preventing future long term need for statutory services.

Over the year a young mums group was supported; looking at health issues; helping to build relationships with their Health Visitors; and taking part in cooking sessions. There was a waiting list for this group as demand was so high, and people were signposted to other agencies until a place became available for them. Individuals were supported and helped with a variety of issues, such as parenting skills; challenging behaviour; benefits; looking for work; and accessing other support such as counselling sessions; grants for clothing, furniture and white goods; and vouchers for food banks.

197 people participated in the programme and 102 parents were referred on to relevant agencies for further support. 13 people received help with CVs and interviews, 32 people took up volunteering opportunities and 46 people were supported to claim grants totalling £8,378. 12 volunteers contributed 25 hours of volunteer time.



The families we have supported have 314 children that we have helped, either directly or indirectly. We still have a high percentage of users who are coming to the project for support due to welfare reforms. One person had not received benefits for a year, with our support he has recently attended an appeal and received over £4,500 backdated money.”



Coming to Adult Learning has given me the confidence to start a part time job. I have to do a bit of writing and stock taking and I have to handle money sometimes. I was nervous about taking it but feel more confident now. Being able to get help at my class stops me panicking if I can't understand what I'm supposed to do at work.”

Literacies for Life is delivered by Aberdeen City Council and it aims to engage individuals in learning opportunities which will assist them to overcome barriers to further learning, employment, volunteering and engagement in their local community. The Lifelong Learning Team deliver a programme which is focussed around integrated literacies, having the specific aims of providing adult learners with help in developing confidence; in overcoming barriers to learning; and in developing skills for life.



Over the year learners came from the target groups of unemployed people; individuals on a low income; young people; homeless people; migrant workers; and offenders. The learners identified significant skills gaps in communications, basic IT, numeracy and literacy, problem solving and team working; these are collectively known as Core Skills and they underpin Employability. Using the Fairer Aberdeen funding the adult learning

team was able to increase the amount of work carried out in this vitally important field; tailoring programmes to meet individual needs and making courses relevant and interactive.

Over the year 243 new learners participated in integrated literacy provision, 36 received support with financial literacy, 32 undertook job search related activities and 10 volunteers were recruited and provided with support and training.

Alternative Literacies by WEA provides literacy opportunities for non-traditional learners who are hard to engage in learning. They offer flexible literacy programmes which are accessible, inclusive and appropriate to learner needs and which provide progression routes to volunteering, alternative WEA provision and employment if appropriate.

Over the year 91 people participated in three 10 week programmes, a summer programme and a residential trip. The classes covered environmental awareness, gardening, football, residential planning, residential participation, the students soap box, arts and crafts, and environmental art. 4 volunteers contributed to the 362 hours of volunteer time undertaken at Reach Out.

The **Reading Bus** delivers creative family sessions in schools and communities to increase confidence and enjoyment in reading together, with positive skills development in reading and the spoken word. It aims to promote reading as a source of life long pleasure; raise attainment and achievement of children at risk of early failure; encourage family learning in a non-school environment; and involve and empower parents in their children's learning.

They introduced a Scots programme through creation of simple, poems, stories and songs, extended to embrace other languages within the school community. Family sessions were a central focus of this programme, encouraging parents to develop and share their creativity; drawing from their own cultures; and culminating in community gatherings to celebrate Scots and the global community.



The children have enjoyed exploring stories from across the globe, including tales from Nigeria and Russia. The teachers have noted that the sessions demonstrated great inclusion by incorporating bilingual stories."

Each school presented a celebratory assembly, which combined music, drama and creative play, and parents were invited to attend these events. One school choreographed dances and re-enacted Doric stories. Puppetry and drama was used to engage EAL and ASN pupils. Parents engaged with storytelling classes and teachers were supported to embed Scots across the curriculum. The project also highlighted Scotland's place in the community and raised interest in the Commonwealth games, which was used as the learning context.

Over the year 400 pupils and 50 parents participated in 160 sessions.



Silver City Surfers provide one to one computer tutoring for over 55s in the City Centre, Seaton and Cummings Park areas, so that they can confidently learn how to use the computer and surf the internet safely in a welcoming and social environment.

Over the year they delivered 4 sessions a week as well as a monthly information session. Learner numbers at sessions in Cummings Park increased over the year with a well-attended open event. Sessions were promoted with posters, in the local press and on SHMU radio. Sessions were delivered by volunteers who helped many older people to stay in touch with family and friends, with services and with what's going on locally and nationally. **206 people participated and 30 volunteers contributed 6,800 hours of volunteer time.**



Volunteering for Silver City Surfers really suits me. Older people, like myself, there's a bit of fear when you touch a computer and we help to break down that barrier. We don't make people computer experts, they do that themselves. We open the doors to help them start to learn."

Stockethill Step Up delivers a range of groups and classes for adults, particularly those living in poverty, lone parents, unemployed, older people and people with health issues. Classes focus on getting people back into work, improving health and support for parents.



We have an older lady who attends this class while her husband, who suffers from senile dementia, attends respite. She sees the class as a lifeline where she can have contact with others rather than feeling isolated."

During the year they set up two computing groups, one for beginners and an intermediate class for students who attended in the previous term, giving them the opportunity to increase their skills and confidence further. These two computing groups mainly attracted older adults living in the area. They also ran a Healthy Cooking Class and a Keep Fit class. Healthy Cooking had a positive impact on the adults and their families in term of losing weight, saving money and eating a healthier diet.

64 people were involved over the year and 2 volunteers contributed 150 volunteer hours.

Regeneration Matters is a group of community representatives from the regeneration and priority areas of Aberdeen. It has a membership of approximately 25 people who meet monthly to discuss issues of relevance to all the regeneration areas. Over the year meeting topics covered the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and its use as a tool for identifying small area concentrations of multiple deprivation; welfare reform and the effects the changes are having; housing and the role of the new Housing Officers; food banks; drug and alcohol issues; and employability. The group invites guest organisations along to meetings in which the group can get questions answered, and the guest organisations have the opportunity to learn about the priorities, concerns and experiences of the community.

Regeneration Matters also manage the Community Support Fund on behalf of the Fairer Aberdeen Board. Over the year funding was awarded to support communications, training, community capacity building and community involvement in regeneration.

Thanks to all the staff, volunteers and users of funded projects and organisations who have contributed reports, case studies and photographs for this report.





Fairer Aberdeen Fund

6 Month Progress Report (1st April – 30th Sept 2014)

In 2014-15 Aberdeen City Council allocated £1.625m to the Fairer Aberdeen Fund (previously the Fairer Scotland Fund). The fund is managed by the Fairer Aberdeen Board on behalf of Community Planning Aberdeen, and members are from Aberdeen City Council, partner organisations and communities.

The main purpose for the fund is targeting disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups and individuals. The Board has agreed outcomes, neighbourhoods and vulnerable groups as priorities for use of the Fund:

Priority Outcomes:

- Maximising income
- Getting people into work
- Improving mental health and well being
- Building stronger safer communities
- Increasing skills and creativity

Priority Neighbourhoods:

- Cummings Park
- Middlefield
- Northfield
- Seaton
- Tillydrone
- Torry
- Woodside

Priority Groups:

- People living in poverty
- Lone parents and families with children
- Unemployed people
- Children and young people
- People with health issues
- Older people
- Minority groups where an identified need can be evidenced

This report details how the fund has been allocated and the progress made from April to September 2014.

Maximising income

£397,000 was allocated to this theme, which aims to improve access to affordable financial services and products, deliver financial education initiatives, and provide coordinated advice and information services.

St Machar Credit Union and North East Scotland Credit Union Access Project promote access to saving schemes and affordable loans across all the priority areas.

Citizens Advice Bureau Money Advice Outreach Project, Care and Repair and Aberdeen Illness and Disability Advice Service offer advice and information. Cash in your Pocket acts as a central hub for its financial inclusion partners and WEA build financial literacies into their education programmes.

Aberdeen Food Banks Partnership aims to generate as much produce as possible for the benefit of those in food poverty, and to provide access to financial, employability and educational support and information.

Over the 6 months 1897 affordable loans, totalling almost £1 million, were provided by the credit unions. Money and income maximisation advice was provided for 1146 people, resulting in client financial gain of £1,563,570. The Food Bank Partnership dispersed 38 tonnes of free food and provided 3615 food parcels for 4490 people.

As can be seen in the table below, most of the figures achieved are up compared to the same time period in 2013, and all are on line to meet the full year target for 2014-15.

Indicator	April-Sept 2013	Target 14-15 (full year)	April-Sept 2014
Number of Credit Union adult savers	3577	4200	4904
Number of Credit Union junior savers	1692	2200	2278
Number of affordable loans provided by Credit Unions	1587	3350	1897
Amount of affordable loans provided by Credit Unions	£999,583	£1,900,000	£971,133
Total savings deposited with Credit Unions	£1,786,498	£1,900,000	£2,166,979
Number of credit union collection points	20	23	18
Number of people receiving money advice	210	475	258
No. of people receiving income maximisation advice	717	1393	888
Number of households receiving maximising income/charitable funding advice from Care & Repair	149	310	193
Total client financial gain	£1,089,216	£1,813,137	£1,563,570
Number of referrals to Cash In Your Pocket database	864	1800	1222
Quantity of free produce distributed in tonnes	12.5	75	38.15
Number of 5kg food parcels distributed	2524	7000	3615
Number of food bank beneficiaries	1514	6000	4490

Getting People into Work

£250,000 was allocated to ensuring that people had access to the support and skills they needed to return to work.

Pathways Employability service supports people into work, offering help with CVs, job searches and completing application forms. They run weekly drop in sessions in all the priority areas.

North East Sensory Services Employment Service supports people with sight and/or hearing impairments, as well as helping people retain employment.

Station House Media Unit delivers the SHMU Train Initiative, as well as early intervention work in schools. WEA and the Princes Trust Team Programme offer training and development programmes for young people.

Pathways also manage the Support Fund which helps to pay expenses that can be a barrier to returning to work.

Over the 6 months 224 people moved into work. Weekly employment support drop in sessions were run in 14 priority neighbourhoods. 125 young people were involved in employability initiatives with 57 of them moving on to employment, education or training. Halfway through the year Pathways have already met their full year target of 200 people into work.

As can be seen in the table below, most of the figures achieved are up compared to the same time period in 2013, and all are on line to meet the full year target for 2014-15.

Indicator	April-Sept 2013	Target 14-15 (full year)	April-Sept 2014
Number of people into work	142	241	224
Number of people accessing the Support Fund	24	40	43
Access Centres in areas of high unemployment offering weekly Employment Support drop In sessions	14	14	14
Number of young people involved in MCMC activities	104	189	125
Number of young people moving on to employment, education or training	37	131	57
Number of people supported into work by Pathways	124	200	200
Number of people supported into work by NESS	8	8	6
Number of people supported into work by shmuTrain	8	15	7

Improving Health and Wellbeing

£307,000 was allocated to health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.

Pathways to Wellbeing and Mental Health Aberdeen provide counselling services in all of the priority areas, these continue to be oversubscribed and have long waiting lists. Seaton Support for Recovery offer support to people recovering from drug, alcohol and mental health issues.

Printfield Feel Good and Tillydrone Health and Wellbeing projects offer complementary health treatments and Healthy Roots continue to maintain Manor Park in Middlefield.

Homestart offers home visiting support to families in need, and the Cyrenians support homeless people. The Community Food Development project continued to improve access to affordable and healthy food.

Over the 6 months 262 adults and 95 children used the mental health counselling provision. 63 Community Food Outlets were operating, 32 of them in sheltered housing complexes. Home-Start supported 20 families in regeneration areas and 2 of these families no longer need social work support.

As can be seen in the table below, several of the figures achieved are up compared to the same time period in 2013, and all are on line to meet the full year target for 2014-15.

Indicator	April-Sept 2013	Target 14-15 (full year)	April-Sept 2014
Number of operational Community Food Outlets	70	71	63
Number of Community Food Outlets operating in Sheltered Housing	31	31	32
Amount of sales in Community Food Outlets	£38,125	£90,000	£43,364
Number of adult clients using mental health counselling provision	214	350	262
Number of clients under 16 using mental health counselling provision	114	145	95
Number of counselling sessions provided	2368	2956	2301
Number of new and existing clients using the Seaton Recovery project and support on a regular basis	61	40	38
Number of people attending Cyrenian's Street Alternative sessions	20	20	20
Number of families supported in by Home-Start	22	35	20
Number of families supported by Home-Start no longer needing Social Work support	3	5	2

Building Stronger, Safer Communities

£263,000 was allocated to supporting neighbourhood projects and services and contributing to community safety.

Community Flats in Cummings Park, Printfield, Seaton and Tillydrone offer a range of services and activities as well as providing venues for other organisations to work within local communities.

Middlefield Youth Flat offers services for young people, and for younger children through its Under 11s work. Additional youth activities are provided by the Big Bang Drumming Group, ACT Attack and Fersands Youth Work Support.

Family support work and a Twos group are funded in Fersands Family Centre and Choices Relationship Revolution aims to raise awareness of gender based violence amongst young people.

Free to Succeed supports female offenders being released from prison, their numbers are lower due to fewer women being transferred to the new prison. They continue to support a woman released earlier in the year.

Operation Begonia provides additional police patrols to engage with on street sex workers. With reduced numbers of calls to the police regarding on street prostitution, and fewer women encountered, Operation Begonia will now also targeting off street sex workers. The number of patrols is lower than anticipated due to front line police officers being allocated to duties in Glasgow during the Commonwealth Games.

Over the 6 months there were 355 hours of patrols engaging with on street sex workers, and 2 women offenders were supported during their release from prison. A total of 1427 people engaged in services and activities in community flats and there were 8326 attendances to use facilities at community flats.

As can be seen in the table below, several of the figures achieved are up compared to the same time period in 2013, and all are on line to meet the full year target for 2014-15.

Indicator	April-Sept 2013	Target 14-15 (full year)	April-Sept 2014
Number of new women encountered through Operation Begonia	4	16	14
Number of hours of patrols engaging with on street sex workers	481	960	355
Numbers of call to the Police regarding 'on street' prostitution for Local Policing Areas of City Centre and Seaton	26	50	34
Number of female offenders engaged with Free to Succeed	8	3	2
Number of people participating in activities and services provided by Community Projects and Flats	978	1176	1427
Number of attendances at Community Flats to use facilities including phone, computers and information/enquiries	5467	11,570	8326
Numbers of young people using the Middlefield Youth Flat	164	130	80
Number of children registered at Printfield After School Club	48	48	51

Increasing Skills and Creativity

£213,000 was allocated to supported learning and creative activities.

The Creative Learning Team delivers Lift, an arts and wellbeing project which aims to offer quality experiences in arts, culture and creativity that contribute to individuals' wellbeing and further cultural participation. Station House Media Unit supports Community Media and Youth Media.

The Reading Bus delivers story telling sessions in schools, and Stockethill Step up provides activities for adults.

Silver City Surfers provides IT sessions for older people, WEA focuses on providing literacy support for non-traditional learners, and Literacies for Life, delivered by the Adult Learning Service, provides literacy opportunities.

St Machar Parent Support Project Positive Lifestyles supports parents, particularly with issues arising from benefit reforms.

Over the 6 months there were 68 people involved in Arts activities, 411 in adult learning activities and 120 in producing community media. 213 people were involved in volunteering, contributing 14,546 volunteer hours.

As can be seen in the table below, most of the figures achieved are up compared to the same time period in 2013, and all are on line to meet the full year target for 2014-15.

Indicator	April-Sept 2013	Target 14-15 (full year)	April-Sept 2014
Number of people active in Arts activities	n/a	276	68
Number of people involved in adult learning activities	477	488	411
Number of Adult learners attending literacy learning	174	271	141
Number of people involved in producing Community Media at SHMU	115	115	120
Number of organisations working in partnership with SHMU	114	100	247
Number of people registered as new learners with Silver City Surfers	89	185	117
Number of young people participating in Youth Media (radio and TV)	54	80	76
Number of volunteers involved	212	196	213
Number of volunteer hours contributed	14,618	29,510	14,546

From 1st April to 30th September over £1,430,000 has been awarded to 50 initiatives, supporting Projects in Regeneration Areas and work across the City with vulnerable groups and individuals. Grants range from £2,400 to £148,000 in value.

Susan Thoms
Fairer Aberdeen Fund Coordinator

Funded Projects 2014-15

Maximising Income

Care and Repair Funding Officer
 CAB Money Advice Outreach Project
 Cash In Your Pocket Team
 NESCU Credit Union Access Project
 St Machar Credit Union
 WEA Count Us In
 Aberdeen Illness and Disability Advice Service
 Aberdeen Food Banks Strategy

Care and Repair
 Citizens Advice Bureau
 ACVO
 North East Scotland Credit Union
 St Machar Credit Union
 WEA
 AIDAS
 CFINE

Getting People Into Work

Princes Trust Team Programme
 NESS Employment Service
 Pathways
 SHMU Train Initiative
 Dynamics
 Employability

Aberdeen Foyer
 North East Sensory Services
 Pathways
 Station House Media Unit
 WEA
 WEA

Improving Health and Wellbeing

Seaton Support for Rehab/Recovery
 Street Alternatives
 Community Food Development Project
 Give Kids A Chance
 Healthy Roots - Manor Park
 Home-Start
 ACIS Youth Counselling
 Calsayseat Counselling
 Torry Adult Counselling & Torry Talk
 Pathways to Wellbeing
 Feel Good Project
 Health & Well Being Project

ACC, Education Culture and Sports
 The Cyrenians
 CFINE
 Children 1st
 Healthy Roots
 Home-Start Aberdeen
 Mental Health Aberdeen
 Mental Health Aberdeen
 Mental Health Aberdeen
 Pathways
 Printfield Community Project
 Tillydrone Community Flat

Building Stronger, Safer Communities

Cummings Park Community Flat
 Big Bang Drumming Group
 Operation Begonia
 Supporting Volunteers and Under 11s work
 Middlefield Youth Flat
 STAR Community Flat
 ACT Attack
 Tillydrone Community Flat
 Relationship Revolution
 Family Support Worker
 Youth Work Support
 Twos Group
 Printfield Community Project
 Free To Succeed - Closing the Gaps

Cummings Park Flat M/C
 Aberdeen Lads Club
 Scottish Police Authority
 Middlefield Community Project
 Middlefield Community Project
 Langstane Housing Association
 St George's Church
 Tillydrone Community Flat M/C
 Choices Aberdeen
 Fersands Family Centre
 Fersands Community Project
 Fersands Family Centre
 Printfield Community Project
 Torry Trust

Increasing Skills and Creativity

Creative Communities
 Reading Bus
 Stockethill Step Up
 Silver City Surfers
 Community Media
 Youth Media
 Positive Lifestyles
 WEA - Alternative Literacies
 Literacies for Life

ACC, Arts Development
 ACC, Education
 Cornhill Community Centre
 Silver City Surfers
 Station House Media Unit
 Station House Media Unit
 St Machar Parent Support Project
 WEA
 ACC, Lifelong Learning

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 th December 2014
DIRECTOR	Ewan Sutherland
TITLE OF REPORT	Community Planning Aberdeen – Update
REPORT REF NO.	CG/14/170
CHECKLIST RECEIVED:	YES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with a 6 month report on the activity of Community Planning Aberdeen.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Council is asked to:

- a) Consider the report and advise of any actions.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Community Planning and the delivery of improved outcomes as described in the Single Outcome Agreement is of major significance to the Council and the City.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Community Planning Aberdeen Board

Review of Single Outcome Agreement

At their meeting in October 2014, the Board held an annual review of progress across the priority Themes set out in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). In considering progress the Partnership's Board recognised that a review and revision of the SOA was required.

There are a number of drivers for this:-

1. A need to revisit / update data from the Partnership's strategic assessment (conducted in 2013) and provide analysis to recognise any changes in the national and local context;
2. A need to identify and assess emerging issues with strategic impact.
E.g.
 - i. Health & Social Care Integration
 - ii. Community Justice Authority transfer to CPPs
 - iii. Community Empowerment Bill and Localism
3. A desire for fewer priorities which has been identified both by the Board and the National Steering Group on Community Planning; and
4. A concern that work plans, data and metrics are not sufficiently aligned to support the necessary improvement in priority outcomes.

The need to review the SOA was further discussed by the Partnership's Management Group in November, 2014. It was noted that when refreshed priorities are agreed there will also be the need to:-

- i. Amend the governance structure of the partnership on the basis of the reprioritisation; and
- ii. Review workplans, data and metrics to ensure these align to new priorities.

Discussions are ongoing on how the refresh of the SOA can be most effectively achieved.

Change to Membership

The Director for Public Health (NHSG) has now been added to the membership of the Board.

Management Group

As well as the review of the SOA, the most recent meeting of the Management Group considered:-

- i. **Community Justice Redesign** - By 2016-17, responsibility for local strategic planning and delivery of community justice will transfer from Scotland's eight Community Justice Authorities (CJAs) to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). Whilst much detail is still being considered, at a national level, on how this transition will work, the Management Group agreed the officers to take actions forward, arrange and attend all necessary meetings and engage fully with the Partnership and other bodies to see through the change.
- ii. **Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP)** - Following on from the previous meeting, the Management Group heard from the ADP and agreed that they report directly to the Management Group rather than via the Health & Wellbeing Theme.
- iii. **Third Sector Interface and ACVO** - The Chief Executive of ACVO provided an update on their role and activity.
- iv. **Data Strategy** - As previously identified, availability of relevant data continues to be a priority for the Partnership and the Management Group considered a proposal to identify a lead officer to co-ordinate a data strategy. The Group agreed that to request the Head of Health Intelligence to present to a future meeting.
- v. **Community Empowerment Bill** - The Group noted the timeline for the Bill and that a Partnership group was being reviewed to co-ordinate responses.
- vi. **Neighbourhood Planning Update** - The Group agreed to request the Council's Head of Communities and Housing, once the structure within his service is confirmed, and discussion held with partners, to report back on firm proposals for progressing Neighbourhood Planning in the city including boundary and resourcing issues.
- vii. **Partnership Winter Readiness** - The Group discussed the development of a co-ordinated effort to prevent communities being adversely affected by winter.

6. IMPACT

The impact of this report is not likely to be significant, however, the impact of the Council's effective participation in Community Planning is of great significance.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Risk is integral to community planning. As stated above a risk assessment was carried out, and is included within the SOA, focusing on those risks which would impact on the effectiveness of the Partnership. The priorities within the SOA were identified following a strategic assessment which considered, broadly, the risk profile of each potential priority.

There are further opportunity risks for all partners which relate to investment (time, sharing, finance, non-financial resources) in the planning, design, delivery of services and initiatives where the potential rewards in terms of improved outcomes and reduced costs are significant, but uncertain. In making such investments partners, and the Partnership, needs to apply a risk based approach.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Single Outcome Agreement

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Martin Murchie

Performance and Transformation Manager, tel 01224 522008

mmurchie@aberdeencity.gov.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 December 2014
DIRECTOR	Ewan Sutherland (Acting Director)
TITLE OF REPORT	Update - Camping in Designated Places
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/14/163
CHECKLIST RECEIVED:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is update and advise members of the Scottish Government's decision on the byelaw on camping in designated places.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is recommended to note the report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional implications arising from this report beyond those set out in the report to the Council's meeting on 14 May 2014

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The Council, at its meeting on 14 May 2014, approved the wording of the proposed byelaw, approved the designated areas, and instructed officers to take all necessary steps to complete the statutory process to seek confirmation of the byelaw from the Scottish Government. As advised at the 20 August 2014 Council meeting, statutory procedures were followed to complete the process and application for confirmation was made to the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government has considered the application and representations lodged and issued its

decision. The decision is not to confirm the byelaw. A copy of the decision letter is attached as Appendix 1.

6. IMPACT

Public – The report may generate public interest as the issue of a byelaw has attracted widespread public interest.

Equalities – The issues identified in the report to Council on 14 May 2014 continue to exist.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The issues identified in the report to Council on 14 May 2014 continue to exist.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council report and minute of meeting 14 May 2014.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Alyson Mollison
Legal Manager
E-mail: amollison@aberdeencity.go.uk
Telephone: 01224 522557

Minister for Housing and Welfare
Margaret Burgess MSP



T: 0845 774 1741
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Councillor Jenny Laing
Leader
Aberdeen City Council
Town House
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1FY

In 2014 Scotland Welcomes the World



31 October 2014

Dear Mr Laing

On 25 July we received the Aberdeen City Council (Prohibition of Camping in Designated Areas) Byelaws 2014. Under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the Scottish Ministers are required to consider any byelaws made by a local authority under the 1973 Act before they can come into force.

Before turning to the byelaws themselves I believe it would be helpful to set out the Government's position on unauthorised encampments. Gypsy/Travellers have a right to their traditional way of life, but that right must be exercised responsibly and balanced against the rights of the wider community. The same standard of behaviour is expected from all members of the community, whether Gypsy/Travellers or the settled population, based on mutual respect. Any anti-social behaviour, including any alleged criminal activity, should be tackled firmly, and we expect the police to deal appropriately with any allegations of offences by those on unauthorised encampments using their normal procedures.

The Scottish Government issued guidelines on managing unauthorised encampments in 2004. They are based on the two key principles:

- encampments should be managed to minimise disruption for all concerned; and
- the same standards of behaviour should be expected from all members of the community.

The guidelines have been reviewed twice since they were first issued, and are available online:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20417/48828

We began another review of the guidelines this autumn.

In that policy context, and in line with the prescribed procedure, the Council submitted the byelaws for confirmation following a period of local advertising. The Council was offered the opportunity to respond to the points raised in the objections, and did so on 11 September.

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
www.scotland.gov.uk



I am now writing to advise that, having carefully considered the byelaws, the objections received, and the Council's response; Scottish Ministers have decided not to confirm the byelaws. The specific grounds for not doing so are as follows:

- Powers already exist to tackle the issues that can sometimes arise around unauthorised encampments. Offences are already in place in relation to anti-social behaviour and flytipping, and the Council can also take action to recover possession of its property if it wishes to do so.
- Insufficient evidence has been provided that the Council has taken adequate action in response to the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers. We are only aware of the Council providing four new pitches, and planning permission has not been sought to expand the number of sites. This is despite research commissioned by the Council and published in 2009 recommending that the Council and other local authorities in the north east "should continue to work jointly, on a regional basis, to identify and address the accommodation needs and preferences of Gypsies/Travellers households." ACC's Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017 also includes a commitment to develop short stay sites (together with Aberdeenshire Council).
- The byelaws would have an impact on one particular community, and are therefore potentially discriminatory. The Council's own Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment identified the byelaws as being "Red Amber", and the Council has not provided sufficient evidence to show that the byelaws are a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

In addition to the points above, there are also substantial deficiencies in the drafting of the byelaws, which are not easily corrected and would present significant difficulties in enforcing it. To give some examples, it is unclear what "occupy" means in relation to a vehicle, and how long a period of "occupation" has to be to constitute an offence (given the definition of "over-night"). The meaning of section 2(2) in relation to repeat offending is opaque. Section 4 creates an offence, but no penalty is provided. Separately, Police Scotland has raised valid concerns about the adequacy of the powers compared with what would seem to be required to enforce the byelaws effectively. We have also noted the views of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) in relation to the byelaws.

I know that unauthorised encampments are a sensitive issue, and something the Scottish Government has previously worked with the Council on in the Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller Issues Working Party (which concluded by publishing a Stakeholder Strategy and Joint Action Plan, in March 2011). We have also provided over £280,000 since 2010 to assist the Council with improving your existing Gypsy/Traveller site. The Government continues to be open to working with the Council to address the difficulties that can arise from unauthorised encampments in Aberdeen. Council officials sit on the Government's Gypsy/Traveller Site Working Group, and we welcome their input on this and other issues.

I hope this explains the reasons why the Scottish Ministers have not confirmed the byelaws. A copy of this letter goes to Police Scotland, COPFS, local Aberdeen MSPs, and those who raised objections to the byelaws.

Kind regards

Margaret Burgess

MARGARET BURGESS

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
www.scotland.gov.uk



ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 th December 2014
ACTING DIRECTOR	Ewan Sutherland
TITLE OF REPORT	Legal Services Restructure - Update
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/14/146
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to further update Members on the restructure of Legal Services and to provide evidence of customer satisfaction levels and financial outturns in terms of expenditure on external legal resources, in compliance with the instruction from the Council meeting of 25 June 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Council note the content of the Report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The new structure has been operational for almost a year and there has already been a reduction in use of external legal agencies, with a corresponding reduction in spend. Details are in the body of the report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Continuing investment in staff development and training is delivering a more flexible workforce, attuned to the Council's priorities and already staff have been rotated within Teams to deal with sickness and other cover requirements.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Members will recall that the Report before them at the Council meeting of 25 June 2014 provided an update of progress since the implementation of the restructure of Legal Services. Members felt that the new structure had not been in operation for a sufficiently long time for the success to be properly measured, and sought

further information as to levels of customer satisfaction and also the impact on spend with external agents.

Customer Satisfaction

The previous report to Council provided some transactional and anecdotal evidence of an improvement in customer service and satisfaction. Since that meeting, Legal Services issued three sets of customer satisfaction questionnaires. Relevant questionnaires were issued to key contacts involved in routine/operational work and strategic input/planning. A third questionnaire was issued to Elected Members in recognition of the fact that they are users of the legal service and to take account of the fact that a number of members were interviewed as part of the original stakeholder review, which informed the restructure.

The questionnaires were deliberately designed to be straightforward and easy to complete in order to encourage responses and also to focus on certain key themes of

- Accessibility
- Engagement
- Quality of advice/input
- Has the service improved?

and contained a combination of common and then more specific questions depending on the legal input required. Some officers may have received both an operational and strategic questionnaire depending on their engagement with Legal Services.

The following table is a summary of the questionnaires issued and responses received –

Type of Questionnaire	Number of Questionnaires issued	Number of responses received	Percentage return rate
Operational	196	46	23.47%
Strategic	60	13	21.66%
Elected Members	43	5	11.62%

Whilst the response rate is somewhat disappointing, online research indicates that the average response rate for surveys of this nature is in the region of 10 – 15%,

therefore it is relatively standard. The responses to individual questions have been collated for each questionnaire and are attached as appendix 1 to the Report.

Notwithstanding the response levels, the Legal Services Management Team is encouraged by the feedback received. In particular, it is worth noting the following

-

- Between 89% and 92% of respondents strongly agree or usually agree that they know who to contact for advice and support
- Between 95% and 92% of respondents strongly agree or usually agree that staff in Legal Services communicate clearly and constructively
- Between 96% and 92% of respondents are satisfied with the quality of advice given

In addition to the above –

- 80% of respondents strongly agree or usually agree that work is carried out within agreed timescales
- 83% of respondents strongly agree or usually agree that they are kept informed of progress
- 92% of respondents strongly agree or usually agree that Legal Services understand business needs and help to deliver corporate priorities
- 85% of respondents strongly agree or usually agree that Legal Services contribute to improving services
- 92% of respondents are satisfied with the overall support provided by Legal Services

Most importantly, between 75% and 80% of respondents strongly agree or usually agree that the new structure provides a better service than before. It is worth pointing out that there was a slightly lower response rate to this question. A number of colleagues indicated that they felt unable to answer as their dealings with Legal Services prior to the restructure were minimal.

In addition to the various questions, each questionnaire provided respondents with an opportunity to add any additional comments. On the whole, the comments received were very positive and included the following

"It is hard to envisage the scheme being at the stage where it is at without the detailed, precise and consistently helpful legal advice the team has received"	Operational	CH&I
---	-------------	------

"I have been pleased to see legal colleagues who I have worked with taking a more client-focussed approach to resolving matters"	Operational	EC&S
"The service has radically improved since the restructure"	Operational	CG
"I have worked with colleagues in Legal Services on some very significant issues and have found them very supportive. I have generally been able to speak to them almost immediately and get constructive and supportive response"	Operational	CH&I
"I have greatly appreciated their support and advice in some very challenging and stressful circumstances"	Operational	CH&I
"10/10 for customer service and professionalism!"	Operational	CG
"I feel that the restructure of the legal team has assisted me in my day to day work and has enabled me to progress key pieces of work quicker and more effectively."	Operational	E&CS
"I have found the commitment of the Service and willingness to consider change very positive"	Operational	E&CS
"The legal team were very responsive and keen to help find a way to manage risks and achieve what I wanted to. Previously I had encountered this as a negative process, where the impression was one of stopping us doing things."	Operational	CH&I
"In my experience, I consider the reorganisation to be very successful, presenting an image of the Legal Services team being positive and proactive in supporting our critical programme"	Operational	CH&I
"I am completely satisfied with the service I receive from our legal team. This in turn helps me give excellent service to my customers - external providers, services managers and heads of services and service users"	Operational	E&CS
"Having named individuals to contact with queries is very useful. The service provided by Legal is always informative and helpful and I like the fact that all options are considered, along with the risks of each option."	Operational	CG
"The page on the zone is very useful in determining which team enquiries should be directed to and who is who in legal services"	Operational	CH&I
"I have found the speed of responses has improved despite a large increase in the number now required"	Operational	CH&I
"The way the team is currently working is brilliant for me and my staff"	Operational	E&CS

"Service is very good in terms of quality, delivery and personal interactions, but there are still some problems with speed of delivery and access to the right people"	Operational	CH&I
"The new structure provides an improved service. I would commend the work of the legal team and the considerable support and advice they provide"	Strategic	CH&I

There were no unduly negative comments; however some respondents took the opportunity to make some suggestions for further improvement. These are included below and our proposed response is included in bold text

"Ask Legal to consider that they need to bear in mind they need to find a balance between representing the organisation as a whole, whilst also taking the wishes of the individual. I'd suggest there's not a one size fits all approach to risk appetite."

Operational CH&I

Legal Services need to assist colleagues from other Services in understanding the role of Legal Services and the organisation as a whole and the need to balance the aspirations of individual Services/Service Managers against the wider corporate and directorate policies and priorities.

"Clarity regarding what Legal view their objective is would be useful (Is it to safeguard the Council, if so, in what respect? Or is it to be challenging the status quo and further the Council's ability to morph as an organisation?"

Operational CH&I

Again, here the challenge for Legal Services is to assist colleagues from other services in understanding our role, which is to identify and assist in the management of risk. Legal Services is clear in the need to support the Council in what it wants to achieve in a way which mitigates risk. Our objective is to undertake our role in a client-focussed and proactive way and to move beyond from the perception that Legal Services are risk averse, where our input to identifying and assisting in the management of risk is embedded. Whilst it is not our role to challenge the status quo per se, this is something that we can and do assist other services with.

"Can procedures be in place if someone is off sick to access their e-mail to put on a sick out of office and who to contact instead? I had one incident where a person went off sick and because no-one had changed their voice mail or their e-mails I wasn't aware there were off"

Operational CH&I

Proxy email access is in place and staff are aware of the need to check the emails of colleagues who are ill or otherwise out of the office. Staff are also aware of the need for clear out of office messages with alternative contact

details in the event that they are unavailable for a prolonged period of time, whether due to leave or business. The current voicemail system and the need for passwords makes it difficult for voicemail messages to be changed in absentia, however we are discussing our telephone arrangements, including more efficient call transferring systems, with colleagues in Customer Services.

"I still have no idea who the first port of call is for requesting advices - perhaps a chart has been written and I am unaware of it?"

Operational CH&I

Members will note that this somewhat contradicts earlier positive feedback. A detailed structure chart, which includes the roles and remits of each team, staff and contact details has been circulated to Services via SMTs and Business Support Managers and is available on the Zone, however we are looking at ways to further disseminate this information across services.

External Legal Spend

A key objective of the restructure was to reduce spend on external legal advice where appropriate. There will always be a need for some external spend e.g. in relation to highly specialised or complex transactions and in respect of disciplines where public lawyers have limited experience e.g. complex corporate matters. However, there has already been a significant reduction in external spend following on from the Legal Services restructure.

The annual external spend for the last 2 full financial years is as follows –

2012/13 £291,191.25

2013/14 £481,677.45 – however in excess of £200,000 of this spend relates to significant one-off projects e.g. Hydrogen Buses, and complex property transactions which generated significant capital receipts for the Council.

In relation to 2014/15, then at the time of writing this Report, information is available in respect of 2 quarters –

Quarter 1 £58,332.89

Quarter 2 £42,218.11

Total £100,551.00

Again, it is worth noting that more than 50% of the figures for this current year include fees for one-off/non-recurring transactions. Further, spend for the equivalent period in 2013/14 was £294,564.15.

In addition to the above, Members should be aware that we are driving greater value out of external relationships. There is greater focus on the agreement of fixed fees in advance of work commencing and we are insisting on a degree of

internal involvement, as appropriate to the nature of the transaction, so that we can maximise knowledge transfer and development opportunities for our staff.

Outcomes/Conclusion

The responses to the survey are very positive and indicate that the restructure is already delivering significant improvements in customer satisfaction and service delivery.

Further, in relation to spend on external support, the figures are very positive and indicate that it is reducing.

Appendix 2 has been added at the request of the Convener of Finance, Policy and Resources.

6. IMPACT

Corporate – the restructure will provide the flexible in-house legal service required and that can adapt to meet the changing business needs of the Council.

Public – the report is unlikely to attract widespread public interest as it concerns internal operational matters.

An EHRIA is not required as the impact of the restructure is neutral in equalities terms.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

A skilled, well trained, and flexible in-house legal service is critical to the Council's strategies for the identification and management of risk.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report referred to Council of 26 June 2013 from Finance and Resources Committee dated 13 June 2013, and Report to Council on 25th June 2014

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Jane MacEachran
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
janem@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522084

Appendix 1

Legal Services Restructure – Questionnaire Outcomes

Operational Questionnaire

The Operational Service Questionnaire was issued to 196 key operational contacts across all Directorates.

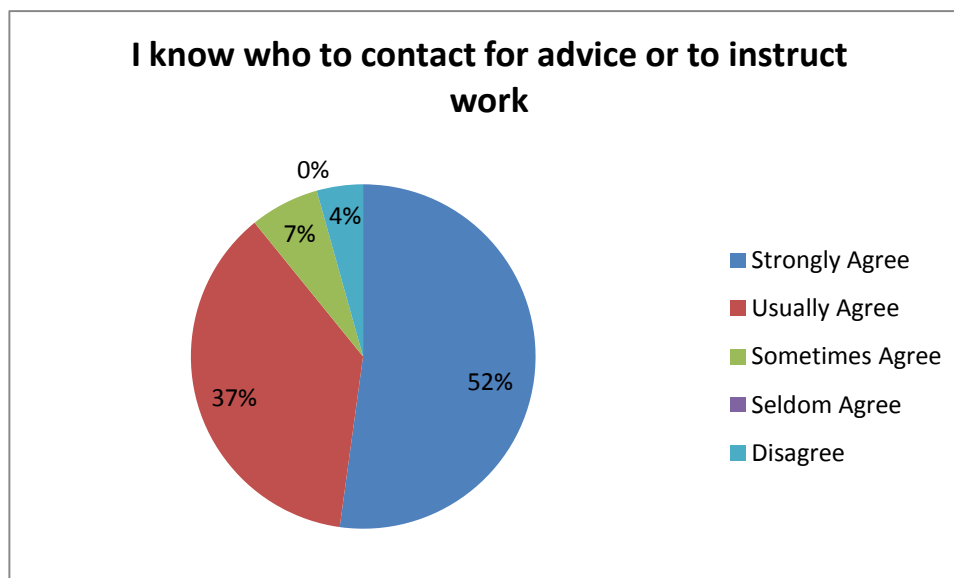
Responses were received from **46**, a response rate of **23.47%**.

Responses by Service

Corporate Governance	10 responses
Communities, Housing & Infrastructure	21 responses
Education & Children’s Services	14 responses
Adults Services	1 response

Question 1: I know who to contact for advice or to instruct work.

This question was answered by **46** respondents.



➤ **24** respondents (**52.17%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **8 (80.00%)**
- CH&I: **12 (57.14%)**
- E&CS: **4 (28.57%)**
- Adults: **0 (0%)**

➤ **17** respondents (**36.96%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: 0 (0%)
- CH&I: 7 (33.33%)
- E&CS 9 (64.29%)
- Adults 1 (100%)

➤ 3 respondents (6.52%) sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: 1 (10.00%)
- CH&I: 1 (4.76%)
- E&CS 1 (7.14%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

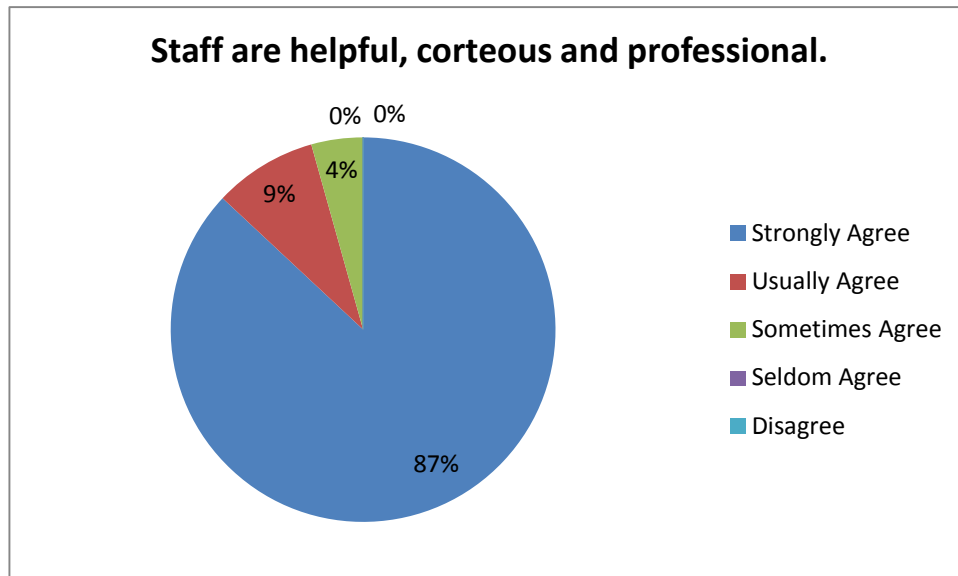
➤ 0 respondents (0%) seldom agree with this statement

➤ 2 respondents (4.35%) disagree with this statement

- CG: 1 (10.00%)
- CH&I: 1 (4.76%)
- E&CS 0 (0%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

Question 2: Staff are helpful, courteous and professional

This question was answered by 46 respondents.



➤ 40 respondents (86.96%) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: 9 (90.00%)
- CH&I: 17 (80.95%)
- E&CS 13 (92.86%)
- Adults 1 (100%)

➤ 4 respondents (8.70%) usually agree with this statement

- CG: 0 (0%)
- CH&I: 3 (14.29%)
- E&CS 1 (7.14%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

➤ 2 respondents (4.35%) sometimes agree with this statement

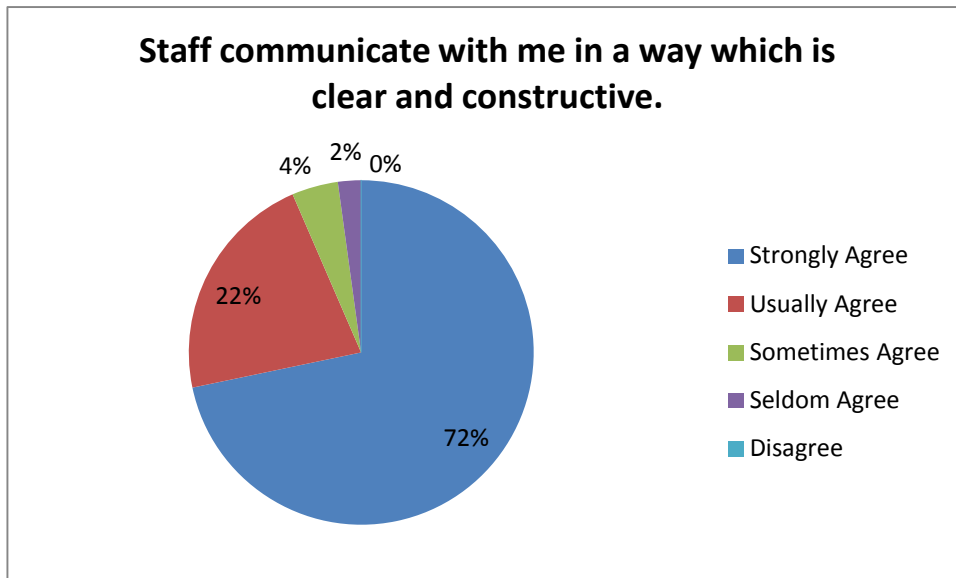
- CG: 1 (10.00%)
- CH&I: 1 (4.76%)
- E&CS 0 (0%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

➤ 0 respondents (0%) seldom agree with this statement

➤ 0 respondents (0%) disagree with this statement

Question 3: Staff communicate with me in a way which is clear and constructive.

This question was answered by 46 respondents.



➤ 33 respondents (71.74%) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: 9 (90.00%)
- CH&I: 14 (66.67%)
- E&CS 9 (64.29%)
- Adults 1 (100%)

➤ 10 respondents (21.74%) usually agree with this statement

- CG: 0 (0%)
- CH&I: 5 (23.81%)
- E&CS 5 (35.71%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

➤ **2 respondents (4.35%)** sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **2 (9.52%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

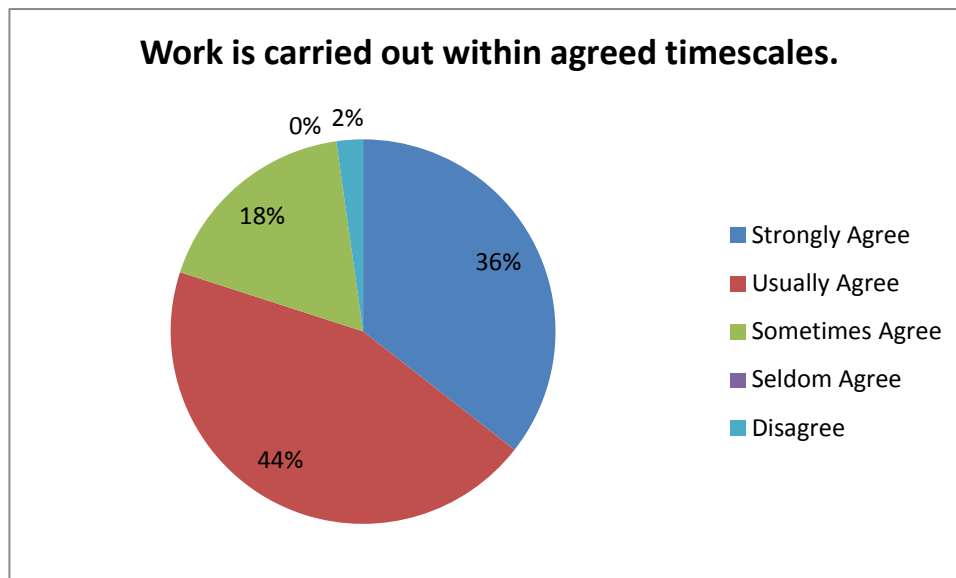
➤ **1 respondents (2.17%)** seldom agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (10.00%)**
- CH&I: **0 (0%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

➤ **0 respondents (0%)** disagree with this statement

Question 4: Work is carried out within agreed timescales.

This question was answered by **45** respondents.



➤ **16 respondents (35.56%)** strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **6 (60.00%)**
- CH&I: **7 (35.00%)**
- E&CS **3 (21.43%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

➤ **20 respondents (44.44%)** usually agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (10.00%)**
- CH&I: **9 (45.00%)**
- E&CS **9 (64.29%)**
- Adults **1 (100%)**

➤ **8 respondents (17.78%)** sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **2 (20.00%)**
- CH&I: **4 (20.00%)**
- E&CS **2 (14.29%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

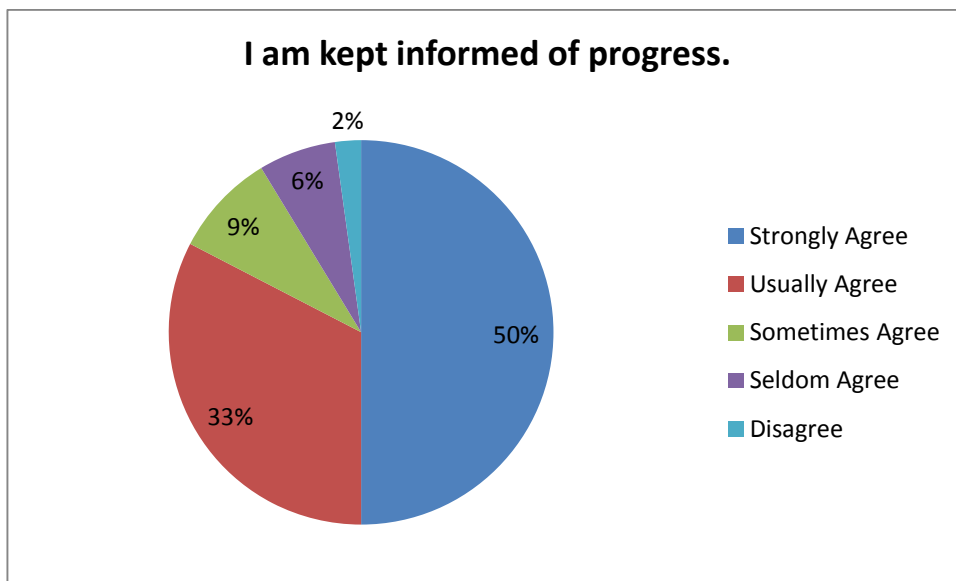
➤ **0 respondents (0%)** seldom agree with this statement

➤ **1 respondents (2.22%)** disagree with this statement

- CG: **1 (10%)**
- CH&I: **0 (0%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

Question 5: I am kept informed of progress.

This question was answered by **46** respondents.



➤ **23 respondents (50.00%)** strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **8 (80.00%)**
- CH&I: **9 (42.86%)**
- E&CS **6 (42.86%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

➤ **15 respondents (32.61%)** usually agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (10.00%)**
- CH&I: **8 (38.10%)**
- E&CS **5 (35.71%)**
- Adults **1 (100%)**

➤ **4 respondents (8.70%)** sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **2 (9.52%)**
- E&CS **2 (14.29%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

➤ **3 respondents (6.52%)** seldom agree with this statement

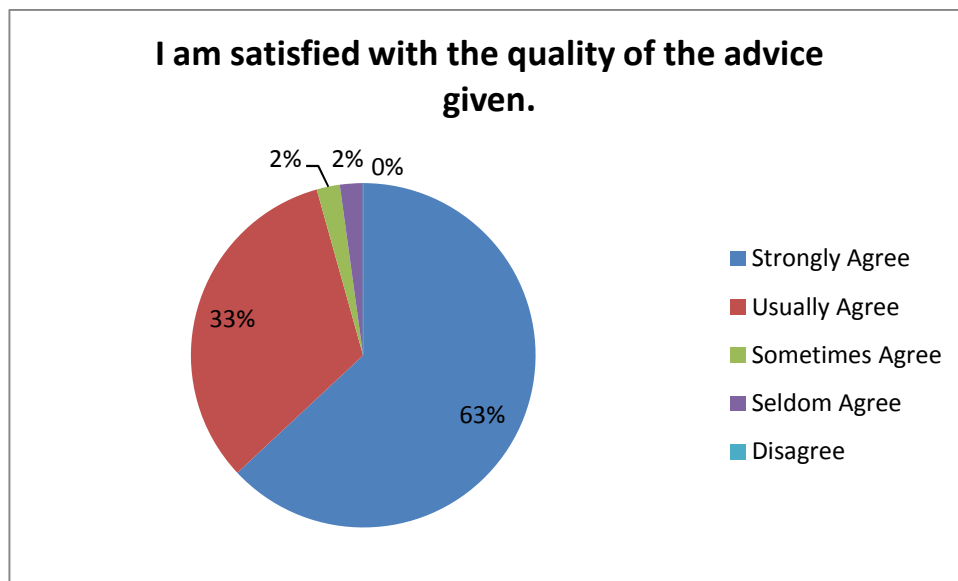
- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **2 (9.52%)**
- E&CS **1 (7.14%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

➤ **1 respondents (2.17%)** disagree with this statement

- CG: **1 (10%)**
- CH&I: **0 (0%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

Question 6: I am satisfied with the quality of advice given.

This question was answered by **46** respondents.



➤ **29 respondents (63.04%)** strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **9 (90.00%)**
- CH&I: **11 (52.38%)**
- E&CS **9 (64.29%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

➤ **15 respondents (32.61%)** usually agree with this statement

- CG: 0 (0%)
- CH&I: 9 (42.86%)
- E&CS 5 (35.71%)
- Adults 1 (100%)

➤ 1 respondents (2.17%) sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: 0 (0%)
- CH&I: 1 (4.76%)
- E&CS 0 (0%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

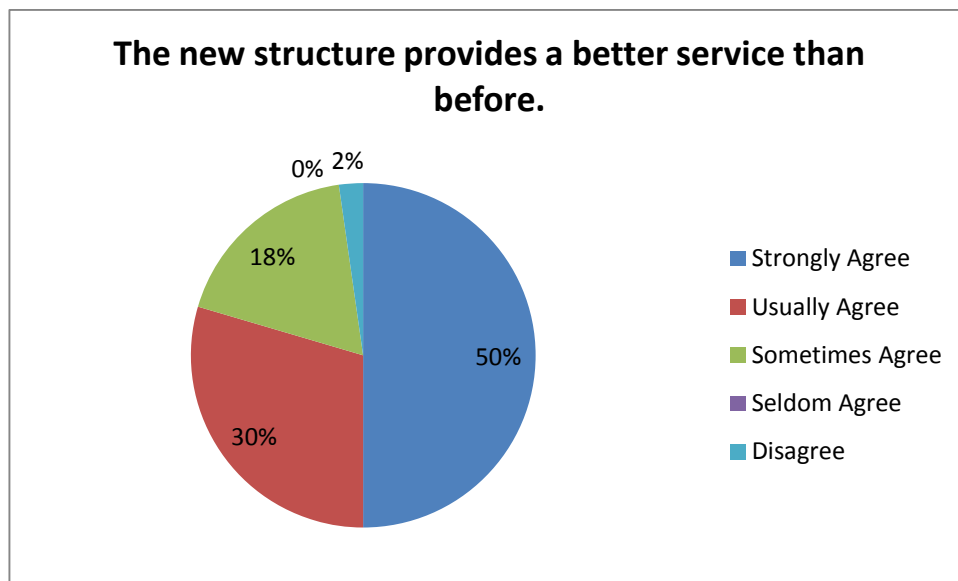
➤ 1 respondents (2.17%) seldom agree with this statement

- CG: 1 (10%)
- CH&I: 0 (0%)
- E&CS 0 (0%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

➤ 0 respondents (0%) disagree with this statement

Question 7: The new structure provides a better service than before.

This question was answered by 44 respondents.



➤ 22 respondents (50.00%) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: 8 (80.00%)
- CH&I: 6 (31.58%)
- E&CS 8 (57.14%)
- Adults 0 (0%)

➤ 13 respondents (29.55%) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **10 (52.63%)**
- E&CS **3 (21.43%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

➤ **8 respondents (18.18%)** sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (10%)**
- CH&I: **3 (15.79%)**
- E&CS **3 (21.43%)**
- Adults **1 (100%)**

➤ **0 respondents (0%)** seldom agree with this statement

➤ **1 respondents (2.27%)** disagree with this statement

- CG: **1 (10%)**
- CH&I: **0 (0%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**
- Adults **0 (0%)**

Strategic Questionnaire

The Strategic Service Questionnaire was issued to 60 key operational contacts across all Directorates.

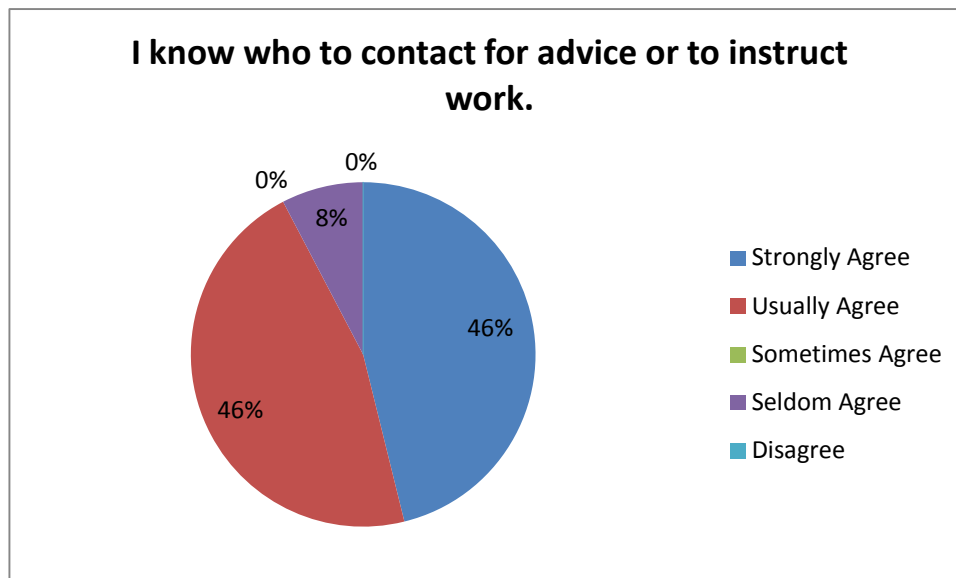
Responses were received from **13**, a response rate of **21.66%**.

Responses by Service

Corporate Governance	1 responses
Communities, Housing & Infrastructure	9 responses
Education & Children's Services	3 responses

Question 1: I know who to contact for advice or to instruct work.

This question was answered by **13** respondents.



➤ **6** respondents (**46.15%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **6 (66.67%)**
- E&CS: **0 (0%)**

➤ **6** respondents (**46.15%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **3 (33.33%)**
- E&CS: **3 (100.00%)**

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) sometimes agree with this statement

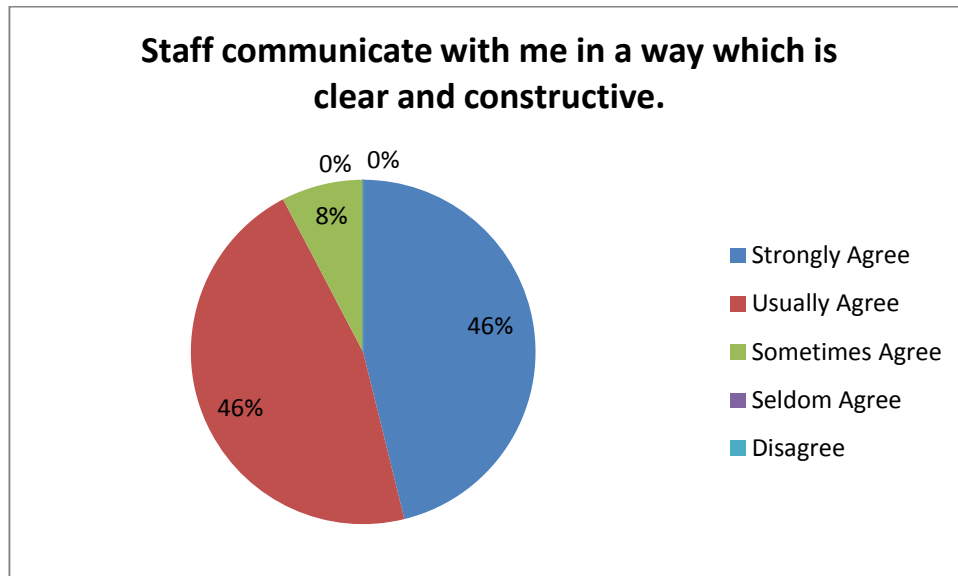
➤ **1** respondents (**7.69%**) seldom agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (100.00%)**
- CH&I: **0 (0%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 2: Staff communicate with me in a way which is clear and constructive.

This question was answered by **13** respondents.



➤ **6** respondents (**46.15%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **4 (44.44%)**
- E&CS **2 (66.67%)**

➤ **6** respondents (**46.15%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (100%)**
- CH&I: **4 (44.44%)**
- E&CS **1 (33.33%)**

➤ **1** respondents (**7.69%**) sometimes agree with this statement

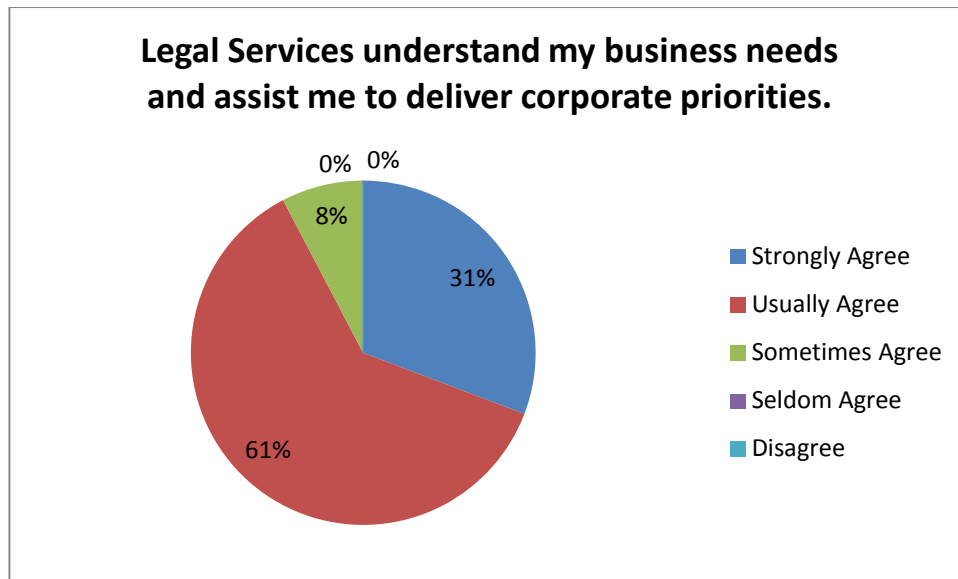
- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **1 (11.11%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) seldom agree with this statement

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 3: Legal Services understand my business needs and assist me to deliver corporate priorities.

This question was answered by **13** respondents.



- **4** respondents (**30.77%**) strongly agree with this statement.
 - CG: **0 (0%)**
 - CH&I: **3 (33.33%)**
 - E&CS **1 (33.33%)**

- **8** respondents (**61.54%**) usually agree with this statement
 - CG: **0 (0%)**
 - CH&I: **6 (66.67%)**
 - E&CS **2 (66.67%)**

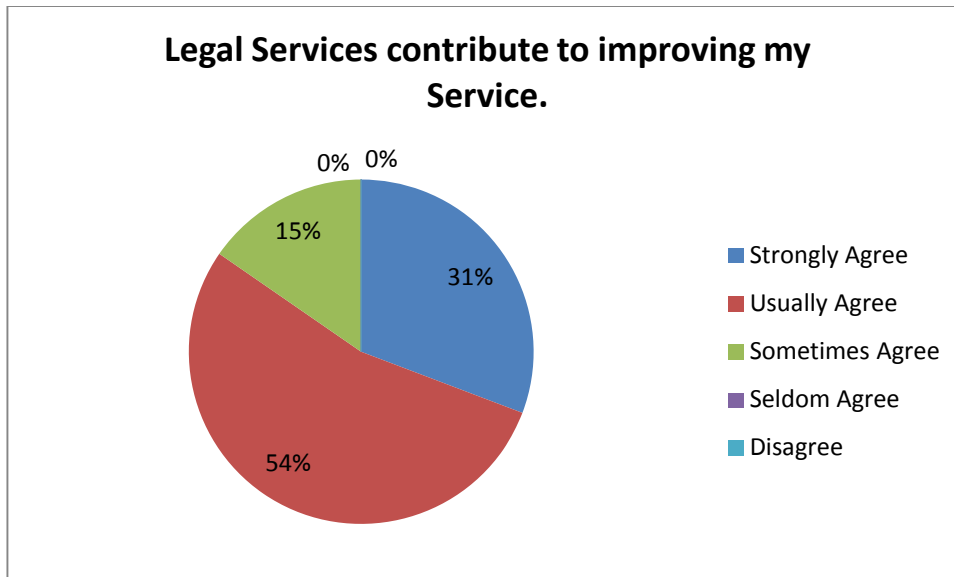
- **1** respondents (**7.69%**) sometimes agree with this statement
 - CG: **1 (100.00%)**
 - CH&I: **0 (0%)**
 - E&CS **0 (0%)**

- **0** respondents (**0%**) seldom agree with this statement

- **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 4: Legal Services contribute to improving my service.

This question was answered by **13** respondents.



➤ **4** respondents (**30.77%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **3 (33.33%)**
- E&CS: **1 (33.33%)**

➤ **7** respondents (**53.85%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **5 (55.56%)**
- E&CS: **2 (66.67%)**

➤ **2** respondents (**15.38%**) sometimes agree with this statement

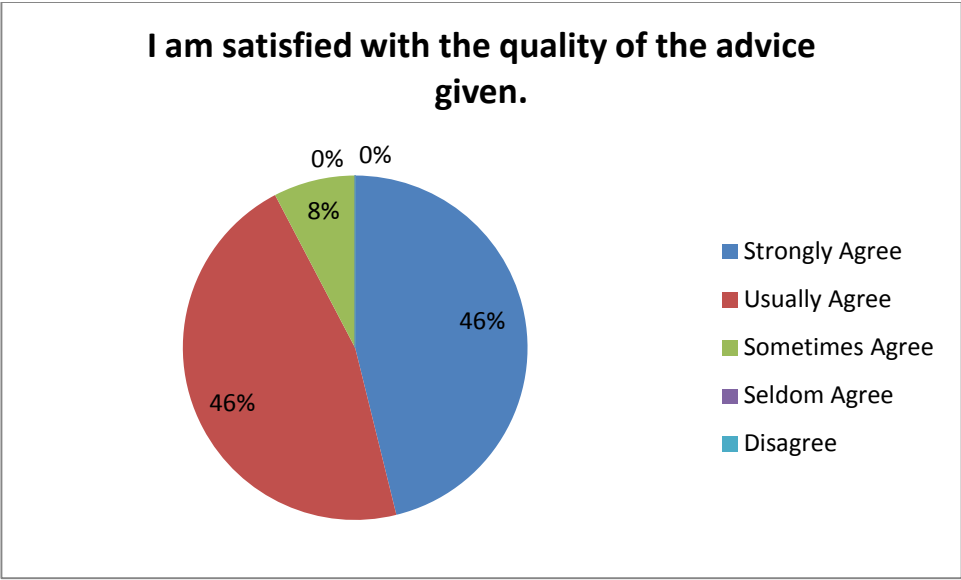
- CG: **1 (100.00%)**
- CH&I: **1 (11.11%)**
- E&CS: **0 (0%)**

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) seldom agree with this statement

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 5: I am satisfied with the quality of advice given.

This question was answered by **13** respondents.



➤ **6** respondents (**46.15%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **4 (44.44%)**
- E&CS: **3 (66.67%)**

➤ **6** respondents (**46.15%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (100%)**
- CH&I: **4 (44.44%)**
- E&CS: **1 (33.33%)**

➤ **1** respondents (**7.69%**) sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **1 (11.11%)**
- E&CS: **0 (0%)**

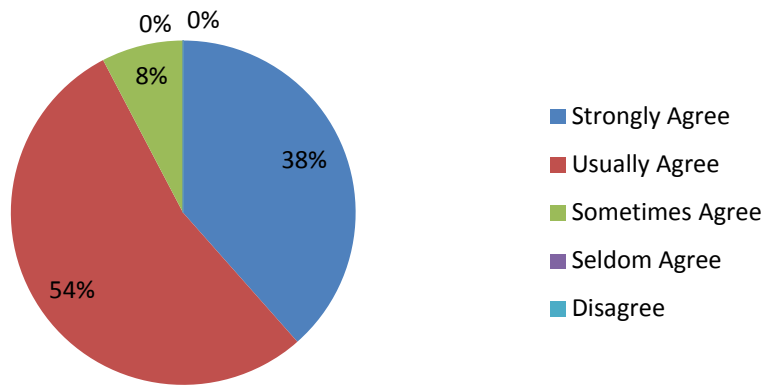
➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) seldom agree with this statement

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 6: I am satisfied with the overall support provided by Legal Services.

This question was answered by **13** respondents.

I am satisfied with the overall support provided by Legal Services.



➤ **5** respondents (**38.46%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **4 (44.44%)**
- E&CS: **1 (33.33%)**

➤ **7** respondents (**53.85%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (100%)**
- CH&I: **4 (44.44%)**
- E&CS: **2 (66.67%)**

➤ **1** respondents (**7.69%**) sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **1 (11.11%)**
- E&CS: **0 (0%)**

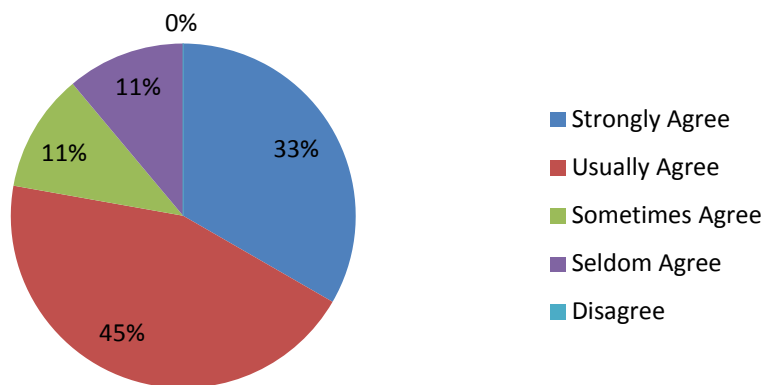
➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) seldom agree with this statement

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 7: It is helpful for the Legal Managers to attend my Directorate Management Team Meetings.

This question was answered by **9** respondents.

It is helpful for the Legal Managers to attend my Directorate Management Team Meetings.



➤ **3** respondents (**33.33%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **1 (20%)**
- E&CS **2 (66.67%)**

➤ **4** respondents (**44.44%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **3 (60.00%)**
- E&CS **1 (33.33%)**

➤ **1** respondents (**11.11%**) sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (100.00%)**
- CH&I: **0 (0%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**

➤ **1** respondents (**11.11%**) seldom agree with this statement

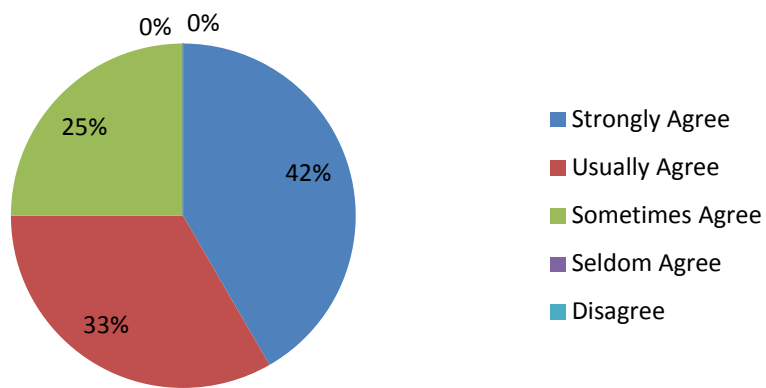
- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **1 (20.00%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 8: The new structure provides a better service than before.

This question was answered by **12** respondents.

The new structure provides a better service than before.



➤ **5** respondents (**41.67%**) strongly agree with this statement.

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **3 (37.50%)**
- E&CS **2 (66.67%)**

➤ **4** respondents (**33.33%**) usually agree with this statement

- CG: **0 (0%)**
- CH&I: **3 (37.50%)**
- E&CS **1 (33.33%)**

➤ **3** respondents (**25.00%**) sometimes agree with this statement

- CG: **1 (100.00%)**
- CH&I: **2 (25.00%)**
- E&CS **0 (0%)**

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) seldom agree with this statement

➤ **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

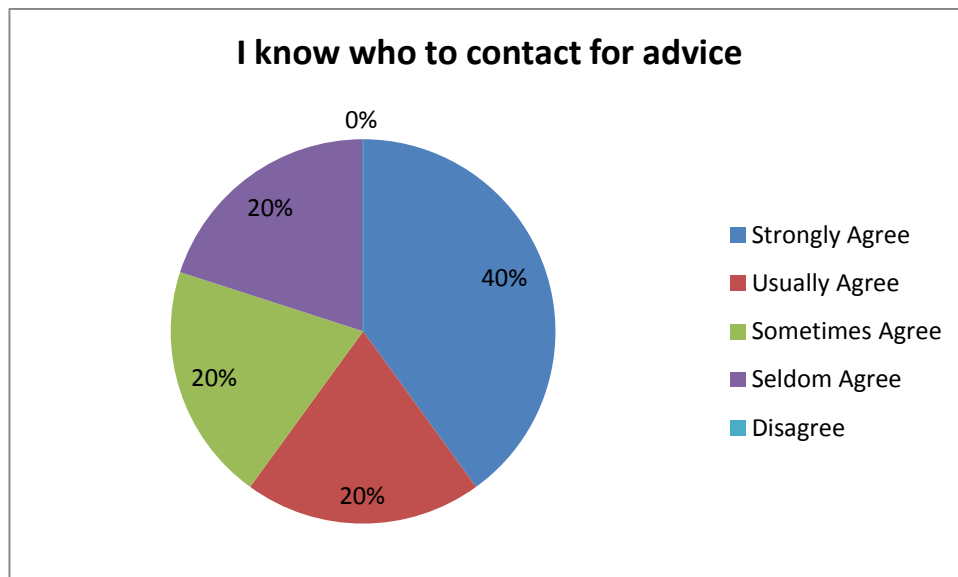
Elected Members Questionnaire

The Elected Members Questionnaire was issued to all 43 Elected Members of Aberdeen City Council.

Responses were received from **5**, a response rate of **11.62%**.

Question 1: I know who to contact for advice.

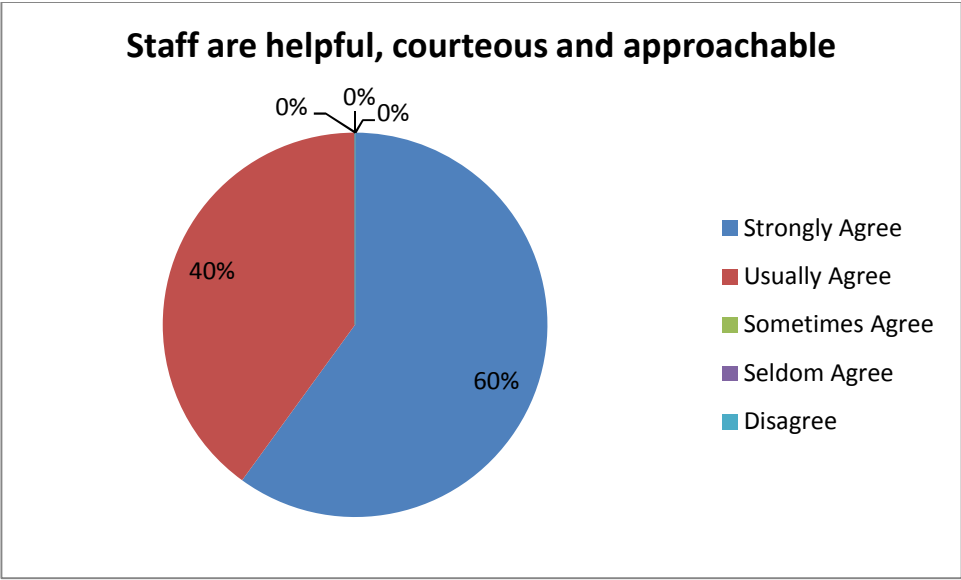
This question was answered by **5** respondents.



- **2** respondents (**40.00%**) strongly agree with this statement.
- **1** respondents (**20.00%**) usually agree with this statement
- **1** respondents (**20.00%**) sometimes agree with this statement
- **1** respondents (**20.00%**) seldom agree with this statement
- **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

Question 2: Staff are helpful, courteous and approachable.

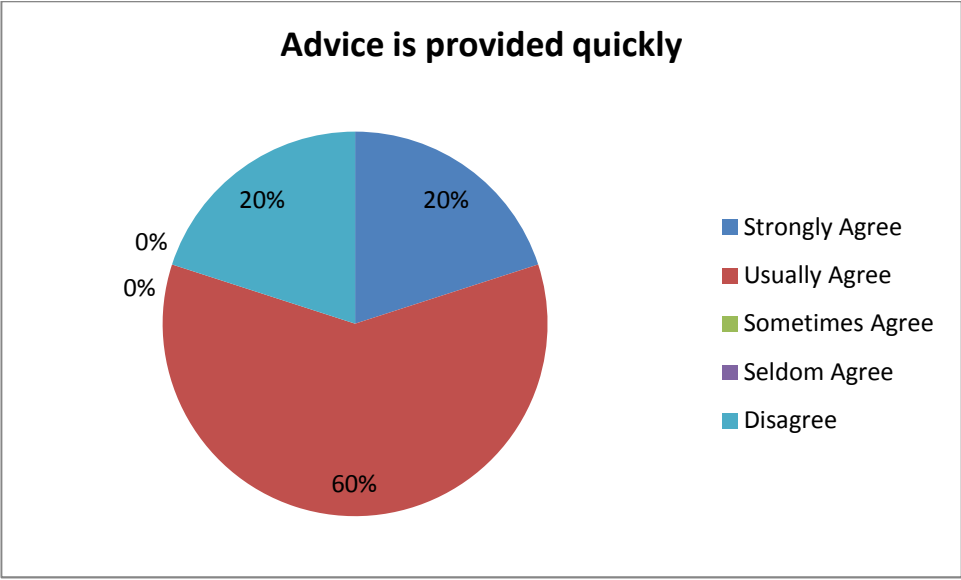
This question was answered by **5** respondents.



- 3 respondents (60.00%) strongly agree with this statement.
- 2 respondents (40.00%) usually agree with this statement
- 0 respondents (0%) sometimes agree with this statement
- 0 respondents (0%) seldom agree with this statement
- 0 respondents (0%) disagree with this statement

Question 3: Advice is provided quickly.

This question was answered by 5 respondents.

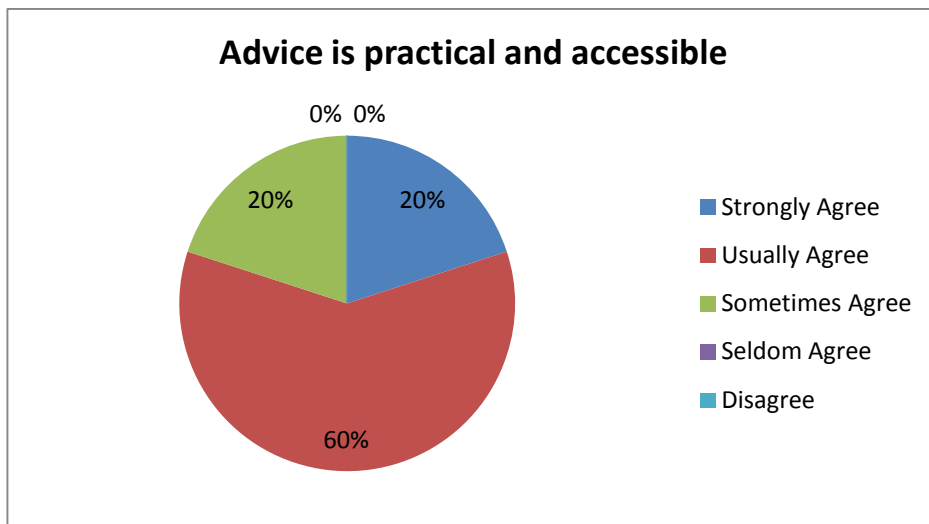


- 1 respondents (20.00%) strongly agree with this statement.
- 3 respondents (60.00%) usually agree with this statement

- 0 respondents (0%) sometimes agree with this statement
- 0 respondents (0%) seldom agree with this statement
- 1 respondents (20.00%) disagree with this statement

Question 4: Advice is practical and accessible.

This question was answered by 5 respondents.

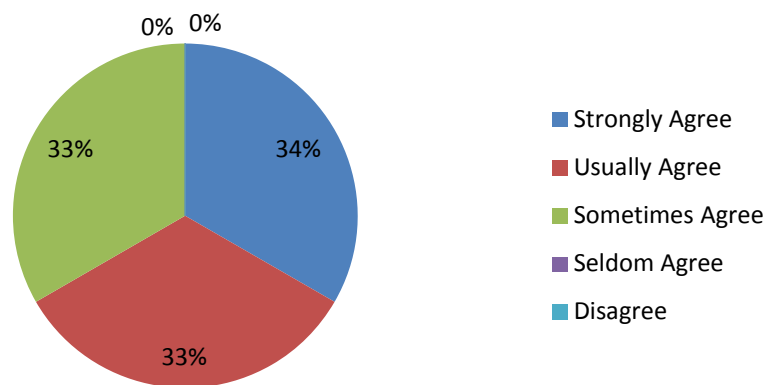


- 1 respondents (20.00%) strongly agree with this statement.
- 3 respondents (60.00%) usually agree with this statement
- 1 respondents (20.00%) sometimes agree with this statement
- 0 respondents (0%) seldom agree with this statement
- 0 respondents (0%) disagree with this statement

Question 5: The new structure provides a better service than before.

This question was answered by 3 respondents.

The new structure provides a better service than before



- **1** respondents (**33.33%**) strongly agree with this statement.
- **1** respondents (**33.33%**) usually agree with this statement
- **1** respondents (**33.33%**) sometimes agree with this statement
- **0** respondents (**0%**) seldom agree with this statement
- **0** respondents (**0%**) disagree with this statement

This page is intentionally left blank

Aberdeen City Council

Compliance with laws and regulations

Internal Audit Report
2014/2015 for Aberdeen
City Council

November 2014

Internal Audit KPIs	Target Dates	Actual Dates	Red/Amber/Green	Commentary where applicable
Terms or reference agreed 4 weeks prior to fieldwork	23.06.2014	23.06.2014	Green	
Planned fieldwork start date	21.07.2014	21.07.2014	Green	
Fieldwork completion date	01.08.2014	01.08.2014	Green	
Draft report issued for Management comment	18.08.2014	18.08.2014	Green	
Management Comments received	15.09.2014	16.10.2014 (initial) 07.11.2014 (follow up with HR)	Red	Management comments were provided late due to internal pressures within the Service. Management informed internal audit of these delays and arranged a meeting at the earliest opportunity. Follow up was required with HR as recommendations impacted this service
Report finalised	14.11.2014	07.11.2014	Green	
Submitted to Audit and Risk Committee	20.11.2014	20.11.2014	Green	



Contents

Section	Page
1. Executive Summary	3
2. Background and scope	5
3. Detailed findings and recommendations	7
Appendix 1 – Basis of our classifications	14
Appendix 2 – Agreed Terms of reference	16
Appendix 3 - Limitations and responsibilities	18

This report has been prepared solely for Aberdeen City Council in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in our engagement letter 4 October 2010. We do not accept or assume any liability or duty of care for any other purpose or to any other party. This report should not be disclosed to any third party, quoted or referred to without our prior written consent.

Internal audit work will be performed in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. As a result, our work and deliverables are not designed or intended to comply with the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB), International Framework for Assurance Engagements (IFAE) and International Standard on Assurance Engagements (ISAE) 3000.

Error! No text of specified style in document.

Internal Audit report for Aberdeen City Council

PwC

Contents

1. Executive Summary

Report classification	Total number of findings				
	Critical	High	Medium	Low	Advisory
High Risk	Control design	-	-	3	-
	Operating effectiveness	-	1	-	-
	Total	-	1	3	-
Responsible Director: Director of Corporate Governance					
Project Sponsor: Head of Legal and Democratic Services					

Summary of findings

Aberdeen City Council operates in a complex legal environment and is required to comply with a wide range of laws and regulations. To ensure compliance the Council has implemented processes and controls aimed at mitigating the risks of the organisation potentially breaching these laws and regulations. The scope of our review was to assess the design and operating effectiveness of those controls. From this review we have identified areas of good practice; however, we have also identified one high risk and three medium risk findings.

Areas of good practice

1.02 In our experience good practice is about embedding legal compliance into day-to-day operations and having legal advisors who are highly engaged with management to support decision making. Given the wide range of laws and regulations the Council must comply with it is difficult to monitor compliance without having this level of engagement. Achieving this requires a culture in which staff see legal compliance as more than just a 'tick-box exercise' or as an obstacle to be overcome. Through interviews with a sample of Heads of Service and with Legal Services it was clear that there was a desire to achieve a greater level of engagement and to change the culture of how Legal Services interacts with the services. However, it is recognised that this kind of behavioural change across an organisation takes time and requires a strong 'tone at the top' from the Corporate Management Team if it is to be successfully implemented.

1.03 Other areas of good practice identified include the process for reporting breaches of Data Protection and the new process being implemented for tracking consultations received by the Council for monitoring new laws and regulations.

High risk finding

1.04 Ten reports sent by officers to the Council, and its Committees, had incomplete report checklists, indicating they had not been submitted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services for review. This review is a requirement of the Council's Standing Order 45, and is a key control for the Council in mitigating against the risk of breaches of laws and regulations. The report checklists are being monitored by Democratic Services; however, there is no process in place for following up on failures by report authors to submit completed checklists with evidence of submission to the Monitoring Officer. (Finding 3.01)

Medium risk findings

1.05 The Council has no policies, or guidance, which requires the involvement of Legal Services in Council services' senior management team meetings. There are also no policies, or guidance, requiring that Legal Services are consulted and engaged in Council projects. Legal Services has recently undergone a service review that saw a restructure of the service. This new structure was approved by the Council in June 2013 and implemented in January 2014. The primary purpose of this restructure was to improve collaboration between Legal Services and other Council services. Through interviews with a sample of Heads of Service and Legal Managers in Legal Services we identified that there are still challenges in achieving the level of collaboration desired. (Finding 3.02)

1.06 The Council has various training materials and courses on laws and regulations available to staff. Although elements of training are in place, there has been no central exercise to gain assurance that all applicable and significant laws and regulations are covered within this. It is also unclear if there is appropriate monitoring of completion rates. (Finding 3.03)

1.07 As per the Council's "Financial Regulations Management and Control - Code of Practice (September 2014), the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (the Monitoring Officer) is responsible for maintaining a register of matters relating to the Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Whistleblowing. A report summarising these matters is required to be presented to the Audit, Scrutiny and Risk Committee no less than annually. As per the Audit Scotland Interim Report (2013/14), the Audit, Scrutiny and Risk Committee has not yet received this report. At present procedures are not yet in place for ensuring instances of fraud are reported to the Monitoring Officer, (Finding 3.04)

Management comments

Management welcome the findings which should go some way to assist Legal Services ensuring legal compliance across the Council.

2. Background and scope

Background

2.01 Aberdeen City Council is required to comply with a wide range of laws and regulations. To ensure compliance it is essential that clear accountability is assigned, robust monitoring controls are in place and projects are assessed for implications. Our review assessed the design and operating effectiveness of the key controls to monitor compliance with laws and regulations. Detailed below is our understanding of those processes and controls in place obtained during our work with Legal Services and a sample of four Heads of Service.

Accountability and ownership

2.02 Responsibility for compliance with key laws and regulations is viewed as being part of the day-to-day activities of Council employees. There is an expectation that staff, as qualified professionals, are knowledgeable of their legal obligations relevant to their role. The various processes and controls that Services have in place for managing their day-to-day activities are there to monitor that staff are complying with any laws and regulations.

2.03 At the time of the review a protocol was in the process of being implemented to help identify new laws and regulations. As a Local Authority the Council is involved in numerous consultations on laws and regulations being developed by the Scottish Government and other Government agencies. In order to track all consultation requests, any consultations received by the Council will be recorded on a central database maintained by the Chief Executive's Service. The purpose of this database will be to monitor the progress of all responses to consultations and to ensure that the responses sent reflect the views of the Council and not solely of officers.

2.04 Registers of breaches of laws and regulations are maintained for specific areas as required by statute, for example for data protection or health and safety breaches. PwC and Legal Services do not consider it practical or desirable to maintain a register of all breaches out with those required by statute. The view is that Legal Services should be engaged with Services to prevent breaches occurring or to identify breaches early before they escalate.

2.05 Third-party legal firms are engaged to provide legal advice as required. When seeking to engage a third-party legal firm, Legal Services will follow the Council's procurement processes to obtain quotes and tender if applicable. Where there are longstanding engagements with third-party legal firms these are reviewed on a quarterly basis to monitor costs incurred and expected costs to complete. Quality and delivery of the service provided is also considered as part of the review. At present there is a joint tendering process ongoing with Aberdeenshire Council to develop a framework of legal service suppliers.

Engagement with Council Activities

2.06 The Council's Standing Order 45, requires that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, as a monitoring officer, receives in draft all reports submitted by Chief Officers to the Council, it's Committees and sub-Committees. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services is expected to review all reports to identify any legal implications the reports may have for the organisation. Since January 2014 all reports must be accompanied by a report checklist where the report author is expected to record details of when the report was submitted to the monitoring officer. Democratic Services have been recording data on these checklists and the numbers submitted with appropriate monitoring officer input.

Scope and limitations of scope

2.07 The detailed scope of this review is set out in Appendix 2 in the Terms of Reference. We have undertaken a review of the design and operating effectiveness of the Council's controls for monitoring compliance with laws and regulations in the areas contained within the Terms of Reference. Our work was undertaken using a sample based approach.

3. Detailed findings and recommendations

3.01 Compliance with Standing Orders on reporting to Council Committees – Control operating deficiency

Finding

The Council's Standing Order⁴⁵, 'Reports by Chief Officers', requires that all reports be submitted in draft to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services for review and consultation prior to consideration by the Council, Committees and Sub Committees. Since January 2014, Democratic Services have required that report authors prepare a checklist to record details of when draft reports were sent to the Monitoring Officer. The purpose of these checklists is to enable Democratic Services to monitor compliance with Standing Order 45.

In our review we identified 233 reports that were sent to the Council and its Committees in the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2014. From this population we selected a sample of 30 reports and obtained the report checklist. In ten cases the checklists we inspected did not include details of when the report was submitted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. Our sample testing of checklists would indicate that the reports we inspected were not being submitted to the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Standing Orders.

Our findings above correlate with the data collected by Democratic Services. Since March 2014 Democratic Services have been proactively monitoring receipt of checklists and tracking those where consultation with Monitoring Officer was recorded. In the three month period from April to July 92 reports were prepared for the Council and its Committees, of these Democratic Services had identified 19 reports with checklists that did not record any consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

When we inquired with key staff in Legal and Democratic Services there was sensitivity around addressing non-compliance with Standing Order 45. Democratic Services have been collating checklist data since March 2014 and indicated that this had not yet been shared with Chief Officers. At present there are no consequences for Chief Officers and report authors who do not comply.

Risks

Monitoring of reports by Chief Officers to the Council, Committees and Sub Committees by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services is a key control in ensuring the Council complies with laws and regulations. The purpose of Standing Order 45 is to mitigate the risk to the Council of reports being approved that are in breach of laws and regulations.

Action plan	
Finding rating	Agreed action
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a formal communication to Chief Officers and report authors about their responsibility for compliance with the Standing Orders when submitting reports to the Council, Committees and Sub Committees. • On approval from the Chief Executive, reports will be removed from the Committee agenda where the Monitoring Officer has not been given the report for review. • Non-compliance with the Standing Orders will be reported to the Corporate Management Team by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on a quarterly basis.
	<p>Responsible person / title</p> <p>Angela Scott, Chief Executive Jane MacEachran, Head of Legal and Democratic Services</p> <p>Target date:</p> <p>30 November 2014</p>

3.02 Legal Services engagement with Council services – Control design deficiency

Finding

Legal and Democratic Services conducted a stakeholder review during the latter part of 2012. The outcome of this was a service review of Legal Services, and the subsequent reorganisation of the service that was presented to a meeting of the Council on 26 June 2013. At this meeting the Head of Legal and Democratic Services was requested to report back to Council in 12 months to advise of the outcomes of the implementation of the new structure. An update was presented to the Council in June 2014 and a further update has been requested for December 2014.

Feedback from the stakeholder review highlighted two key issues:

- The need for closer relationships between Council services and Legal Services, with Legal Services being “embedded” in teams and projects; and
- The perception of Legal Services as risk averse and therefore becoming a block on Council services achieving their objectives.

In our review we interviewed a sample of Heads of Services from across the Council to gauge their view on how they felt the service engaged with Legal Services. We also obtained evidence from the Legal Managers within Legal Services to understand how they were engaging with Council services since the restructure. From these discussions and review of information it is apparent that a change in culture is required across the organisation if the desired level of engagement between Legal Services and Council services is to be achieved.

At present there is no requirement for Legal Services to be consulted or involved in Projects. There is also no requirement for Legal Services to be invited to participate in Senior Management meetings. Our experience of organisations with good practice in monitoring compliance with laws and regulations are those where the legal department is engaged with senior management and operational leads, and where this engagement is seen as part of ‘normal’ day-to-day operations. Council services should be engaging with Legal Services to help them to identify legal risks and to mitigate those risks before the risk exposes the Council to a legal or regulatory breach. The challenge for Legal Services is to provide a solution-focused and constructive approach when engaging with services.

Risks

Where Legal Services is not engaged with Council services, and working with services to identify legal risks, there is a risk that the Council is then exposed to non-compliance with laws and regulations. In relation to projects, this could cause delays and result in financial and reputational damage for the Council.

Action plan	
Finding rating	Agreed action
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance will be issued to recommend Legal Services attend monthly Senior Management Team meetings across the Council. Through discussions with the PMO Office we are aware that a new governance process is being put in place for all new projects. It is recommended that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services engage with the PMO Office to ensure the new process mitigates the risk of Legal Services not being appropriately consulted at the project appraisal phase.
	<p>Responsible person / title</p> <p>Ewan Sutherland , Interim Director of Corporate Governance</p> <p>Jane MacEachran, Head of Legal and Democratic Services</p> <p>Target date:</p> <p>30 November 2014</p>

3.03 Training for staff – Control design deficiency

Finding

The Council has various training materials and courses on laws and regulations available to staff. The most significant example of this is the online learning material for Data Protection. In addition to this, mandatory training in relation to data protection, child protection and ICT security is available for new joiners, and a number of services have identified additional specific mandatory training which is identified on job profiles. Although elements of training are in place, there has been no central exercise to gain assurance that all applicable and significant laws and regulations are covered within this. It is also unclear if there is appropriate monitoring of completion rates.

A draft paper is being prepared to address specific issues in relation to Data Protection training which was identified during the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) voluntary assessment of the Council during April 2013. While this will improve the monitoring process for Data Protection training there is also a need to reassess training more widely, across the Council, on other areas of legal compliance.

Risks

Staff are not aware of the laws and regulations that impact them in their roles leading to breaches

Action plan	
Finding rating	Agreed action
Responsible person / title	
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Services will, in conjunction with Human Resources (HR) and the Services, perform a risk assessment to identify those laws and regulations for which breaches would have a significant impact on the Council. • HR, in conjunction with Legal Services and the Services, will compile a list of all training which addresses the laws and regulations identified in the risk assessment. Where gaps in available training materials exist, additional training will be developed. • HR, in conjunction with Legal Services and the Services, will assess the level of training required for each role. This exercise is already underway by HR but will now include any additional training identified in the risk assessment. • The output of the risk assessment and newly created training material will be used by the Services to update job profiles, ensuring staff have an understanding of the mandatory training required. • Completion of mandatory training for staff will be monitored and an appropriate process implemented for escalating issues with non-completion. Consideration should be given to including an annual sign off on the Your HR system which would be approved by line management during the performances management process.
	<p>Target date:</p> <p>30 March 2015</p>
	<p>Jane MacEachran, Head of Legal Service</p> <p>Jeff Capstick, HR Manager</p> <p>Members of Corporate Management Team</p>

3.04 Fraud reporting procedures – Control design deficiency

Finding	
As per the Council's "Financial Regulations Management and Control - Code of Practice (September 2014), the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (the Monitoring Officer) is responsible for maintaining a register of matters relating to the Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Whistleblowing. A report summarising these matters is required to be presented to the Audit, Scrutiny and Risk Committee no less than annually. As per the Audit Scotland Interim Report (2013/14), the Audit, Scrutiny and Risk Committee has not yet received this report.	
Through discussions with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services it has been noted that procedures are not yet in place to ensure matters are reported to the Monitoring Officer. As a result, the register is not up to date.	
The Council's "Policy and strategic Response to Fraud, Bribery and Corruption" is currently being revised and is due to be approved by the Audit, Scrutiny and Risk Committee on 20 November. Internal Audit has reviewed the draft policy and has suggested the following points are included prior to finalisation:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (the Monitoring Officer) responsibility to maintain a register of matters relating to the Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Whistleblowing; and • The procedures for reporting matters to the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (the Monitoring Officer). At present the draft policy only states that matters should be reported to line management, or above if the matter relates to line management. 	
Risks	
There is a risk that instances of fraud are not reported to the Monitoring Officer as specified in the Financial Regulations.	
Action plan	
Finding rating	Agreed action
Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council's draft "Policy and strategic Response to Fraud, Bribery and Corruption" should be updated to include the above points prior to finalisation. 2. The finalised policy should be formally communicated to staff and line management should be reminded of the importance of escalating matters to the Head of Finance and the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (the Monitoring Officer). 3. A paper summarising the matters reported will be submitted to the Audit Scrutiny and Risk Committee on an annual basis, commencing February 2015.
	<p style="text-align: center;">Responsible person / title</p> <p>Jane MacEachran, Head of Legal Service</p> <p>Jonathan Belford, Corporate Accounting Manager</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Target date:</p> <p>Point 1 and 2 - 31 December 2014</p> <p>Point 3 - 26 February 2015</p>

Appendix 1 – Basis of our classifications

Individual finding ratings

Assessment rationale	
Finding rating	Assessment rationale
Critical	<p>A finding that could have a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical impact on operational performance; or • Critical monetary or financial statement impact; or • Critical breach in laws and regulations that could result in material fines or consequences; or • Critical impact on the reputation or brand of the organisation which could threaten its future viability.
High	<p>A finding that could have a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant impact on operational performance; or • Significant monetary or financial statement impact ; or • Significant breach in laws and regulations resulting in significant fines and consequences ; or • Significant impact on the reputation or brand of the organisation.
Medium	<p>A finding that could have a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate impact on operational performance; or • Moderate monetary or financial statement impact; or • Moderate breach in laws and regulations resulting in fines and consequences; or • Moderate impact on the reputation or brand of the organisation.
Low	<p>A finding that could have a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor impact on the organisation's operational performance; or • Minor monetary or financial statement impact; or • Minor breach in laws and regulations with limited consequences; or • Minor impact on the reputation of the organisation.
Advisory	<p>A finding that does not have a risk impact but has been raised to highlight areas of inefficiencies or good practice.</p>

Report classifications

Findings rating	Points
Critical	40 points per finding
High	10 points per finding
Medium	3 points per finding
Low	1 point per finding

Report classification	Points
Low risk	6 points or less
Medium risk	7– 15 points
High risk	16– 39 points
Critical risk	40 points and over

Appendix 2 – Agreed Terms of reference

Background

Aberdeen City Council is required to comply with a wide range of laws and regulations. To ensure compliance it is essential that clear accountability is assigned, robust monitoring controls are in place and projects are assessed for legal implications.

Scope

We will review the design and operating effectiveness of the key controls in place to monitor compliance with laws and regulations. The sub-processes included in this review are:

Sub-process

Objectives

Accountability and ownership

- Responsibility for complying with, and monitoring compliance with key laws and regulations is clearly defined between Legal Services and Directorates (including laws and regulations which are cross cutting);
- Processes are in place and consistently followed for identifying and risk assessing new laws and regulations;
- An escalation process is in place for known breaches. Breaches are reported to management, Head of Legal, Chief Executive and Committee where appropriate. Breaches are risk assessed and action taken where required.
- The quality of service provided by third party legal firms is monitored. Performance is measured on attributes such as delivery within budget/agreed timescales, expertise, knowledge share etc.

Engagement with Council Activities

- Processes are in place and consistently followed to ensure that items sent for Committee or working group approval have been assessed and reviewed by Legal Services. Committee are clearly informed of items which have not been through this review;
- Legal Services are actively involved in all significant project work across the Council and engaged at the earliest opportunity to ensure the legal requirements are assessed and addressed in a timely manner. If resource constraints exist, processes are in place to influence the timing of such projects or advise the service of the requirement and estimated cost of external consultants; and
- There is regular stakeholder engagement to ensure a thorough understanding of the strategic and operational issues within the services.

Limitations of scope

The scope of our review is outlined above. This will be undertaken on a sample basis across a number of services.

Internal control, no matter how well designed and operated, can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance regarding achievement of an organisation's objectives. The likelihood of achievement is affected by limitations inherent in all internal control systems. These include the possibility of poor judgment in decision-

making, human error, control processes being deliberately circumvented by employees and others, management overriding controls and the occurrence of unforeseeable circumstances.

Audit approach

Our audit approach is as follows:

- Obtain an understanding of the procedures in place through discussion with key personnel, review of documentation and walkthrough tests where appropriate.
- Identify the key risks in respect of monitoring compliance with laws and regulations.
- Evaluate the design of the controls in place to address the key risks.
- Test the operating effectiveness of the key controls on a sample basis.

Key Council Contacts

Name	Title
Ewan Sutherland	Director of Corporate Governance
Jane MacEachran	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Karen Donnelly	Legal Manager, Commercial and Advice
Alyson Mollison	Legal Manager, Litigation and Licensing

Appendix 3 - Limitations and responsibilities

Limitations inherent to the internal auditor's work

We have undertaken a review of compliance monitoring of laws and regulations, subject to the limitations outlined below.

Internal control

Internal control, no matter how well designed and operated, can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance regarding achievement of an organisation's objectives. The likelihood of achievement is affected by limitations inherent in all internal control systems. These include the possibility of poor judgment in decision-making, human error, control processes being deliberately circumvented by employees and others, management overriding controls and the occurrence of unforeseeable circumstances.

Future periods

Our assessment of controls relating to compliance monitoring of laws and regulations is as at 1 August 2014. Historic evaluation of effectiveness is not relevant to future periods due to the risk that:

- the design of controls may become inadequate because of changes in operating environment, law, regulation or other; or
- The degree of compliance with policies and procedures may deteriorate.

Responsibilities of management and internal auditors

It is management's responsibility to develop and maintain sound systems of risk management, internal control and governance and for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud. Internal audit work should not be seen as a substitute for management's responsibilities for the design and operation of these systems.

We endeavour to plan our work so that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting significant control weaknesses and, if detected, we shall carry out additional work directed towards identification of consequent fraud or other irregularities. However, internal audit procedures alone, even when carried out with due professional care, do not guarantee that fraud will be detected.

Accordingly, our examinations as internal auditors should not be relied upon solely to disclose fraud, defalcations or other irregularities which may exist.

In the event that, pursuant to a request which Aberdeen City Council has received under the Freedom of Information Act 2002 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (as the same may be amended or re-enacted from time to time) or any subordinate legislation made thereunder (collectively, the "Legislation"), Aberdeen City Council is required to disclose any information contained in this document, it will notify PwC promptly and will consult with PwC prior to disclosing such document. Aberdeen City Council agrees to pay due regard to any representations which PwC may make in connection with such disclosure and to apply any relevant exemptions which may exist under the Legislation. If, following consultation with PwC, Aberdeen City Council discloses any this document or any part thereof, it shall ensure that any disclaimer which PwC has included or may subsequently wish to include in the information is reproduced in full in any copies disclosed.

This document has been prepared only for Aberdeen City Council and solely for the purpose and on the terms agreed with Aberdeen City Council in our agreement dated 4 October 2010. We accept no liability (including for negligence) to anyone else in connection with this document, and it may not be provided to anyone else.

© 2014 PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. All rights reserved. In this document, "PwC" refers to PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (a limited liability partnership in the United Kingdom), which is a member firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, each member firm of which is a separate legal entity.

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 December 2014
DIRECTOR	Liz Taylor, Social Care and wellbeing
TITLE OF REPORT	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report
REPORT NUMBER:	SCW/14/25
CHECKLIST COMPLETE	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents to Members the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2013- 2014. The purpose of the Report is to inform Members of the role and responsibilities exercised by the Chief Social Work (CSWO) Officer; to provide information on statutory decision making in the period 2013-2014; and to give a progress report on key areas of the Social Care and Wellbeing service over the period of the Report.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Council is recommended to

- (i) note the content of the Annual Report attached as Appendix; and
- (ii) offer comment on the format of the Report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this Report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from the Report.

The Chief Social Work Officer is a statutory post in accordance with the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 as amended by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994. The required qualifications for the CSWO are set down in regulations. In 2009, the Scottish Government published national Guidance on the 'Role of the CSWO: Principles, Requirements and

Guidance'. The CSWO provides advice to the Council on social work matters; undertakes decision making in respect of statutory functions ; and provides professional governance, leadership and accountability for the delivery of social work and social care services, whether they are provided directly by the local authority or on behalf of the local authority by another agency. It is a recommendation of the Guidance that the CSWO provides an Annual Report to the Council.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

In 2014 the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser to the Scottish Government developed a template for CSWO Annual Reports, and this has been followed. The aim was to bring consistency in reporting across Scotland, to aid information sharing and benchmarking and give an overview as to how social work services are being delivered, the highlights and the challenges. It is the intention of the Chief Social Work Advisor (to receive Annual Reports and compile a national overview report.

6. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 6.1 The report covers the areas of content in the national template. It puts social work into the context of Aberdeen City, describes the service and partnership structures, the landscape of social services, our financial position and the governance and performance reporting arrangements. More specific information is provided on highlights in performance across services; continuous improvement and planning for change; user, carer and stakeholder involvement; workforce planning and development and key challenges for 2014-2015. The activity of the CSWO and other authorised officers in relation to statutory functions is set out.
- 6.2 It is not intended that the Annual Report should be a complete account of social work activity for the year. Business and Service Plans, finance and performance reporting, reports on developments seeking authorisations, and information bulletins provide regular information to committees.
- 6.3 The Annual Report is an opportunity to give an overview of the range of services and initiatives in social care and to highlight key achievements and challenges. In this sense it is selective.

7. IMPACT

There are no EHRIA requirements associated with this Report.

8. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There are no risks associated directly with this Report. Social Care and Wellbeing maintains a Risk Register and within services, risks are identified and managed.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scottish Government, 2009, The Role of Chief Social Work Officer: Principles, Requirements and Guidance pursuant to Section 5(1) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/03/16113229/0>

10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Liz Taylor
Director of Social Care & Wellbeing
Chief Social Work Officer
litaylor@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel. 01224 522379

This page is intentionally left blank

CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 2014



CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

Contents

	Page
Foreword	
1. Introduction	3
2. Aberdeen City	4
3. Social Work and Partnership Structures	5
4. Service Delivery Landscape and Market	7
5. Finance and Resources	8
6. Scrutiny and Performance	10
7. Chief Social Work Officer Statutory Activity	11
8. Service Highlights 2013-2014	17
9. Users, Carers and Stakeholders	35
10. Workforce Planning	37
11. Service Improvement and Transformation	39
12. Key Challenges for 2014-2015	42
References and Reading	43

CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

Foreword

I am pleased to present the Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for Aberdeen City for 2013-2014. This provides an overview of the social work service, information on statutory decisions made by the Chief Social Work Officer on behalf of the Council and some of the key challenges facing the service in 2014-2015 and beyond.

This Report has been written at a time of great change for social work and social care in the City. With the integration of adult health and social care, we have what has been described as the greatest change for social work in 40 years, since the implementation of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 that brought a unified social work service into being. Alongside this, we have the restructuring of the Council's directorates that will take Children's Social Work into the new, integrated Education and Children's Service. From 2015, the Chief Social Work Officer role will be part of the remit of the Head of Children's Social Work.

Alongside structural change, new ways of delivering services, like Self-Directed Support and Reclaiming Social Work, will bring changes to practice for staff and improved outcomes for service users. While transitional and transformational change is underway, the dedication of our highly motivated staff will ensure that there is no loss of focus on the day to day business of delivering services to support and protect the most vulnerable people in Aberdeen.

It is not intended that this Report should be an account of all activity in social work, rather that it should highlight the breadth of service delivery and achievement over the period. It follows the template introduced in 2014 by the Chief Social Work Adviser to the Scottish Government, to standardise CSWO annual reports and create a national picture of social work in Scotland.

Liz Taylor
Director for Social Care and Wellbeing
Chief Social Work Officer

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Annual Report from Aberdeen City Council's Chief Social Work Officer. The Director of Social Care and Wellbeing currently holds the position of Chief Social Work Officer, ensuring a level of seniority within the Council that is commensurate with the responsibilities of the position.

Every local authority is required to have a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO), as set out in Section 45 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994. The qualifications are set down in regulations that state that the CSWO must be registered as a Social Worker with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

The overall aim of the CSWO role is to ensure that the Council receives effective, professional advice and guidance in the provision of all social work services, whether these are provided directly, in partnership with other agencies, or purchased on behalf of the local authority. The CSWO has a responsibility for overall performance improvement and the identification, management and reporting of corporate risk as these relate to social work services. To fulfill these responsibilities, the CSWO has direct access to elected members, reporting through the Social Care, Wellbeing and Safety Committee, and reports directly to the Chief Executive.

The CSWO provides professional leadership and promotes values and standards of professional practice, ensuring that only Registered Social Workers undertake those functions reserved in legislation and that social service workers meet the requirements of their regulatory body and the SSSC Codes of Practice. Any social service worker may approach the CSWO for professional advice.

Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, and the rights that follow from this. Social workers should uphold and defend each person's physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual integrity and well-being. (International Federation of Social Workers, 2004)

A number of specific statutory responsibilities are discharged by the CSWO. These relate primarily to decisions about the curtailment of individual freedom and the protection of individuals and the public, which must be made by the CSWO or by a professionally qualified social worker to whom the responsibility has been delegated by the CSWO and for which the CSWO remains accountable.

There must be CSWO cover 24 hours a day, every day of the year. To ensure this, the Council has in place a scheme of delegation of the statutory responsibilities to the Heads of Service, Social Care and Wellbeing, who are Registered Social Workers.

The purpose of this Report is to reflect the discharge of this range of duties of the CSWO. It is not intended to describe all aspects of social work in Aberdeen City and is complementary to the Social Care and Wellbeing Business Plan 2010-2013 and 2014 to 2017.

2. Aberdeen City

Aberdeen's population is projected to rise from 217,120 to 271,705 between 2010 and 2035, an increase of 25.1%. A significant increase is projected in the number of older people, almost 70% in those over 75 years. Following a period of decline, an increase is projected of 32.5% in the primary school population and 37.2% in the secondary school 12 to 16 year population in the period to 2035. Aberdeen has a more diverse population than Scotland generally, with 75% of people classifying themselves as "Scottish" (2011 Census, down from 85% in 2001) compared to the Scottish figure of 84%, and a higher percentage of people from all ethnic classifications than the Scottish average.

Average life expectancy at birth in Aberdeen is 76.3 years for males and 80.9 years for females (based on 2008-2010 data), slightly higher than the Scottish averages. A longer living population is to be celebrated but the potential increase in levels of dependency and demand for services makes our preventive approaches to active ageing and wellbeing for more years of healthy living a priority.

Around 28% of households have a member with a long-standing illness or disability and 16% of people have classified themselves as having a long-term condition that limits their daily activities. The prevalence of mental health issues, learning disability and dementia is each around the Scottish average. Drug misuse occurs in 2.3% of the population, compared to the Scottish figure of 1.7%. The number of child protection cases where drug and alcohol misuse is an issue is above the national average and it is significantly higher where drugs alone are the main concern.

Whilst many people in Aberdeen enjoy a high standard of living, poverty affects a significant proportion of the population. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), December 2012, identified 22 data zones in Aberdeen that were in the most deprived 15% of all Scottish data zones. This represents around 8% of the city's population. The incidence of deprivation may be relatively low but is still a significant issue, particularly the wide gap between the city's most and least deprived areas.

Aberdeen City Council receives the lowest Total Government Funding per head of any Council, 73% of the Scottish average figure. The Council's FTE staffing is equivalent to 32 employees per 1,000 population, the second lowest ratio of any Council and well below the Scottish average of 45 per 1000 population (2012).

3. Social Work and Partnership Structures

The Social Care and Wellbeing directorate is led by Liz Taylor, Director and CSWO, and a Senior Management Team composed of the Head of Adult Services, Tom Cowan, the Head of Children's Services, Susan Devlin, and the Business Manager, Kate Mackay. The service reports through the Social Care, Wellbeing and Safety Committee (Social Care and Wellbeing to August 2013), whose Convenor is Councillor Len Ironside, with Vice Convenors, Councillor Lesley Dunbar and Councillor Gordon Graham (for Safety).

Restructuring

It is the intention of the Council to restructure Social Care and Wellbeing in 2014-15, as part of a corporate restructuring to reduce from five to three directorates. This will see Children's Social Work going into a new Education and Children's Service, with its own Committee, and Adult Services going to the new Integration Authority with Health. With the loss of the Director post, the Council has decided that the Head of Children's Social Work will become the Chief Social Work Officer.

Health and Safety Partners

Health and Safety matters are dealt with in partnership with staff and Trade Unions. The Social Care and Wellbeing Health and Safety Committee comprising the Director/CSWO and senior management team, staff and Trades Union representatives, and corporate Health and Safety advisors meets quarterly and an Annual Report is taken to the Council's corporate Health and Safety Committee.

Development over the year has focussed on improving the reporting, collating and analysis of data on accidents and incidents. Incidents are still under-reported. Further refinement will take place to enable better use of this information by teams and encourage reporting. Led by the Head of Adult Services, a new Lone Working Policy is ready to implement. The corporate Health and Safety Team has produced a Health and Safety Plan for children's residential homes, following audit activity. Workplace Inspections have been brought up to date across the service.

Partnership working

Partnership working with a range of internal and external partners, across sectors, is integral to how the service does business: the Health and Social Care Partnership (which is the CHP); the Integrated Children's Services Partnership of which the Director/CSWO is co-chair; the Early Years Collaborative; the Northern Community Justice Authority (NCJA); the Grampian Adult Protection Partnership; the North East Scotland Child Protection Partnership (NESCOP); MAPPA; and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP). The Integrated Strategic Management Team of social care, health and housing meets monthly with an Integrated Operational Group bringing a range of services together. With new policy agendas, newer partnerships have come into existence: the Older People's Change Fund Group where the Council, NHS, ACVO as the 3rd Sector Interface, and Scottish Care for the private sector have been equal partners round the table; and the high level North East

Partnership Forum of NHS Grampian and Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils to oversee strategic planning for health and social care integration.

Integration of health and social care

With the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, adult social care and adult health services will be integrated during 2015, in a new Partnership arrangement between the Council and Grampian Health Board that will see health and social care functions delegated to an Integration Joint Board. A Transitional Leadership Group of six elected members of the Council and six NHS Board members, supported by officers, was set up in February 2014 to plan the implementation of integration and the production of the Integration Scheme.

Integration of adult health and social care will be through the body corporate model, with the establishment of an Integration Joint Board (IJB) from 1 April 2015 and the appointment of a Chief Officer, to be in post from October 2014. The CSWO will be a non-voting member of the IJB as will the Head of Adult Services. Our plans and actions on integration are building on our strong tradition of joint working with the NHS and across the three North East Councils. In particular, we are focussing on the development of “cluster working” as a means of planning and delivering joined up services and better use of resources, based around the four clusters of GP practices and aligned health and care services that cover the City. This will support locality planning and the development of the IJBs first Strategic Plan from 2015. There will be a full programme of engagement and consultation with key stakeholders and staff. The Partners are committed to maximising the opportunity for pooling our resources and creating new ways of working to provide seamless services, promote better health and wellbeing and improve outcomes for people.

Planning in Partnership

In conjunction with staff, service users and carers and our key partners, and following on from our 2010-2013 Business Plan, Social Care and Wellbeing has developed its Business Plan for what it needs to achieve over the next 3 years, 2014-2017.

We are working to improve outcomes for a City where:

- people are supported and cared for;
- people are protected;
- people in need are enabled and supported to put in place their solutions; and
- we will maintain health and wellbeing.

To achieve this, our priorities are:

- shifting the balance of care;
- personalisation of services;
- in partnership; and
- improving the use of resources.

These priorities should endure structural redesign.

4. Service Delivery Landscape and Market

Aberdeen is one of the most prosperous cities in the UK, as the centre of the energy sector, with international significance. Average earnings have been relatively high in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire while unemployment has been low, even during the current economic downturn. House prices and private rents are high and there is a shortage of affordable housing.

These factors impact significantly on the health and social care sectors' ability to recruit and retain staff at all levels. In particular this has been felt in the ability of all social care providers to meet increasing and more complex demand, in teacher and in health visitor numbers, and in the recruitment of hospital nurses and NHS consultants, e.g. in mental health and geriatric medicine. The increase in the older population relative to those of working age will create even greater workforce pressures across health and social care.

Social Care and Wellbeing delivers on the Council's responsibilities for all social work services and leads the Council's contribution to public health promotion and preventive services for the wellbeing of vulnerable citizens. A high proportion of the direct delivery of care is through the independent sector, particularly provision for older people, people with long term conditions or disability and those with mental health issues, which are fully outsourced. Commissioned services account for 75% of the Social Care and Wellbeing budget, making the delivery of critical services subject to the volatility of the market. The service has been exploring new ways of commissioning services and took a radical step in establishing a **Local Authority Trading Company** in 2013.

In August 2013, the Council established a Local Authority Trading Company, **Bon Accord Care Ltd**, for the delivery of those older people's and rehabilitation services that were previously delivered in-house, including 3 care homes and 3 day centres, care at home, housing support and care in very/sheltered housing, Occupational Therapy and the Community Equipment Service. Under TUPE arrangements, 766 staff transferred, retaining their terms and conditions of employment. The Council is the sole shareholder, with a contract for services to the value of around £25 million. There is an expectation that Bon Accord Care will develop trading activities that will create a surplus for re-investment in services. In 2014, in Partnership with the Council, two new services were opened: Clashieknowe, providing accommodation with rehabilitation, and Hillylands Independent Living Centre. After the first year of operation, service specifications are being reviewed to give more opportunity for flexibility in response to changing demand and strategic priorities, and to encourage ongoing partnership working. Bon Accord Care's first Annual Report is available.

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s41201/BASS%20End%20of%20Year%20Report%202013-14.pdf>

5. Finance and Resources

Aberdeen City Council in 2011 undertook a Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) exercise that reviewed all its costs over a 5 year period. This led to the Council producing a 5 Year Business Plan outlining the financial position of the Council over the period, which is reviewed annually. Initial calculations showed that if the Service were to do nothing to change service delivery from the 2010 position, by 2016 Social Care and Wellbeing would require an increase in budget in excess of £20m.

As a result of this, a transformation programme was implemented, including the development of alternative family services and locally based preventative services to reduce the number of out of authority placements for children; the redesign of Learning Disability services with new models for accommodation with support and day opportunities; and the establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company, known as Bon Accord Care Ltd. These actions, along with prudent financial management and monitoring, have ensured that the service continues to operate within available resources.

The current 5 Year Business Plan lays out the Social Care and Wellbeing Directorate's net budget until 2018-19, showing an increase of 7% from 2013-14. This is based on agreed savings and the building in of growth to the base budget.

Table 1 Social Care & Wellbeing net Budget Projections

SERVICE	2013-14 £'000	2014-15 £'000	2015-16 £'000	2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000	2018-19 £'000
Total Budget	121,071	122,938	123,871	125,589	129,197	131,605
Adults	85,842	86,022	86,836	89,399	91,963	94,530
Children	33,575	34,156	34,271	34,502	34,533	34,362
Business Mgt	1,748	2,758	2,673	2,683	2,700	2,712

The projected growth in net budget is predicated on increases in nationally and locally agreed rates for commissioned services, demographic pressures in Learning Disability and Older People's services, purchasing of additional home care to meet need, and increase in demand for alternative family services, based on growth trends in children's services and looked after children numbers.

The Service meets its commitments within budget. However, Children's Services in 2013-14 were overcommitted though increase in demand, particularly against the joint budget with Education for specialist residential placements through the Children's Hearing, and additional requirements for foster placements. As demand projections indicate an ongoing budget pressure, a sustainable solution is being developed through a range of initiatives. Investment is being made in service transformation to improve outcomes and constrain demand pressures, in particular adoption of the Reclaiming Social Work Model, which gives the opportunity for an outcome based approach to setting the Children's Services budget. An Inclusion Review underway in Education will enable joint approaches to managing demand and meeting the needs of looked after children within City resources.

The integration of Children's Social Work services and universal services for children will offer further opportunities to strengthen and develop prevention and early intervention strategies to constrain growth in demand for more costly interventions.

Commissioning

Particular consideration needs to be given to changes in relation to commissioned services and the impact of market forces. With negotiations over the National Contract for Care Home services putting its future use in doubt, a locally agreed rate may need to be negotiated for 2015-16 and onwards. The aim should be for a single rate, or suite of rates, for publicly funded places across all independent care homes, and for the possibility of shared arrangements across North East Councils to be explored.

The increasing difficulty for some providers in maintaining a financially viable service in Aberdeen is leading to some instability in sectors of the social care market. This is being tackled through measures such as the use of new Framework contracts in adult services for more transparency of unit costs and flexibility in commissioning, encouragement to providers to seek economies of scale through collaboration, and tactical use of uplifts to funding. A more strategic approach to decisions about funding levels that takes account of demand and supply variables, inflation, market forces and Aberdeen cost factors will be needed to ensure stability. The degree of dependence on commissioned services warrants more partnership-type approaches with providers to find mutually beneficial solutions to supply/demand/cost challenges.

6. Scrutiny and Performance

Effective social work services promote independence and resilience, enabling some of our most vulnerable, excluded and even dangerous people to play an active part in society, through achieving change. (Changing Lives, 2006, p.16)

The Social Care and Wellbeing Service was subject to an Initial Scrutiny Level Assessment by the Care Inspectorate in 2012. The assessment was generally positive, with 7 Recommendations for Action. An Action Plan was submitted to the Care Inspectorate in response to the findings, with a final update in March 2014.

In 2014 a Joint Inspection of Children's Services is to take place. The Integrated Children's Services Partnership was subject to Child Protection Inspections in 2008 and 2009. Weaknesses from the 2008 inspection were acted on and improvements were demonstrated in 2009 and in 2011.

The Service has a Continuous Improvement Framework, which has been approved by the Social Care and Wellbeing Committee and which sets out how we review and monitor the performance of what we do. 'How Good is Our Team' is the service approach to self evaluation, with key themes reviewed on a cross service basis. These link into team and service development plans. The Service has recently introduced a case auditing policy and procedure, to ensure we are robustly reviewing the quality of the work that we are doing to support vulnerable adults and children.

Performance reports are submitted quarterly to the Social Care, Wellbeing and Safety Committee. The Service reports on a suite of indicators that have been revised for 2014 for relevance and usefulness, through a series of workshops involving elected members, and agreed at Committee. The Child Protection Committee, chaired by the Director/CSWO, and the Adult Protection Committee, with an independent Convenor, receive performance reports four to six times a year. Criminal Justice Social Work reports on a suite of measures applicable to all seven Council members, to the Northern Community Justice Authority (NCJA), giving opportunity for benchmarking.

Bon Accord Care reports monthly to Social Care and Wellbeing against a Performance Framework and through regular meetings. A corporate process is being established for governance of all the Council's Arms Length External Organisations (ALEOs), under Audit and Risk Committee, that will direct performance reporting through an officer Governance Hub to a Shareholder Scrutiny Group and the service committees.

7. Chief Social Work Officer Statutory Activity

The CSWO is responsible and accountable for statutory decision making in relation to specific Social Work functions undertaken by the CSWO and by other designated professional staff. This section provides detail of this statutory activity for 2013-14.

7.1 Mental Health

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 Section 32 (the 2003 Act) places a responsibility on Local Authorities to appoint sufficient Mental Health Officers (MHOs) for their local area to undertake statutory duties. The 2003 Act stipulates that MHOs must be Registered Social Workers working for the local authority who are experienced and who have completed specialist training.

Aberdeen City Council secures MHO training through The Robert Gordon University and in 2013 to August 2014 four social workers completed their training and were approved by the CSWO. A further four have begun MHO training. This gives the Council a total of 30.5 MHOs located across adult services, with 19.5 working within Mental Health teams and 5 in the Out of Hours team. This level allows us to meet present demand, though shortages of MHOs have created pressures in the past and a continual supply of new MHOs is needed. We are providing emergency cover at times of shortage in the neighbouring Aberdeenshire Council, in a reciprocal relationship, and a joint approach to MHO cover is being considered.

MHOs have statutory duties in situations where compulsory detention or treatment under the 2003 Act is being considered, to assess and either consent or withhold consent to the detention or treatment. As the Designated MHO they remain involved with the person and exercise duties for the duration of their detention. The deprivation of a person's liberty is a serious event and the principle of the least restrictive intervention is an important safeguard. Statutory interventions by MHOs are shown at Table 2.

Table 2 Statutory Interventions by Mental Health Officers

Intervention	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Compulsory Treatment Order	49	65	56
Emergency Detention in hospital	20	30	36
Short-term Detention in hospital	156	186	180

Adults with Incapacity – Guardianship

For those adults who are unable to make decisions or take action to safeguard their own welfare, their property or their financial affairs, the sheriff court can appoint a guardian under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. Where no relative, carer or friend is available, the local authority can apply for Welfare Guardianship with the CSWO as the guardian. The CSWO is the named Guardian for 72 people. The use of Private Guardianships, which must be supervised by the local authority, places a growing demand on social worker time in adult and older people's services. A total of 244 Private Guardianships are subject to supervision, with contact made generally at the review stage or more often when assistance is needed. This is an increase of 65% in three years since 2011. Table 3 shows new Guardianships granted over the past three years.

Table 3 Adults with Incapacity placed under Guardianship

INTERVENTION	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Welfare Guardianship	14	18	15
Private Guardianship	49	37	57
Total Guardianship CSWO	-	-	72
Total Guardianship Private	148	-	244

The majority of people who are subject to guardianship have a learning disability, with older people as the second most likely group. Since 2011, the growth in the use of private guardianship has been noticeable in relation to people with a learning disability, with a 57% increase in three years. Though the numbers of people are small, four times as many people have become subject of local authority applications for guardianship for reasons of incapacity such as acquired brain injury (ABI in this period. The breakdown of guardianship across client groups is shown at table 4.

Table 4 People subject to Guardianship by client group

CLIENT GROUP	Welfare Guardianship		Private Guardianship	
	2011	2014	2011	2014
Learning Disability	18	20	105	183
Older People	34	32	32	48
Mental Health	5	4	-	2
Other (e.g. ABI)	4	16	11	11
Total	61	72	148	244

The time taken for the legal process of Guardianship can delay discharge from hospital of people who lack capacity to make a decision about their future care. The new national Guidance on Choosing a Care Home on Discharge from Hospital (Scottish Government, December 2013) explains the circumstances in which the use of powers under Section 13ZA of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 to facilitate discharge of people who lack capacity to consent is applicable. The CSWO has advised that when use is made of Section 13ZA, this should be on a formal basis, as part of multi-agency decision making, and that decisions should be recorded. Again, we work to the principle of minimum restriction on the individual.

7.2 Secure Applications for Children

A very small number of children and young people present a significant danger to themselves or to other people and for these few a placement in secure care may be warranted. These placements can be instigated through Court proceedings, or by the CSWO. The CSWO decides whether to implement a secure authorisation by a Children's Hearing and whether to remove a child from secure accommodation and must be satisfied that the criteria for secure placement are met and that this is in the best interest of the child. Such placements are used for the minimum possible time, though this will vary according to the needs of the child. The CSWO is putting in place a formal internal process to ensure a monthly review of children in secure accommodation.

Table 5 Use of Secure Accommodation – number of children placed in year

PLACEMENTS	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Total New Placements	6 (5 children)	5	3
Placed by Court	3	1	1
Placed by CSWO & Hearing	3	1	0
Placed by CSWO	0	3	2
Hearing request - declined	1	2	2

The use of secure placements has been decreasing and Table 5 shows the trend. The criteria for secure care are specific and the CSWO as decision maker declined to implement two authorisations from Hearings 2013-2014 on the basis that there was insufficient evidence that the grounds were met. Where there is a feasible alternative to a secure placement this would be pursued vigorously and options would include a specialist residential placement, the Intensive Support Service in Youth Justice and, from 2014, support through the Crisis Team and the Young Women's Centre.

Emergency transfer of children

The CSWO authorised 16 emergency transfers of children subject to Compulsory Supervision Orders in 2013-2014, following discussion with the social worker/team leader and for a variety of reasons, including placement breakdown (From 2013, under Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 S143.)

7.3 Adoption and Fostering

The Head of Children's Services is the Agency Decision Maker and the CSWO is the Alternative Agency Decision Maker, with a regular role in decision making that allows a scrutiny function over adoption and fostering. While the Court determines whether an adoption is granted, the CSWO is the ultimate local authority decision maker on matters appertaining to adoption.

There is a need for more adopters and foster carers for older children, sibling groups and those with special needs, to give these children the security of permanent, loving and nurturing relationships. The recruitment of new adopters and foster carers over the past year has been challenging. (see Table 6) This has been largely influenced by the wider economic conditions in the Aberdeen/North East area but also reflects the experiences of other fostering providers in the area. Our recruitment of foster carers does not reflect usage, though, as around 46% of foster care is purchased by the Council. At 31 August 2013, 132 children were placed in foster care provided by the Council and 112 in purchased foster care.

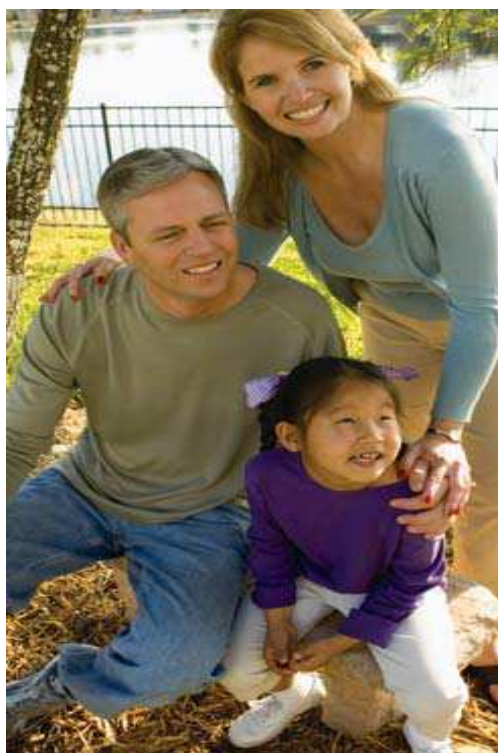
We have developed a recruitment group, involving staff, carers as well as partners within the Council's marketing and media teams to develop a more effective marketing and recruitment strategy. The proposed restructure of Children's Services also recognises the need for some staff within the fostering and adoption service to have a greater focus on the recruitment, training and preparation of carers. This will be achieved via the Recruitment and Assessment team.

Table 6 Adoption and Fostering activity

ACTIVITY	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Adopters approved	15	19	14
Adoption Plans approved	25	19	19
Children adopted	21	24	21
Foster carers approved	16	13	6

We have seen an increase in the number of adopters coming forward in 2014 and have further developed relationships with Aberdeenshire Council to enable adopters to be assessed by Aberdeen City, given our higher numbers of children who require adoptive families.

The PACE, Permanence and Excellence in Care, programme recognised that delay and drift occurred in the planning for children at every stage of the process. The City has adopted this and our PACE project is taking a multi-agency approach to making changes that can speed up the process of decision-making for permanence. Working with the Scottish Government and CELCIS since March 2014 we have begun to see a reduction in the length of time it is taking for children's plans to be agreed. From April to August 2014, as many adoption plans, 19, have been approved as in the year 2013, allowing more timely placement of children within an adoptive family. (see below - PACE under Service Improvement and Transformation)



Have
you ever
considered
Adoption or
Fostering?

http://www.aberdeency.gov.uk/social_care_health/fostering_adoption/adoption/fos_fostering_adoption.asp

7.4 Social Work Complaints

The CSWO reviews all responses to statutory complaints and the outcomes of appeals against complaint decisions, for quality assurance purposes. Using CareFirst version 6 to record data on complaints allows for analysis and ensures that complaint information is available for services and committees and to inform service improvements.

A regulated process applies to the methods and timescales for responding to complaints by persons who receive or are in need of social care service and persons whose request for a service has been refused by the local authority. This report considers statutory Stage Two complaints, where the requirement is for a formal investigation and a full written response under the procedure, and Stage Three complaints, where the complainant is not satisfied with the response and has requested the complaint be examined by the Complaints Review Committee

In the period April 2013 to March 2014, 95 statutory complaints were recorded, (comparable with 96 for 2012-13 and 88 for 2011-12). Of these, 13 were upheld, 24 were partially upheld, 45 were not upheld, 3 were rejected, 3 not resolved and 7 are still seeking resolution. The breakdown across the service is: Children and Families, 46; Adults, 24; Older People, 20; and 5 'other'.

For 2013-14, 48% of complaints were acknowledged within the required 5 day timescale and 30% were responded to within the 28 day deadline. Many factors can influence the ability of the service to respond to a complaint within 28 days and, consequently, impact on the outcome for the service user. There is no doubt, though, that our focus on improving the handling of complaints is needed. The aim is to

resolve complaints at an earlier stage, to the satisfaction of the complainer and the Service, where possible. Training has been delivered to managers and further training in complaints investigation is planned, making use of SPSO (Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman) materials.

In 2013-14 two complainants took their case to the Complaints Review Committee, (the same as in 2012-13). One complaint was abandoned. On the other, the recommendations from CRC and the service's actions to address them have been presented to the Social Care and Wellbeing Committee.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In relation to statutory activity the Chief Social Work Officer is going to

- monitor MHO activity and capacity in the service and facilitate joint working with Aberdeenshire Council;
- monitor the impact of increasing numbers of private guardianships on workloads and review capacity;
- ensure that powers under Section 13ZA of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 are used through a formal, multi-disciplinary process and that decisions are recorded;
- commission an (internal) audit of cases where Section 13ZA has been used;
- plan succession arrangements for Agency Decision Maker roles;
- monitor the impact of the PACE programme on timescales in permanence planning for children;
- introduce four weekly, face-to-face reviews of secure placements with the responsible workers;
- ensure that all service managers undergo training in complaints handling and investigation, to achieve better outcomes

8. Service Delivery Highlights 2013-2014

The following are service delivery and performance highlights for 2013-2014. These have been chosen to reflect the variety of social work responsibilities and provision across care groups and are not intended to be exhaustive in scope.

8.1 Self Directed Support

Aberdeen City Council is well prepared for the implementation of the Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013. Self Directed Support (SDS) is about ensuring that people of all ages with social care needs are helped to find support to live the way they wish to lead their lives, with the best outcomes possible, through exercising the fundamental principles of SDS, 'choice' and 'control'. SDS has the potential to be transform the way in which people have their needs met.

With annual funding from the Scottish Government from 2012 to 2015, a dedicated team has been planning and implementing arrangements for SDS. A Strategy and Workplan for 2014-2016 is in place. Participation of service users, carers and families has been crucial, through awareness raising events, a World Café programme and production of a film and DVD to share individual stories.

An independent information, advice and support service, I-Connect North East, has been commissioned as a user led organisation for development of SDS, offering practical solutions for managing the process and facilitating access to greater opportunities for people. The 'My Life' portal has been purchased as the Council's main public information system for SDS and will be running by autumn 2014.

All staff from the Children with Disabilities Team attended training with In Control on SDS with children, young people and their families. An SDS pilot with group of 22 children in 14 families during summer 2013 and a further 20 families in the Easter holidays 2014 received a test budget of £200 to implement a support plan with agreed outcomes. The success of this has led to the wider roll out of SDS.

The **SDS** summer pilot in 2013 helped to focus staff and families on children's skills and strengths to achieve the outcomes of their Support Plans. Parents said:

"We had flexibility in picking staff."

"Amazing for a small amount of money"

"I realise I'd underestimated my boys' ability."

"I liked being in control of my own budget – I want to do it again."

To enable individualised budgets, a Resource Allocation System (RAS) has been developed and implemented within our Adult Learning Disability service and an equivalency based model is being explored for other areas of service, where the challenges are greater. Significant work has taken place with staff across the Service, via briefings, awareness raising and training. Lessons from an Action Learning Set with Newcastle Council are helping to refine plans and processes. Whilst best practice already promotes a person-centred and outcomes focussed approach, Adults and Children's services will further adapt their assessment and

care management practices to incorporate full discussion of the options for SDS and ensure that people are enabled to make an informed choice.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In SDS we are going to

- develop and put in place the systems to support SDS for all user groups, in particular a RAS equivalent for older people; and
- ensure that people are supported by knowledgeable staff to make a positive, informed choice about SDS.

8.2 Children's Services



Population growth is putting pressure on all children's services in the City, already having seen a 28% increase in births from 2002 to 2012. In the five year period to February 2014, there has been a 10.5% increase in the number of children receiving a social work service, rising to 2073 in 2013-14.

There was an increase in referrals throughout 2013, with a peak in October to December. Over this period, referrals to Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) increased by 50% from the previous quarter and changes brought about by the Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011 have undoubtedly been significant, particularly the new Grounds of Referral to a Children's Hearing, "close connection with someone carrying out domestic abuse" and "a child's conduct being harmful to himself and other".

Further legislative change with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 will impact on service planning and resources, including young people who are looked after having new rights to support up to age 21 and aftercare to age 26, enhanced entitlement to assistance for kinship carers and increased support for vulnerable children and families.

As a means to improve outcomes for children and families, meet demand and constrain growth, the **Reclaiming Social Work** model is being implemented with a three year programme that began in September 2013 (see below - Reclaiming Social Work under Service Improvement and Transformation).

With increasing demand, multi-agency responses become even more important. The multi-agency Integrated Children's Services Board, co-chaired by the Director/CSWO with the Director of Education, revised its structure in December 2013 to focus on improving outcomes, with six Outcome groups based on the SHANARRI Indicators – **S**afe, **H**ealthy, **A**chieving, **N**urtured, **A**ctive, **R**espected, **R**esponsible, **I**ncluded - plus a Performance Group that will develop the analysis of performance, monitor and challenge across Outcome groups.

GIRFEC is being implemented, from 2012, following the National Practice Model as a basis for intervention, supported by an Operational Guidance Toolkit. A group of children's social work staff has developed a Framework of 21 outcomes - Aberdeen 21 - to help staff assess and plan for children in a SMART manner. Staff have had training in understanding outcomes and are beginning to use the tool, though it is too soon to know how effective this will be.

Every child has a Named Person and single points of contact in Health and Education can identify who that is. The role of Lead Professional is in place. A Single Assessment and Plan is used for any child requiring additional support and an interactive version is being rolled out. A multi-agency training programme encourages continuous practice improvement and reinforces our integrated approach of the 'child at the centre/team around the child'.

Work needs to be ongoing to create and maintain a culture of understanding of different roles and responsibilities and collaboration among different professionals.

Looked after Children

Of the 2,060 children's cases open to social work services at the start of 2014, looked after children made up 28%, 577 children. In the 10 year period to December 2013 the number of looked after children has increased by 28%.

Over 90% of looked after children are cared for in a 'family' home: 28% by parents, around 20% by friends/relatives, nearly 40% by foster carers, with about 4% in other community care. The remaining 9% of children in residential care is comparable to the Scottish figure.

Our strategic aim is to shift the balance of care in the placements used for children with a focus on improving outcomes. The number of foster carer households has increased by 12% from 2010 to 2013 and the children with foster carers by about 20%. In the past five years there has been a 50% decrease in the use of residential school placements, from a steady number of 40 plus down to around 20, through better scrutiny of decision-making and development of community based intensive support services as an alternative.

The Council runs six children's homes of 5-6 places each and two 'satellite' units of two places each. One unit refurbished in 2013 has yet to re-open as a result of recruitment difficulties. A new, six place purpose-built unit opened in August 2013, Marcburn House, is still to settle into its role as a permanent home for children, with emergency, short term admissions taking up most places.

A Review of children's residential homes, in terms of demand, use of premises and staffing, and planning for future needs is underway, but overdue, and will report to Committee with recommendations by the end of 2014.



Children and staff enjoyed the official opening of our new residential home, Marchburn House, by the Lord Provost on 4 December 2014.

Service developments continue in 2013-14, with establishment of a Young Women's Centre for girls and young women at risk of harm, through reinvestment of £200,000; and a Crisis Support Team that can access a short term, two place residential resource. Planning for young people requiring throughcare and after care is improving, with 62% having a Pathway Plan in 2013 (compared to 30% in 2010), and needs to go further, especially with young people who are harder to engage.

Educational attainment for looked after children is considerably lower than all other children's outcomes in Aberdeen, whether they are at home or away from home. Exclusion rates are among the highest in the country. Some young people on Compulsory Supervision Orders who have a range of difficulties and often have been out of mainstream education for some time are benefitting from attendance at social work services offering care and support with educational programmes, at Westburn and Craigielea Centres.

Westburn Intensive Community Support and Learning Service is working with 24 young people and 9 at S4 level have attained SVQ Access, 3 in English and Maths, 11 additional SVQs and 12 ASDAN qualifications.

Similarly, **Craigielea Children's Centre** runs their Acorn Project working with 9 young people who have achieved National 4 qualifications in English, Access 3 levels in Maths and History, and ASDAN qualifications.

Reducing the use of residential schools, none of which are in Aberdeen, and improving attainment of looked after children are joint priorities with Education and the integration of our services will enable closer working on these issues. As part of the 'keeping in touch' (KIT) annual data review in schools in 2013, the attainment of individual looked after children was profiled, reviewed and challenged, and for KIT in 2014 their attendance will also be reviewed. In June 2013 the Education service launched an Inclusion Review that will conclude in August 2014 and as part of this a 'virtual school' is proposed, to focus on the totality of looked after children's education, to improve outcomes.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Children's Services we are going to

- plan for the impact of legislation on extended entitlement to support for looked after young people;
- fully open the Young Women's Centre;
- conclude the Review of Residential Children's Homes;
- continue to reduce the use of specialist residential schools, with intensive community supports and more inclusive educational responses; and
- implement Reclaiming Social Work towards units being established from 2015.

8.3 Child Protection

The Aberdeen City Child Protection Committee (CPC) was established in June 2013, from the disaggregation of the North East Scotland Child Protection Committee (NESCPC) that covered three local authority areas. The CPC is the Safe Outcome Group of the Integrated Children's Services Partnership. The Director of Social Care and Wellbeing/CSWO is the appointed Chair.

From the NESCPC the North East Scotland Child Protection Partnership (NESCPP) was formed, with governance through the Chief Executive Officers Public Protection Group to which Child Protection, Adult Protection and MAPPA matters are reported by the committee/group "chairs". The NESCPP collaborates over the Child Protection Register, core training, policies and procedures and Serious Care Reviews, to ensure consistency of approach. For the North East, Aberdeen City holds and administers the Register, co-ordinates the core training programme and leads the organisation of the Partnership.

Following a multi-agency Child Protection Inspection in 2011, Phase 1 of an improvement action plan was completed in 2013 and the Phase 2 Action Plan has been designed and agreed, to be delivered through the Child Protection Sub-committee. The CPC considers performance information from the Register and the CP administration team, Police Scotland, SCRA, and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP). The CPC has recognised the need for greater analysis of data from the Register and other sources, to strengthen its governance and improve planning.

The number of children on the Child Protection Register over time is variable with need (see Table 7). An increase was noted from 97 in October 2013 to 121 in December 2013. This spike in registrations coincided with the introduction of new recording procedures in Police Scotland, with the National Database of Vulnerable Persons, which commenced in September 2013, and saw a significant rise in the completion of Child Concern forms. (A similar increase was noted by our neighbouring authority, Aberdeenshire, over the same period.) The number of children on the Register fell to 108 in March 2014, a figure comparable to the Scottish average of around 3 children per 1000 population of 0-16 year olds. The lower number of 73 at 31.07.14 was partly the result of several sibling groups coming off the Register around that time.

Table 7 Number of children on the Aberdeen CP Register 31.07.10 to 31.07.14

	31.07.10	31.07.11	31.07.12	31.07.13	31.07.14
Total	99	96	86	92	73

Children remain on the CP Register only as long as necessary and over 90% are de-registered within 12 months and 50% within 6 months, a total of 186 in 2013-14. Twenty eight children, in 16 families, who were registered over the year August 2013 to July 2014, had previous registration history, with the time interval between individual registrations ranging from 8 years to 2 months.

The majority of children on the Register, 55%, are under 5 years old, including pre-birth registrations. Registering more children at a younger age and for a shorter period than previously may be evidence that we are responding at an earlier stage to children in need of protection and that the supports in place reduce the risks within a shorter time-frame. The joint Pre-birth Team is an addition to the social work service at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital and is ensuring that child protection issues are recognised and an effective response is at the earliest stage.

The main risk factors for children on the Register are emotional abuse 40%, neglect 36%, domestic abuse 36% and parental drug use 29% (at 31.07.13). Physical abuse is recorded as a risk factor in 18% and sexual abuse in 3% of cases. No children have been registered yet for reason of child sexual exploitation (CSE). The recent introduction of a recording mechanism for CSE concerns on the core Social Work record on Carefirst resulted in 14 children being identified as at risk of CSE.

'Abby's Room' was launched in September 2013 at Aberdeen's Integrated Children's Services Conference, as the Child Protection Committee's contribution, focussed on internet safety and its links to child sexual exploitation. 'Abby's Room' is a mock-up of her teenage bedroom alongside an extract from her Facebook account. 'Visitors' can rummage around the bedroom and compare what they have found out about her with what they can find out from a few Facebook posts, thus highlighting the actions of on-line behaviour in a physical rather than virtual way. The set and accompanying materials from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre are available to schools, parent councils, staff groups and other agencies to promote social media safety and highlight the risks of on-line exploitation. The resource is well used and effective in its message.

The CPC is committed to self-evaluation and continuous improvement, with a number of exemplars to date:

- Aberdeen participated in 2013 in a pilot of the SCIE (Scottish Institute of Excellence) Learning Together Model to review the death of a child and actions on the findings are incorporated in the Phase 2 CP Action Plan. This was found robust but labour intensive and the feasibility of adopting this as the model for all Significant Case Reviews is under consideration.
- The CPC carried out a multi-agency case file audit in 2013, with 151 files reviewed across seven agencies. The audit found improvement in the assessment of need and risk across all agencies, good evidence of partnership working and contributions to effective planning for children, resulting in improved outcomes. Areas for improvement are included in the Phase 2 Action Plan.

- In early 2014 there was a significant increase in applications for Child Protection Orders, 12 compared to 13 in the whole of 2013 and 16 in 2012. Though all applications were granted, the CPC conducted a review of the 12 orders and found all applications to be an appropriate response, with assessments accurately identifying the risk of significant harm.
- The CPC considered the findings of the Scottish Government short life working group on CSE in December 2013 and commissioned the Community Safety Hub to carry out a mapping exercise on data, support, training etc. in relation to CSE.
- On taking up the position in November 2013, the CPC Chair (CSWO) introduced an element of self-evaluation to each CPC meeting to give a focus on learning, development and action in relation to priority topics, including new quality indicators, the impact of domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, abuse of children with disabilities, information sharing.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Child Protection we are going to

- develop our performance framework and analytical reports for the CPC;
- work collaboratively with the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) to tackle issues for families with substance misusing parents; and
- extend our knowledge and responsiveness to Child Sexual Exploitation.



All children have the right to be kept safe from harm.

Are you being harmed?

If you're worried about something, or if you don't feel safe, there are a lot of people who can help.

Are you worried about a child being harmed?

If you think a child is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, you must report it. Remember, the child may not be able to tell anyone.

To speak to someone or report concerns call

- 01224 306877 (Joint Child Protection Unit)
- 01224 693936 (out of hours)
- 101 Police Scotland
- 0800 11 11 (Childline)

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/childprotection/>

8.4 Youth Justice

The **Whole System Approach** (WSA) to youth justice In Aberdeen, an award winning pilot in 2010-12 and embedded since within the GIRFEC framework, is overall a success story. Youth offending has fallen from 2011-12 to 2013-14, with a reduction of 28% in the number of young offenders (see Table 8). Offence referrals to SCRA and Court proceedings for 16-17 year olds have reduced significantly (28% and 21% respectively in 2012-13 from 2011-12).

Table 8 Youth Offending in Aberdeen (source Grampian Police/Police Scotland)

OFFENDING	2011-2012	TOTAL	2012-2013	TOTAL	2013-14
Offenders under 16	644	1245	557	1035	894
Offenders 16-17	601		478		
Crime Files linked to under 16yr	1605	2656	1218	2034	-
Crime Files linked to 16-17yrs	1051		816		-
Offences linked to under 16yrs	2392	4004	1737	3082	-
Offences linked to 16-17yrs	1612		1345		-

Through collaborative working and shared decision making, the WSA offers early intervention for low level offences, diversion from statutory measures, prosecution and custody, and community alternatives. An Intensive Support Service (ISS) makes a range of provision available, including Barnardo's Connect service, the Foyer, APEX, and SACRO's Assertive Outreach, Court Support and Restorative Justice services. Social Workers undertake more direct work with young people and families.

The number of young people receiving an ISS, with a support plan that is reviewed weekly, has risen from six in 2011 to 23 in 2013, and is at 21 in 6 months in 2014. Over 100 young people are diverted from prosecution annually. The result is better outcomes with more positive futures for young people and safer communities.

In 2014 WSA processes will be reviewed and the approach strengthened. There is potential for development of a review process for medium risk offenders to prevent escalation of risk and for extension of Restorative Justice to more serious offending. Decision making and resource finding should be improved around alternatives to secure care and custody for the Court and Children's Panel, especially for 16-17 year olds who are on Compulsory Supervision Orders. Joint Protocols on use of custody and social work's welfare response need to be re-negotiated, in the light of changes with Police Scotland practices. The ISS needs to be more 'intensive' in relation to measures to tackle persistent offending, including car crime. Closer working and learning from adult Criminal Justice in relation to youths 16 years and over would be beneficial. The Responsible Outcome group will take the strategic overview.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Youth Justice we are going to

- recommit to and strengthen the Whole System Approach across agencies;
- develop further intensive support options and restorative justice;
- improve communication and procedures around custody of young people; and
- work more closely with Criminal Justice Social Work.

8.5 Criminal Justice Social Work

The Director/CSWO attends bi-monthly meetings of the Northern Community Justice Authority (NCJA) which disburses the funding from Scottish Government, prepares the area plan for reducing offending and has oversight of the performance of Criminal Justice Social Work (CJSW) over four mainland and three island authorities. A Joint Officer Group provides leadership on strategy, policy and planning, and training. With announcement of the 2016 date for CJAs to be disbanded, Councils will be considering alternative arrangements under Community Planning but there is a desire among NCJA members to maintain a degree of collaborative working.

In the Northern CJA area, recorded crimes and reports to the Procurator Fiscal have decreased from 2011-12 to 2013-14 by about 18% and 5% respectively, resulting in fewer people appearing in Court. For Aberdeen CJSW the number of Reports to Court decreased a little from 1586 (including 201 supplementary reports) in 2012-13 to 1550 (including 152 supplementary reports) 2013-14, with 99.5% submitted on time. Though the number of reports is down, the service finds that they are dealing with more complex situations so find there is no time saving.



Community Payback orders were introduced in 2011 as an alternative to custody (Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010). In Aberdeen the number of Community Payback Orders has increased by 7 % and the Unpaid Work hours by 21% from 2012-13 to 2013-14 (87% and 66% respectively from 2011-12). (table 9)

Since October 2011, Aberdeen has been piloting Fiscal Work Orders, as an alternative to prosecution with a financial penalty, for 10 to 50 hours to be completed in 6 months. An evaluation found high completion and reduced breach rates; diversion from offending; references offered by placement employers; and around 10% of individuals returning to their work placements to undertake voluntary work after completing their order. The Procurator Fiscal determines the use of FWOs, which decreased in 2013-14 by 45% from 2012-13. Scotland-wide roll-out of FWOs is expected in 2014-1015.

Table 9 Criminal Justice Social Work Activities

ACTIVITY	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Community Payback Orders	540	945	1011
CPO Requirements	1013	1496	1542
Unpaid Work Hours	52882	62183	75649
Fiscal Work Orders	37	105	58

Reconviction rates for women offenders reduced steadily by 10% from 2007-08 to 2010-11 in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire area, compared to 3.5% for overall reconviction rates (available combined Court figures). A focus on women offenders has been maintained from 2010-11 with funding from the NCJA, £45,000 in 2013-14. Investment in this area of activity has been significantly increased following recommendations of the Women Offender’s Commission in 2013 and successful bidding by CJ Social Work to the Scottish Government for funding in 2013-14 to develop a Women’s Centre. In addition to our community based service, our Women’s Support Workers are meeting with all Aberdeen women in any Scottish prison on a regular basis. This is having the desired result of 100% take up of voluntary aftercare by those offered.

In January 2014 HM Prison Aberdeen closed for the opening of HMP and YOI Grampian, at Peterhead in Aberdeenshire. In the new prison, 55% of short and long term convicted prisoners, 57% of the untried population and 41% of the female population are from Aberdeen City (September 2014 figures). The travel distance is 42km and the travel time is around 1 hour or 1hr 20min by bus, making family visits more difficult. APEX Scotland is supporting the Scottish Prison Service with a successful ‘Virtual Visits’ project for family contact based in Aberdeen that had nearly 700 visitors, 120 of these children, in the first six months. With journey times now a consideration, direct contact by CJ social workers with prisoners may be less frequent but priority is given to Case Management Board and Community Integration Plan meetings.

The **Women’s ‘Centre’** in Criminal Justice has been established with funding from the Scottish Government of £249,732 in 2013-14. Run from existing CJ premises at present, it will move to a new, dedicated base by 2015. The Centre is delivering our Connections Women’s programme, support services, group work and a drop-in, the Connections Café where women meet in a safe environment and can be involved in making crafts that they will sell to raise funds for local charities. A community nurse attends the Cafe each week to support the women with health issues. Though current space is limited, 78 women are engaging positively and receiving services. Women are encouraged to consider the connections that they have with others and their communities in planning for a realistic and achievable future. They are often keen to maintain contact and friendships they have made once their programme is complete. The Women’s Centre will be evaluated.

Of their experience, the women have said:

“The Connections programme has helped me massively with my relationship.”

“The Programme has improved my confidence.”

“I know it’s okay to express my emotions.”

“I’ve hung up my carrier bags.”

(made for shoplifting)

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Criminal Justice we are going to

- open the Women's Centre in new, permanent premises; and
- plan for the future of CJSW under Community Planning, post NCJA.

8.6 Substance Misuse

Substance misuse is highlighted as a concern across social work and other public services in Aberdeen. This is an area where collaborative working across adult and children's services and with partners is essential. The Director/CSWO attends the ADP and the Head of Adult services chairs the Tasking and Coordinating operational group. The ADP Coordinator is a member of the Child Protection Committee.

Of particular note is the incidence of drug misuse in the population, above the national average at 2.3% compared to 1.7%, that impacts on lives from pre-birth onwards. The incidence of infants born with neo-natal abstinence syndrome in Aberdeen is 12.5 per 1000 live births, more than double the national rate of 5.6 per 1000. A pregnancy protocol ensures early identification of the need for intervention with parents and babies and the Early Years Change Fund has been used to establish a joint social work and health Pre-birth Team.

In November 2013 the ADP hosted a two day conference to improve understanding of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and create a care pathway. Adult services staff have participated in training on assessing parenting capacity and neglect and in use of the Assessment Tool for Neglect, and child protection training is mandatory. Jointly the CPC and ADP have planned a development event for September 2014, to consider the challenge of timescales for recovery of parents engaged in substance misuse programmes versus the needs of children for decisions about permanence in their lives, an issue that will become more pressing with the PACE programme.

In 2013-14 use of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), known as 'legal highs', has been of growing concern to the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and to the Council. NPS is one of the 2013/14 ADP Ministerial priorities with improvement goals to *'Develop a local understanding of the prevalence and impact of new psychoactive substances in ADP areas based on locally available information and experience'*.

In response, Aberdeen ADP was instrumental in forming the Pan-Grampian NPS monitoring group in 2013, bringing together local partners to gain understanding of NPS use. The Council has debated the issue and taken a report from the ADP. In 2014 the Council's Citizen's Panel of 890 people was surveyed, with a 76% (672) response rate, as to people's knowledge of NPS. Of the respondents, 75%, rising to 85% for 16 to 34 year olds, had heard of NPS, mainly through the media.

A visible aspect of NPS, or 'legal highs', is at least five 'Head-Shops' known to be operating in Aberdeen City, openly advertising and selling NPS products under the label of 'not for human consumption'. Trading Standards officers are monitoring their activity. The indication is of a mixed demographic across a wide age range using NPS, including those with previous experience of drug use. NPS use has been seen among school age and some looked after children. In March 2014, the Aberdeen ADP with Police Scotland sponsored an event, "Not for Human Consumption", run by Transition Extreme and aimed at secondary school pupils. This event was very successful and an evaluation confirmed that innovation in terms of engaging young people, and other target groups, is vital regarding NPS. The ADP is organising a public campaign which will be taken forward during 2014.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Substance Misuse we are going to

- support collaboration between the ADP and the CPC in relation to recovery of substance misusing parents and the protection of and planning for their children; and
- monitor the impact of NPS or 'legal highs' in the City.

8.7 Learning Disability

Learning Disability Services are completing a whole-system transformation programme that commenced in 2010. A number of distinct elements, much of which were implemented contemporaneously, have delivered the following:

- **staff development programme**, focussed on outcomes in assessment and care planning, shifting from a service-brokerage model to a more personalised co-production model, with modules ongoing;
- **community engagement programme**, ongoing but with a concentrated focus during key transitional phases of the overall transformation programme, such as the introduction of Self Directed Support;
- **service provider engagement programme**, particularly in relation to the shift from block contracts to an SDS model of individualised budgets, and vital as more than 75% of accommodation-related support is from external providers;
- **retendering of specialist LD accommodation services** from 3 providers to a more cohesive model under a new, single provider organisation;
- **re-organisation of in-house services** to rationalise accommodation into a single 'estate', allow for staff resources to work across services and for shared process and systems to be introduced, reducing cost by £1m per annum;
- **reprovisioning of day services for those with highest needs**, with a capital project underway to build a new community resource and day centre to expand services and opportunities, to replace the existing Rosehill Centre;
- **Resource Allocation System (RAS)**, developed and tested over three years and now implemented as the platform for the transparent allocation of funding to support the delivery of more personalised provision under SDS;
- **Support Services: iConnect NE**, a new, independent charity to provide advice, guidance and support for those wishing to explore SDS opportunities;

- **independent scrutiny** by the Council's Internal Auditor who has praised the transformation programme, levels of preparedness for SDS, and the consultation and engagement with key stakeholders throughout the process.

The learning disability transformation programme will have achieved £25m in savings over 5 years to 2015. These savings were agreed as part of the corporate Priority Based Budget (PBB) process.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Learning Disability we are going to

- complete the service transformation programme and achievement of the expected PBB savings.

8.8 Older People

Joint Commissioning Strategy

The first Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People was produced in May 2013, with the vision statement addressing older people's aspirations:

"To work with you to make Aberdeen a great place to grow old and flourish by maximising choice and promoting independence."

The Strategy takes the Community Planning Outcomes as its commissioning themes: **Healthier, Safer, Wealthier and Fairer, Smarter, Greener.**

It's overall priorities are consistent with those of the national Reshaping Care for Older People Programme, to shift the provision of care and treatment towards home and community settings and as close to people as possible.

The Partners' commissioning intentions are set out against each theme for the years 2013-2016, and beyond to 2023 long term commitments are outlined. The Integrated Operational Management Group developed a 3 Year Action Plan and is responsible for overseeing its implementation.

The Strategy and the extensive consultation process that led to it were commended by the Joint Improvement Team (JIT) for the innovative approach to planning. A workshop programme on joint commissioning with JIT was aimed at supporting the implementation. Though service redesign and improvement are expected to be within existing resources, a weakness of the Strategy and the Action Plan is that neither is costed. The difficulty of identifying and disaggregating older people's costs from universal NHS budgets continues to be a barrier to joint commissioning where reinvestment is needed for redesign.

In 2014, the planning for health and social care integration has been to the forefront and this combined with staff changes and reduced planning capacity has led to some loss of momentum in implementation. The Strategy will, however, provide a basis for the Strategic Plan in relation to older people's services.

Shifting the balance of care

Shifting the balance of care to enable more people to live at home or in homely settings is a long standing strategic objective that is subject to market forces in supply of care that have challenged the social care system since 2012. Recruitment and retention problems have become chronic and the reliance of the Council on externally purchased services adds an extra degree of vulnerability in providing for older people. This is impacting on waiting times for care and on discharge from hospital. Our multi-agency approach to tackling capacity problems in social care is described at 10.1.

Delayed Discharge remains a challenge and the national standard for 0 delays over 4 weeks is not being achieved, though the flow of people supported to leave hospitals is steady. The introduction of a 2 week standard will only add to the pressures on services. Aberdeen was a top performer in meeting the previous 6 week standard for its duration but from 0 discharges delayed over 6 weeks at 1 April 2012 and 2013, Census data shows 36 people were delayed over 4 weeks and 30 over 6 weeks at 1 April 2014. A similar number of people are waiting for a care home place as for care at home, around 40% each of those delayed. Waiting for an assessment was the reason for delay in only 5% of cases, demonstrating the commitment to preventing delays. Though there are inconsistencies and issues with discharge practices within hospital wards, the main reason for delays is the shortage of care to meet demand.

In relation to care home provision, in 2013-14 home closure has taken around 80 beds out of the system, embargos on admissions because of staffing problems or poor standards have been affecting 3 to 4 care homes at any time and several care homes have ceased offering publicly funded places, all contributing to delay in admissions and in hospital discharge. While the planned use of homes with nursing care is decreasing year on year as people are supported at home, demand for residential care and respite care remains steady and at times outstrips availability, particularly for people with dementia.

Because of recruitment issues, care at home providers are not able to fully meet the demands from an increasing number of people with complex care needs who require services through the day, evenings and weekend, often with two carers for multiple daily visits. There are some 'hot spots' in the City where lack of local provision makes delay in securing care more likely. Increasingly complex demand and pressures of resource finding place a strain on capacity in care management teams, who show a high degree of persistence in trying to source care, and this will be taken into the budget setting process.

Nonetheless, the number of emergency admission bed days occupied by people over 65 has fallen year on year from 2008, and fell by 20% from 2011-12 to 2013-14. In this period bed days fell by 28% for both groups aged 65 to 74 and 75 to 84 years, and 10% for the most frail group of people 85 and over. Aberdeen is now among the top performing partnerships in this respect. (source ISD) This achievement is the result of effective community measures.

Social Care and Wellbeing has been making significant investment in residential rehabilitation at Rosewell House, to prevent hospital admissions and support

discharges, in enablement and Telecare to support independence, and in active ageing and wellbeing as preventive measures. (see below – Enablement under Service Improvement and Transformation) Collaboration between Social Care and Wellbeing, Housing and Bon Accord Care saw the opening in January 2014 of a new, 20 place, intermediate care facility. It replaces and improves on the former Smithfield Court rehabilitation service. Change Fund programmes have reduced falls, improved medication management and provided additional AHP resource at the ‘front door’ to prevent hospital admissions. Anticipatory Care Plans are embedded in GP practice and are becoming more effective with care management and multi-disciplinary input.

Clashieknowe offers accommodation with an individual rehabilitation programme to support people in transition home from hospital, for up to 12 weeks, in 12 modern bedsit flats, six wheelchair accessible flats and a larger two-bedroom, self-contained flat allows a family to be together. The support and rehabilitation is provided by Bon Accord Care. Clashieknowe was adapted from a sheltered housing complex with the project delivered by the Council’s Architectural, Asset Management and Building Services teams at a cost of £1m. Anticipated cost savings from this service are £1.5m. It is believed this facility is the first of its kind in Scotland and there has been keen interest and enquiry from other Councils.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Older People’s services we are going to

- review the Joint Commissioning Strategy and Action Plan and take action on priorities;
- provide new opportunities for older people to meet their chosen outcomes through SDS;
- continue to work with partners to address capacity issues and develop the social care workforce; and
- lead on more integrated approaches to prevention of admission to hospital and discharge.

Active Ageing and Wellbeing

The significant achievements of a recently formed Wellbeing team were featured in the CSWO Annual Report in 2012. Since then, the reach and influence of this small team has grown considerably as a force for prevention and early intervention.

Taking an asset based approach, the team develops resources and initiatives to promote physical activity and wellbeing, with social opportunities, and through partnership working with other agencies is able to put these on a sustainable footing. Aberdeen Sports Village, Sport Aberdeen, The Robert Gordon University, the Health Village, Aberdeen Football Club, Cornhill Hospital, Environmental Planning, Alzheimers Scotland, Addaction, care homes and third sector groups are among the organisations now offering physical activities and other events and opportunities to increasing numbers of older people across the City. The benefits are to people’s physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Working collaboratively with The Robert Gordon University, initially over the installation of Technogym equipment at the University sports centre for use in older people's sessions, has brought active ageing to the attention of applied Sports Science students who now must deliver Technogym sessions as part of their course. Several have been recruited to the Wellbeing team. The Technogym project is being evaluated.



The **Golden Games** won the 2013 APSE, Association for Public Service Excellence, Award in the Best Health and Wellbeing category for the Wellbeing team, in partnership with Sport Aberdeen and the Sports Village. From a two day event in 2011 with around 80 participants, the Games grew to a three day event in 2013 with 360 people taking part in 23 sports across 18 venues. Participants are of all abilities and mostly over 75 with a few over 100 years. In June 2014, a four day event will offer 30 free activities over 27 venues to even more older people. Many activities are ongoing throughout the year.

Margaret, 88, has signed up for 6 activities - wellbeing circuits, croquet, Otago strength and balance, Friskis & Snettis Swedish aerobics (shown), ten-pin bowling, and the end-of-games social event at Pittodrie. Margaret says

“I like to try anything new... It gets you out and about and keeps you fit. I really enjoy the exercise and also meeting other people. So it's a social and exercise thing.” Margaret maintains an active lifestyle and takes part in Robert Gordon University's weekly keep fit and circuit classes for people 55 and up, which help her with general strength building and balance.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Wellbeing we are going to

- attract more older people in hard to reach groups and areas to take part in wellbeing activities and events;
- develop the range of wellbeing opportunities in local communities and in other settings for people with dementia and their carers; and
- explore the possibilities for extension of wellbeing approaches to adults with long term conditions; and
- develop research and evaluation opportunities with the Robert Gordon University.

8.9 Adult Support and Protection

Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee (APC) shares an Independent Convener with Aberdeenshire and Moray APCs. This helps to facilitate consistency between the agencies across the Grampian Adult Protection Partnership. Through the Grampian ASP Working Group, three APCs develop and maintain the Grampian Interagency Policy and Procedure for the Support and Protection of Adults at Risk of Harm, and this contributes to the success of multi-agency working. This is due to be reviewed in 2014-15.

The Head of Adult Services is the Adult Protection lead for the Council. Around 110 Council Officers have been trained to a level that allows them to carry out adult protection investigations and discharge specific legislative functions. A rolling programme of training is in place to ensure a supply of Council Officers and the Council has invested in advanced training from The Robert Gordon University, for two cohorts of 20 officers, in 2012 and 2013.

The APC is delivering on the 5 National Priorities for Adult Support and Protection (ASP): Financial Harm; ASP in A&E; Service User and Carer Involvement; ASP in Registered Care Homes; and Data Collection. The new national ASP Dataset has been incorporated into the Aberdeen Adult Protection Unit (APU) reporting mechanism, which produces a full suite of information for monitoring, management and development purposes. Raising awareness of ASP remains a local priority, using a variety of means and ongoing efforts to promote awareness are resulting in increased referrals from the public, care homes, care at home staff, and NHS.

A significant proportion of ASP referrals relate to financial harm, including fraud, theft, misuse of Power of Attorney and scams. Work on a list of over 380 people who have potentially been victims of scams, made available via the National Scam Hub, commenced in November 2013 in partnership with the APU, Police Scotland and Trading Standards. The initial step was to check the names on the list against those known to Social Work, Trading Standards, on the electoral roll, in receipt of benefit; the Police Scotland Vulnerable Persons Database; the Police Scotland crime recording system; and known to be deceased. All those in current contact with Social Care and Wellbeing and those for whom there was intelligence to suggest greater vulnerability were visited by social work staff to make sure that they received assistance in relation to any financial risks. This work has already identified a number of adults who have been subject to scamming activity, often with loss of considerable sums. To support this work a successful application was made by Aberdeen on behalf of the Grampian Partnership to the Scottish Government for the purchase of call blocking units.

Older people (65 years and over) account for almost half of the ASP referrals, followed by people with learning disability and mental health issues. Physical harm was the most common concern, in 24% of reports, followed by financial harm, in 20%, with neglect, self-neglect and harm, and psychological harm also prominent. Use of alcohol and/or drugs features in 64% of referrals. The main 'location of harm', 60%, remains the adult at risk's own home, though 25% of referrals were of people living in a care home.

From 2012 to 2014, eight Large Scale Inquiries were conducted in care homes in Aberdeen, three more than in 2010-2012. Close working takes place on these with the Care Inspectorate, NHS, and care home, with Police involvement as necessary. The APU has developed a Large Scale Investigations Protocol, which reflects the expertise that has been developed in Aberdeen in managing ASP concerns in all registered care settings and in the NHS, and this was adopted by the Grampian Adult Protection Partnership in January 2014.

Around 40% of referrals continue to formal ASP intervention by Initial Inquiry, with only 5% of these proceeding to Full Investigation. The remainder of referrals are often redirected to social work services for assessment and support or to other relevant services/agencies. There is clear evidence from local audits that provision of immediate supports at Initial Inquiry stage often addresses risks of harm at an early point, thereby reducing the need for more substantive ASP intervention.

What are we going to do in 2014-15?

In Adult Protection we are going to

- continue the particular focus of ASP on registered care settings on financial harm; and
- improve awareness, engagement and involvement of service users and carers.



Are you being harmed?

If you are unable to protect yourself from being harmed it is important to tell someone.

Do you know of someone who is being harmed?

If you think you know someone who is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, you must report it. Remember, the person being harmed may not be able to tell anyone.

Everyone has a right to be safe

To speak to someone or report concerns call

- 01224 522 055 (Social Work Duty Team)
- 01224 693936 (Out of Hours)
- 101 Police Scotland
- 01224 79 38 70 (Care Inspectorate)

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/social_care_health/community_care/car_vulnerable_adults.asp

9. Users, Carers and Stakeholders

In April 2013, we held a Key Stakeholders event, attended by over a hundred people, including representatives of service users and carers, voluntary sector groups, our public sector colleagues, service providers and our own staff. We used this event to undertake a stakeholder analysis, where we asked what the Council should be doing, and also asked those present to consider what their contribution to our outcomes and priorities could be. This informed our Business Plan for 2014-2017. We followed up this event in November 2013 with our 'Top 20' stakeholders, to ensure that they are informed of key strategic and service developments, in particular SDS, health and social care integration, and Reclaiming Social Work. A further meeting will be held in 2014.

Service users and carers, citizens and providers, have participated in a range of engagement and consultation events in 2013-14: workshops on a revised Non-residential Charging Policy; SDS events; the Older People's Consultation and Monitoring Group on the topic of integration; City Voice/Citizen's Panel surveys on NPS/'Legal Highs', Wellbeing of Older People, Physical Activity, Quality of Life; the children's Residential Review; various Aberdeen City Youth Council consultations; development of a Dementia Strategy.

An Integrated Children's Services Participation Strategy was approved in April 2013. A Communication and Engagement Strategy in relation to health and social care integration is in development.

9.1 Corporate Parenting

Aberdeen City Council aims to ensure that there is no discernible difference between the outcomes of children and young people who have been looked after and their peers who have not. The Council's Corporate Parenting Policy provides a framework for directorates and their respective services to identify specific actions and interventions to close the gap between looked after children/young people and care leavers and their peers.

To fully implement the Corporate Parenting Policy and recognise this responsibility across the public sector, the Corporate Parenting Champions Board, made up of Chief Officers across the public and third sectors and the chair of the Youth Council, held its inaugural meeting in February 2014. This was followed with a workshop led by Who Cares to understand the needs and expectations of children and young people. Children and young people are supported by the Children's Rights Officers to present their views to the Champions Board. The Young People's Participation Group provides a forum where young people can come together identify issues to take to the Board but participation has been inconsistent and new approaches need to be tried to encourage young people to become involved. Being responsive to their representations will be an incentive.

Young people told the Champions Board that not having access to the internet in children's homes made them different from most children and young people who are not looked after. The CSWO undertook to remedy this and the service is working closely with ICT to put Wi-Fi into the homes. An acceptable internet use policy is being developed and staff training provided for the safe use by our looked after children. 'Abby's Room' is another resource to promote awareness of on-line safety.

The **Family Firm** Policy offers a variety of apprenticeship and intern opportunities for looked after young people. It is underpinned by the GIRFEC national practice model and aims to make the needs of ACC's looked after children a priority and seek for them the same outcomes that would be sought by any good parent for their own children. Each young person is supported through their placement and with any additional training or qualifications they pursue. A Young Employee Support Group is being set up between Social Care and Wellbeing and HR for all young employees.

The Family Firm approach is being enhanced with the launch in 2014 of Aberdeen Guarantees, a scheme to ensure every young person leaving education has an offer of employment, training or education, which will circulate opportunities to looked after or previously looked after young people.



Ten young people have been on the Family Firm intern programme, four are long term interns, with one progressing to a promoted post and two due to start college in 2014.

10. Workforce Planning

The public sector generally in Aberdeen faces challenges in recruitment of staff. In Social Care and Wellbeing, there are few experienced applicants for professional posts and, especially in children's services, recruits are often recently qualified. Shortage of residential child care staff has held up the opening of a children's home after refurbishment. Promoted posts at any level attract few applicants and particular posts with 'acting up' arrangements remain unfilled on a permanent basis, despite middle management salary levels that are higher than the norm.

The Council approved its Workforce Plan in February 2014 and for social care set out the workforce needs relating to the skills staff require to meet the legislative agendas of personalisation and self-directed support, the implementation of Reclaiming Social Work and the skill mix, and the need for new skills to meet organisational goals. Requirements for Registration of staff with SSSC are taken into account, though the number of staff under new categories of registration has decreased considerably for the Council with the move of staff to Bon Accord Care in 2013.

The Workforce Plan will be supported by the service's Learning and Development Plan which is being reviewed to meet the continuous learning needs of all staff and ensure they have the skills to meet service demands. In addition, the Council offers an extensive development programme for staff at all levels and the new Springboard scheme provides an in-house careers and executive coaching service, available to all council employees. With recruitment issues in Social Care and Wellbeing, staff are encouraged to take all possible opportunity for skill development, as a 'grow our own' strategy.

At the operational level, we have a SMART Supervision policy linked to the Scottish Social Services Council's (SSSC) continuous learning framework, which ensures that social work staff receive professional supervision to support the development of their professional practice. The supervision policy is linked to a Performance Review and Development (PR&D) scheme, which has been adapted from the Corporate scheme to support social work staff. From 2013 annual increments in pay scales are linked to positive performance as assessed through PR&D.

10.1 Workforce Planning – the independent sector

Interest in workforce development extends to the independent sector as recruitment and retention difficulties there are impacting significantly on capacity for service delivery through commissioning. The Director/CSWO chairs a multi-agency strategic Workforce Group, set up in 2012, to tackle recruitment and retention problems in social care, particularly in older people's services.

With support from the Change Fund and DPW, a Care Centre of Excellence was established in 2013 to link employers with potential employees who receive core training and work experience for entry into social care jobs. Other initiatives to build skills and improve retention include increased access to SVQ training, development of new SVQ modules, a care 'passport' for training, internships for AHPs, and

introduction of enablement approaches (see below Enablement under Service Development and Improvement).

Further collaborative developments will include exploring the use of mobile technology to deliver training, with SSSC; pathways for students to jobs in care, with Aberdeen College; media promotion of care as a career; and a survey of recruitment and retention in the independent sector, commissioned from the Chamber of Commerce. Such efforts will need to be maintained as solutions to capacity problems are not short term.

The Care Centre of Excellence is funded by the Older People's Change Fund with a contribution from DWP. As a partnership between Aberdeenworks, the Foyer, DWP and the Council, the project supports the recruitment and retention of health and social care workers in Aberdeen. Participation of potential employees is on a voluntary basis and individuals may disengage at any time with no sanctions or loss of benefit. Around 30 employers have signed up to the project to offer placements and jobs to those suited on completion of core training. In 2014, in six months the project had contact with about 300 people, of whom 88 were employed, 33 have job offers and 44 are in receipt of ongoing support. Around 90% of those who are found employment are still in post after 3 months. DWP will continue to support the project post Change Fund. Employers have commented:

"The ones we have recruited so far have worked out well"

"I think The Care Centre of Excellence does an excellent job for employers."

www.carecentreofexcellence.com

11. Service Improvement and Transformation

11.1 Reclaiming Social Work

The Social Care and Wellbeing Committee approved a report in September 2013 to progress the implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work model in Aberdeen. The Head of Children's Services is leading the planning and implementation through three workstreams - HR, Communications and Systems. A multi-agency Programme Board is chaired by the Director/CSWO for governance. An Operational Group ensures that staff at all levels are engaged in the planning and implementation. Consultancy support is coming from the originators of the model in Hackney.

Full implementation of the programme is expected to take up to 3 years, with the first of the new delivery units operational from January 2015. An extensive training programme is underway to prepare staff for new roles and ways of working. The first two cohorts of 60 practitioners are undertaking 18 days training, followed by an assessed assignment, and managers attend a 3 day course. A costed structure plan will be presented to Committee for approval by the end of 2014.

A significant restructure of the service will move it from a traditional team model with individual social workers managed by a Team Manager, to generic units with a smaller number of staff working directly with a managed number of children and families. Two caseload weighting exercises and workforce analysis have been undertaken to determine the optimum number of units and staffing redesign. As the functions of specialist teams will be absorbed into the new generic units, there will be a need to ensure that skills and expertise in areas of youth justice, throughcare, permanence and disability are not diluted but developed in more staff through training and practice opportunities.

The adoption of a small unit as the service delivery vehicle will mean that there are no families dependent on the service provided by just one practitioner. In the existing team model the service received by families is only as good as the individual social worker. The new model will ensure a sharing of assessment, planning, intervention and review within a group of staff with enhanced skills in effective interventions with children and families. Consistency of approach will come from the use of one theoretical and practice model, systemic practice.

The aim is to improve outcomes for children and help families to make positive changes to their lives, keeping more children at home with fewer being accommodated. Staff will benefit in terms of improved practice skills, greater support and job satisfaction from more time for direct work with families. The financial investment in this new model is expected to result in more effective targeting of resources and to constrain growth in demand for more complex and costly services.

As the model is implemented, ways of strengthening links with Adult services, in particular substance misuse and Criminal Justice, and with other partner agencies will be explored.

11.2 PACE - Permanence and Excellence in Care

Aberdeen City has adopted the PACE - Permanence and Excellence in Care - programme. This is part of the effort across Scotland supported by Scottish Government and CELCIS (Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland), to address drift and delay in the permanence process, as highlighted in the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) report, "Care and Permanence Planning for Looked after Children in Scotland", March 2011, which includes decision making and implementation as key areas for improvement.

The Aberdeen project started in March 2014 with the aim that

- 90% of children in Aberdeen City will be presented to the Adoption and Permanence Panel within 12 weeks of the LAC review recommendation to rule out rehabilitation to parental care, by 31st December 2014.

Baseline data for April 2012 to March 2013 showed that this process took an average 38 weeks and affected around 60 children per year.

The project is being run alongside work to progress the sister aim (the next part of the process):

- 90% of children in Aberdeen City aged 0-5 years will be in their final placement within 12 months of the decision to pursue permanence, by December 2015.

It is early days for results and the benefits to children to be reported but they are indicated. The use of the Single Assessment Report, to save time by streamlining and simplifying reporting, is allowing the Panel to make faster, informed decisions about permanence planning, in the first 14 cases the latest of these children went to the Panel in only 5 weeks. A record of activity is being used to evaluate tests of change in the decision making process. A Timeline is maintained to provide focus on Key Milestones for the child.

This work supports Aberdeen's vision: "Every child is settled and happy at home".

11.3 Enablement for Older People

The Enablement Project, led by the Development Officer for Scottish Care, was set up in 2014 under the Older People's Change Fund to work with independent sector providers to bring an enablement approach to care homes and care at home provision, through developing the staff skills base and promoting behaviour and culture change. This is a person centred and outcomes focussed approach that aims to promote independence and self-management and, where possible, to release resources to be used elsewhere.

A partnership approach is being developed with Scottish Care, Bon Accord Care - enablement team, Social Care and Wellbeing - care management, the NHS and the pilot providers, presently three private care homes and two care at home agencies. By partnership working, the Enablement project aims to be a whole system approach that will problem solve, learn and share, build an evidence base and improve the 'enablement pathway' for better outcomes.

Project staff (in the main OTs) are establishing baselines and collating outcome measures using a range of tools. They are training care staff to put in place individualised 'support plans' that detail a 'recipe' method of enablement that reflects the service user's wishes and strengths, that all staff can follow consistently.

Individual stories of increased independence and improved quality of life for people are being gathered. Qualitative data from one care home describes over three months a noticeable change in staff motivation, improved staff retention (only one person left), reduced complaints and relatives and residents happier with their experience at the home, and "dramatic and continuing results for residents, not just improving mobility but overall quality of life" (the Manager).

It is essential to the success of this approach that care management is able to review care packages and make adjustments quickly to reflect change in need and release care time. Some additional capacity is to be funded from the Change fund to address this and care managers have attended awareness training in enablement.

The next stage proposed is a test of change to offer 'slow stream' enablement in a longer period of intervention than intermediate care services are providing.

The Director/CSWO and the Development Officer have met with the Care Inspectorate to discuss providers' concerns about aspects of enablement that may be contrary to Inspectors' expectations. Assurances have been given of the Care Inspectorate's interest in learning from and supporting the Enablement project.

Anna's Story

Background: Anna is a lady with very advanced Dementia who lives in an EMI unit. She no longer communicates with language. Her mobility steadily decreased over time and for two years she has been transported in her Kirkton Chair. Her left arm is severely contracted. She has a pureed diet but is able to feed herself with her right hand. She needs encouragement to eat. She received assistance with her personal care though she can help wash.

Aim: To enable Anna to regain some mobility and improve her daily function.

Enablement Story: Anna's keyworker realised that she was still able to walk the three to five steps from chair to bathroom and chair to bed. Staff started a programme of placing her chair further from her bathroom and bed encouraging Anna to walk with the moderate assistance of two staff. Over the next 10 days, Anna began walking longer distances with assistance of two staff. In two weeks, she was walking from the bedroom to the dining room where she sits upright in a dining chair. Her Kirkton chair is now used as an armchair.

Outcome: The increased physical activity has increased Anna's appetite. She is drinking much more and her kidney function has improved. She is smiling. Her daughter says that she cannot believe the transformation in her mother.

Recommendations: Anna is impatient now in walking with two staff. so they will begin a programme of walking short distances with one staff and refer to the Physiotherapist for review and a possible mobility aid. Apparently, there is no medical reason why Anna's left arm is contracted and the keyworker will liaise with Nurse to investigate potential enablement of Anna's left arm.

12. Key Challenges for 2014-2015

The year ahead presents a number of challenges in meeting national and local policy agendas, responding to demand pressures and workforce issues, and implementing new structures for adult and children's services.

- The planning and implementation of arrangements for Self Directed Support will continue, to meet the challenge of delivery across care groups, in particular on a scale to offer choice and control to older people, taking account of the market in social care.
- The implementation of Reclaiming Social Work will proceed, with training for staff, matching and appointment to new posts in units, and strong governance arrangements to ensure there is no compromise to current service delivery.
- The Residential Review of children's homes will take the redesign proposals to staff and Trade Unions for consultation, and costed recommendations for implementation to Committee for approval. The aim is to ensure that the residential estate and the staffing structures are fit for purpose in meeting the needs of young people and keeping them in the City.
- Cross service demand pressures and resourcing implications of redesigned children's services will be taken into the budget setting process for 2015-16.
- Children's Social Work services will be transferred to the new Education and Children's Services directorate early in 2015, following the outcome of the Joint Children's Services Inspection, and as seamlessly as possible.
- Preparations will continue for the integration of adult social care and health services under the Integration Joint Board, to be in place from 1 April 2015. This will include consideration of the cultural aspects and the contribution of our social model of care and person-centred focus, to ensure a strong identity for social work under the new structure.
- Professional governance arrangements will be put in place under each structure in which social work staff are deployed, for children's adults and criminal justice services. This will be the responsibility of the CSWO.
- Business Support resources and functions will be assigned to new adult and children's structures to ensure continuity of service, and to support the role of CSWO.
- Planning needs to begin for the future positioning of Community Justice under Community Planning, with the decision of the Scottish Government to disband Community Justice Authorities from 2016.
- The Chief Social Work Officer role will transfer to the Head of Children's Social Work at an appropriate time as agreed with the Chief Executive.

References/Reading

The Role of Chief Social Work Officer: Principles, Requirements and Guidance pursuant to Section 5(1) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, February 2009
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/01/27154047/1>

21st Century Social Work Review Group (2006) Changing Lives: Report of the 21st Century Social Work Review. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/02/02094408/0>

Aberdeen City Council, 2014, Behind the Granite: Aberdeen Key Facts 2014
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=55074&sID=332>

Aberdeen City Council, 2010, Social Care and Wellbeing Service Business Plan 2010-13
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s10122/SCW%2010099%20Appendix%20-%20SBP%20V6.pdf>

Aberdeen City Council, 2014, Social Care and Wellbeing Service Business Plan 2014-17
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s38080/SCW%20Service%20Business%20Plan%202014-17.pdf>

Aberdeen City Council, 2011, Integrated Children's Services Plan 2011 - 2015
Integrated Children's Services Plan 2011 - 2015: Year 2 Update August 2013
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/social_care_health/social_work/childrens_services/integrated_childrens_services_plan.asp

Aberdeen City Council, 2013, Ageing wi' Opportunity": a Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People in Aberdeen City 2013 – 2023
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/social_care_health/social_work/older_people_rehabilitation/telecare/joint_commissioning_older.asp

Aberdeen City Council, Five Year Business Plan 2013/14 -2017/18, Workforce Plan, 2013-14 Budget
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/NextFiveYears/nfy_home.asp

[Aberdeen City Council, 2014, Children and Young People's Audit 2013-2014](#)

Bon Accord Care Ltd, 2014, First Annual Report
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s41201/BASS%20End%20of%20Year%20Report%202013-14.pdf>

Pentathlon at the Golden Games - Medal winning care home team



ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy & Resources Committee
DATE	4 December 2014
DIRECTOR	Ewan Sutherland (Director of Corporate Governance); Pete Leonard (Director of Communities, Housing & Infrastructure)
TITLE OF REPORT	Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Housing Capital Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/14/134

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1.1 To provide elected members with information to allow the setting of the rent level for the financial year 2015/16 as well as provisional rent levels for the financial years 2016/17 to 2019/20. In turn, this will allow a capital programme for 2015/16 as well as a provisional programme for 2016/17 to 2019/20.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee consider the draft Housing Revenue Account Budget and refer it to Council on 17 December 2014 to:

- a. Approve the budget as attached in Appendix 1 of this report;
- b. Approve the weekly unrebated rents for municipal houses, as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report, to take effect from Monday 6 April 2015;
- c. Approve the level of revenue contribution to the Housing Capital budget for 2015/16 as well as a provisional contribution for the subsequent four financial years as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report;
- d. To continue to increase the level of working balances to 10% to meet future contingencies;
- e. To agree the continuation of the practice that all capital receipts, from the disposal of Council houses under right to buy, continue to be used to repay debt for 2015/16 and future years;
- f. Approve the level of miscellaneous rents and service charges, including Heat with Rent as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report;
- g. Set a capital programme for the financial year 2015/16 based on the rent strategy adopted as well as the indicative level of programme for the financial years 2016/17 to 2019/20;

- h. In order for work to commence on the capital programme approves as estimated expenditure in terms of Standing Order 1(3) (of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Contracts and Procurement) the sums shown against each heading of the Housing Capital Expenditure budget set out in Appendix 1 to this report; and
- i. Authorises the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure to undertake or instruct appropriate procedures to procure the works referred to in Appendix 1 for the capital programme and award contracts relating thereto.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Voids and rent arrears continue to be the main cost pressures to the HRA.
- 3.2 Given this report is to set the HRA budget for 2015/16 the financial implications are contained within the report and the attached Appendix 1.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Without adequate investment there is the possibility that the housing stock could fail to meet health and safety regulations as well as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.
- 4.2 The Scottish Government issued guidance on the operation of the Local Authority Housing Revenue Account in Scotland in February 2014. The purpose of this guidance is to consolidate information on the role of the HRA: how it must operate; who the resources contained within it are meant to benefit; and what outcomes can be expected from these resources.
- 4.3 The guidance details that there should be a robust, written methodology for calculating and allocating HRA costs (including internal costs charged by the Council to the HRA) in sufficient financial details for tenants to understand why costs are being charged and who is benefiting from the services these costs relate to.
- 4.4 The Council is in the process of ensuring all the internal costs charged to the HRA are reviewed and documented, reviewing the treatment of the Building Services surplus and all non residential assets held on the HRA to ensure compliance with the guidance.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The Council is required to give its tenants 28 days notice of any change in the level of rent. Further, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires the Council to consult with tenants on any proposed rent increase. This consultation was in the form of a tenant questionnaire on the possible rent increase.
- 5.2 The tenants were asked if the rent policy of inflation plus 1% should continue in order to maintain investment in the housing stock and improve services.
- 5.3 The results are shown on page 19 of Appendix 1. The number of tenants who responded and agreed with this rent policy was 79.61% with 20.39% not agreeing.
- 5.4 Schedule 15 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 requires expenditure in the under noted main areas to be charged to the HRA:
- Capital Financing Costs in respect of monies borrowed for the purpose of providing and improving the Council's housing stock;
 - Management, administration and maintenance of the Council's housing stock;
 - Other expenditure such as loss of rents for vacant periods, insurance, communal lighting and heating, cleaning and security.
- 5.5 Items of income that must be credited to the HRA are:
- Council house rents;
 - Other income attributable to the HRA. For example, income recovered from tenants for heating, interest on revenue balances and, when available, transfers from working balances generated by the HRA in previous years.
- 5.6 In the absence of any central or local authority financial support for the HRA, the HRA is regarded as "ring-fenced". In addition, consideration of the level of capital to be financed from current revenue (CFCR) within the HRA budget will have an impact on the Housing Capital Budget. This report therefore, whilst indicating a proposed HRA Budget, also provides information on the Capital Budget.
- 5.7 Consideration of the out-turn on the HRA for 2015/16 and the 2016/17 budget is dealt with in detail in Appendix 1. **Based on the annual rent consultation and Council policy the budgeted figures have assumed a Council house rent increase of 3.3%** (RPIX at September 2014 of 2.3% plus 1%).

- 5.8 In the UK, the recovery has remained strong, however there is evidence of a slowing of growth in the UK and prospects for the global economy have deteriorated. The Bank of England inflation target remains at 2%.
- 5.10 It is worth looking at the future projections for inflation in setting the rent increase for 2015/16:

FORECAST						
End period %	Oct 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015
RPI inflation	2.3	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.7
RPIX inflation	2.3	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.1	2.5
CPI inflation	1.2	0.8	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.8

Source – Capital Economics – Forecasts (Oct 2014)

- 5.11 The above table indicates that inflation is expected to fall to 1.8 in Q4 2014 and to increase in Q2 2015 to 2.1, therefore close to the Bank of England's target of 2%.

5.12 **Welfare Reform and Working Balances**

The full impact of Welfare Reform has not been felt and it is now likely that Aberdeen will not be involved in the first tranche of the roll out of Universal Credit in March 2015, it is expected that Aberdeen will be involved in the second tranche in May 2015. Tenants continue to be sheltered from the effect of the Welfare Reforms today by the use of Discretionary Housing Payments.

The Head of Finance must be confident that the level of working balances is adequate to meet any unforeseen contingencies during the financial year particularly with regard to the introduction of Welfare Reform.

Based on projected income and expenditure that is likely to be generated for 2014/15, this opening figure for 2015/16 should be approximately £7.2 million as detailed below:

MOVEMENT IN WORKING BALANCES	£000
Working Balances as at 1 April 2014	8,808
Less: Ear marked sums (2013/14)	
Housing repairs	(1,543)
House Sales – Non RTB	(245)
Land Transfer	(305)
Finance Lease Liability	(454)
	<hr/>
Projected Uncommitted Working Balances	6,261
14/15 Contribution to the Working Balance	1,000
Projected Uncommitted Working Balances as at 31 March 2015	7,261
15/16 Contribution to the Working Balance	1,000
Projected Uncommitted Working Balance as at 31 March 2016	8,261

Given the continued inherent uncertainty it is proposed the Council continues to work towards increasing the working balance to 10% over the next year as demonstrated in the table above and review is undertaken there after to establish if further increases are required.

5.13 **Capital Expenditure**

The draft budget for 2015/16 (and the subsequent four financial years) is attached as Appendix 1 of this report. This shows gross expenditure of £40 million financed through £15 million of borrowing and £20 million by way of a revenue contribution to fund the net programme of £34.8 million.

5.14 This capital budget reflects and includes a proposed rent increase of 3.3%. The details of the potential projects to be included in this programme are contained in Appendix 1 – pages 24 to 26.

5.15 **Miscellaneous Rents**

The budget attached in Appendix 1 also requires the miscellaneous rents and service charges to be set. As way of indication on possible increases, page 17 gives indicative increases that the Council may wish to consider. **The Council will have to decide on any possible increment to these charges in line with their rent setting strategy.**

5.16 Prudential Code

From 1 April 2004, Councils are required by Regulation to have regard to the Prudential Code when carrying out their duties under Part 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

5.17 In setting a capital programme, members will be aware that under the Prudential Code, the level of capital investment is determined at a local authority level. The base programme for consideration, subject to final rent levels is £39 million. This is attached in Appendix 1 at pages 24 to 26.

5.18 As part of the rent setting process of determining the average rent payable for a Council house, the Council must ensure that this is affordable and sustainable over the long term.

5.19 The fundamental objective, in the consideration of the affordability of the Council's capital programme, is to ensure that the total capital investment of the authority remains within sustainable limits and in particular to consider the impact on the "bottom line". That is, affordability is determined by a judgement about acceptable levels of rent.

5.20 2016/17 to 2019/20 Budget

Included within Appendix 1 is an indicative budget for 2016/17 to 2019/20 with an assumed rent increase of 3.5% for all years. There is also an analysis of the management and administration, the repairs and maintenance and capital budgets.

5.21 In setting a 3 year rent strategy, Council must pay cognisance to the level of capital investment required to maintain and improve the overall housing conditions available to the citizens of Aberdeen. The Council is required to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.

5.22 Summary

The Council is required to determine the average weekly unrebated rents (and other miscellaneous rents and service charges) for municipal houses to take effect from Monday 6 April 2015 which in turn will allow decisions to be taken on the level of capital investment.

6. IMPACT

The City Council will operate within overall financial constraints taking into account recommended accounting practice and policies. Rent increase will be notified to tenants providing them with 28 days notice.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Risk is being managed through the increase of working balances as detailed in 5.12.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

HRA 30 Year Business Plan
Bank of England Inflation report: August 2014

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Helen Sherrit
Finance Partner (Communities, Housing and Infrastructure)
hsherrit@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 346353

This page is intentionally left blank

Aberdeen City Council
Draft Housing Revenue Account
2015/16 – 2019/20 Budget

Our vision is
for Aberdeen
to be an ambitious,
achieving, smart city.



Steven Whyte
Head of Finance

Pete Leonard
Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure

DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Index

Page 2	.	.	.	.	.	Index
Page 3	.	.	.	.	.	Revenue Assumptions
Page 4	.	.	.	.	.	Housing Capital Expend Prog

Section 1 – HRA Budget 2015/16

Page 5	.	.	.	.	.	HRA Draft 2015/16 Budget
Page 7	.	.	.	.	.	HRA Variance Notes
Page 12	.	.	.	.	.	HRA Draft Repairs Budget
Page 14	.	.	.	.	.	Management & Admin Budget
Page 17	.	.	.	.	.	Miscellaneous Rents
Page 19	.	.	.	.	.	Tenants Consultation

Section 2 – HRA Budget 2016/17 – 2019/20

Page 20	.	.	.	.	.	5 Year HRA Budget
Page 22	.	.	.	.	.	5 Year HRA Assumptions
Page 23	.	.	.	.	.	5 Year Repairs Budget
Page 24	.	.	.	.	.	5 Year Capital Budget

Revenue Assumptions

In preparing the information for the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for the financial year 2015/16, a number of assumptions have been made and these are given below.

Should you require an electronic version of the budget contained within this documentation, please contact Helen Sherrit, Finance Partner (Housing & Environment) on (34)6353 or e-mail hsherrit@aberdeencity.gov.uk. The budget information is available as a set of Excel spreadsheets.

Inflation

In preparing the budget no general inflationary uplift has been added which is in line with the base assumptions used in preparing the General Fund Budget for 2014/15, (there are some exceptions to this rule such as utility costs and contractual uplifts etc. and these are stated in the variance notes). Inflation is currently running at approximately 2.3% (RPIX at September 2014). (Source: Office of National Statistics)

Housing Stock

The number of Council houses owned by the Council, as at 31 October 2014, is 22,378. It has been assumed that there will be a further 98 sales during the financial year 2014/15, bringing total sales for the year to 200. The average selling price for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 October 2014 is approximately £56,400.

Set Aside Rules

For the financial year 2014/15 the Council budgeted for 100% of all Council house sales to be utilised to repay debt. The Council is free to decide on how the proceeds from the disposal of Council houses are used. **The Head of Finance recommends that all capital receipts continue to be used to repay debt for the financial year 2015/16 and future years.**

Council House Sales

It has been assumed that the level of house sales will be 140 in 2015/16. The average selling price for 2014/15 is currently estimated at £56,400. The average number of houses for the financial year 2014/15 is therefore estimated to be 22,206 properties.

Rental Income

The income available in 2014/15 to fund the proposed budgeted level of expenditure has been calculated by taking the projected income under the revised rent structure plus 3.3% (RPIX at September 2014 + 1% which is the Council's current rent strategy/policy).

Heat with Rent

A detailed analysis has been carried out on the utility bills for Heat with Rent to ensure that the charging policy introduced in the 2006/07 budget setting process can be continued into 2015/16. No increase of income has been built into the proposed budget.

Working Balances

In developing a rent setting strategy it is important to ensure that there are adequate working balances. The Head of Finance must be confident that the level of working balances is adequate to meet any unforeseen contingencies particularly as regards the uncertainty surrounding welfare reform and the impact this could have on viability of the business plan of the Housing Revenue Account. Given this inherent uncertainty it is **proposed that the working balances continues to be increased to 10% over the 3 year period.**

Housing Capital Expenditure Programme

Housing Investment Programme

2014/15 will see continued major investment in tenants' homes to make sure that they meet their needs and expectations as well as the requirements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). Aberdeen City continues to make steady progress towards SHQS compliance with 97.2% of our stock now meeting the standard (as at 5 November 2014).

As at 31 March 2014 Aberdeen City Council compared favourably with other cities for SHQS completion –Aberdeen 89%, Local authority average 84% and Large Local authorities 86%.

It is unclear as to any future obligations beyond the SHQS completion date of 2015 it is anticipated this may relate to energy efficiency.

The Council will continue to provide funding for the provision of combined heat and power in our multi storey stock with the completion of the 7 Tillydrone multi's in 2015/16. These actions will improve the energy performance of the council housing stock and prevent potentially hundreds of tenants from falling into or remaining in fuel poverty.

The Council is continuing work on a major over-cladding scheme for High Rise buildings with blocks in Cornhill being completed in 2015/16 with work commencing on further blocks in Linksfield, Regent and Promenade Courts. In addition work will be undertaken on the following during 2015/16, major repair to 770 -852 Great Northern Road, structural repairs and re-rendering of Stewart Park and Hilton Courts and structural repairs at 2-138 Wales Street.

To ensure that the Council can meet its priorities in terms of its housing stock the capital programme for the next five years (inclusive of slippage) is proposed as follow:

2015/16 - £35.385 Million
2016/17 - £34.197 Million
2017/18 - £28.966 Million
2018/19 - £25.686 Million
2019/20 - £28.239 Million

The above figures make no allowance for the potential new build at Smithfield and Manor Walk or Regeneration.

Housing Revenue Account					
Draft 2015/16 Budget					
		Budget	Out-turn	Budget	Notes
		2014/15	2014/15	2015/16	
		£000's	£000's	£000's	
	Premises Costs				
1	Rates	19	23	28	
2	Rent – Other	141	215	215	1
3	Repairs and Maintenance	22,407	21,713	22,462	2
4	Maintenance of Grounds	3,075	3,260	3,293	3
5	Gas	1,014	1,014	765	4
6	Electricity	2,512	2,512	3,405	5
7	Cleaning Service	495	495	435	6
8	Security Service	376	376	380	7
9	Window Cleaning	24	24	25	
10	Refuse Collection	328	328	345	8
11	Cleaning – Sheltered Housing	499	499	504	9
12	Premises Insurance	57	57	57	10
13	Other Property Costs - Council Tax	201	201	201	11
		31,148	30,717	32,115	
	Administration Costs				
14	Downsizing Grants/Direct Debit Incentives	52	52	52	12
15	Legal Expenses	201	201	201	
16	Office Tel / Rent	88	88	90	
17	Former Tenants Arrears	2,000	1,300	2,000	13
18	Charges - Services Admin & Management.	8,657	8,059	8,963	14
19	General Consultancy	85	85	55	15
20	Training for Front Line Staff	100	100	100	15
21	Benefits Staff	141	141	142	15
22	Charges - Tenants Participation	208	208	210	16
23	Charges for Environmental Health	227	201	229	
		11,759	10,435	12,042	
	Supplies & Services				
24	Provision of Meals	194	232	234	17
25	Equipment Purchase	0	0	0	
26	Television Licence	5	5	5	
27	Integrated Housing System	295	295	302	18
		494	532	541	
	Agencies				
28	Mediation Service	99	99	100	19
29	Energy Advice	82	82	83	20
30	Citizens Advice Bureau	14	14	14	15
31	Disabled Persons Housing Service	39	39	39	15
32	Ethnic Minority Worker	0	12	12	15
		234	246	248	

	Housing Revenue Account	Budget	Out-turn	Budget	
	Draft 2014/15 Budget	2014/15	2014/15	2015/16	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	
	Transfer Payments				
33	Aberdeen Families Project	418	418	465	21
34	Loss of Rent - Council Houses	900	1,602	1,274	22
35	Loss of Rent - Garages, Parking etc	218	352	226	
36	Loss of Rent - Modernisation Works	100	100	104	
37	Haudagain Home Loss & Disturbance Payment		0	184	23
38	Supporting People Contribution	406	406	406	24
39	CFCR	22,362	23,841	20,681	
		24,404	26,719	23,340	
	Capital Financing Costs				
40	Loans Fund Instalment	5,228	4,967	5,860	
41	Loans Fund Interest	9,026	8,501	9,124	
42	Heating Leasing Payment	0	0	0	
		14,254	13,468	14,984	25
	Expense Total	82,293	82,117	83,276	
	Income				
43	Ground Rentals	(27)	(27)	(27)	
44	Dwelling Houses Rent Income	(79,017)	(78,719)	(80,000)	26
45	Housing - Heat with Rent Income	(2,047)	(2,134)	(2,047)	27
46	Housing - Garages Rent Income	(1,176)	(1,177)	(1,176)	28
47	Housing - Parking Spaces Rent	(180)	(214)	(180)	28
48	Housing - Insurance Income	(2)	(2)	(2)	
49	Housing - Other Service Charge	(489)	(489)	(489)	28
50	Legal Expenses	(225)	(225)	(225)	
51	Revenue Balance Interest	(130)	(130)	(130)	29
	Income Total	(83,293)	(83,117)	(84,276)	
	Net Expenditure	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	
	Projected Working Balance at 1 April 2015			7,261	

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2014/15 BUDGET

Variance Notes Comparing Draft Budget 2015/16 to Estimated Out-turn 2014/15

Expenditure Movements

1. Rent

This budget is for the rent of Accommodation for Community Groups and Housing Offices.

2. Repairs and Maintenance

An analysis is contained at page 12.

3. Maintenance of Grounds

Maintenance of Grounds budget has two elements: Ground Maintenance and cleansing/weed control. The budget for 2015/16 has been calculated by using the anticipated out-turn for 2014/15 uplifted by 1% (the budgeted salary uplift).

4. Gas

The Council moved on to the Scottish Government National Procurement for Gas Supply on 1 April 2010 with the contract price reviewed on an annual basis. The budget has been calculated using the actual consumption from 2014/15 and an anticipated rates increase in the contract price as advised by the Council's energy unit.

5. Electricity

This will be the first year of the new contract (previously a four year contract was in place). The budget has been calculated by using an assumed uplift of 29.6% as advised by the Council's energy unit and the actual consumption from 2013/14.

6. Cleaning Service

This budget is for communal cleaning. The cleaning contract commenced on 5 July 2010 and ran for three years, with an extension. To date the contract has not been agreed therefore the annual contract of £428K has been increased by 1.6% (CP July 2014).

7. Security Service

This budget is for the Security Service which started in 2012/13 and runs for three years. The cost of the security included in the budget for 2015/16 is £380,000, and includes the control room team.

8. Refuse Collection

The budget for 2015/16 has been calculated by using the actual for 2013/14 uplifted for salary increases.

9. Cleaning – Sheltered Housing

This is the budget for the cleaning of Sheltered Housing and has been calculated by using the anticipated out-turn for 2014/15 uplifted by 1%.

10. Premises Insurance

The budget for 2015/16 has been maintained at the 2014/15 level.

11. Other Property Costs – Council Tax on void properties

This budget is for the cost of Council Tax due on void properties. The budget for 2015/16 has been maintained at the 2014/15 level and is based on the assumption that there will be no increase in Council Tax for 2015/16 based on the terms and conditions of the award of the General Revenue Grant.

12. Downsizing Grants/Direct Debit Incentives

There are currently two schemes within this budget line which are Downsizing grants (£50,000) and Direct Debit Incentives (£2,000). Budgets have been maintained at the 2014/15 level.

The Downsizing scheme provides assistance and a financial incentive to Council tenants occupying 3+ bedroom family properties in high demand areas to move to smaller more suitable housing in order to increase the supply of large family housing. This budget is being maintained at the current level as there could be a potential rise in requests to downsize.

The Direct Debit Incentive scheme was introduced on 5 April 2010. Each month there is a draw for all new and existing direct debit payers for a chance to win a week free rent period, to encourage more people to switch to paying by direct debit.

13. Former Tenants Arrears

The budget has been maintained at £2M to reflect the increasing rent arrears being experienced (Current arrears have increased from £3.236M at the end of April 2014 to £3.945M at the end of October 2014). The budget for former tenant arrears is for the write off of uncollectable arrears and any increase in the debt provision.

14. Management & Administration

The staffing budget is based on the current structure of the Housing Revenue Account and includes central support recharges. A pay award of 1% has been allowed for which is in line with the assumptions contained within the Council's General Fund.

15. General Consultancy, Training for Front Line Staff, Benefits staff, Citizens Advice Bureau, Disabled persons Housing Service and Ethnic minority worker

All of the above budgets have assumed no uplifts.

General Consultancy allows the Housing Revenue Account to fund one off projects. An example of this type of expenditure would include work on the Housing Business Plan. In 2014/15 an addition £30,000 was required for a tenant

satisfaction survey requested by the Scottish Housing Regulator, this is carried out every three years therefore will not be required in 2015/16.

Training for Front line Staff allows, for example, Housing Assistants to participate in professional staff development programmes with the opportunity of gaining membership of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

The costs of the Benefits staff are recharged from the Benefits team for the time spent with Council House Tenants on maximising income and tackling financial exclusion, it is anticipated that the recharge will increase.

The contribution to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) provides funding to the service at ARI/Woodend Hospitals.

Disabled Persons Housing Service (Aberdeen) (DPHS) is a charitable organisation that provides specialist information, advice and advocacy on housing matters to disabled people, their families and carers and professionals working in housing, social work, health and the voluntary sector.

The funding covers the funding of the Development Officer's post, plus an allowance for running costs. This will enable the DPHS to continue to develop and expand the range of services that it offers to people of Aberdeen in line with the objectives set out within the Disability Action Group (DAG), DAG Homes Sub-Group Action Plan, the Local Housing Strategy and the Community Care Housing Strategy.

Ethnic minority housing outreach worker funding was agreed at 14 January 2014 Housing & Environment Committee.

16. Tenants Participation

This is the budget allocated for the provision of Tenants Participation and includes the employment costs of two Tenant Participation Officers, Newsbite and training for tenant representatives.

17. Provision of Meals

The out-turn for 2014/15 plus 1% is the basis for the 2015/16 budget. This budget is for the provision of meals at Denmore and Kingswood extra care housing. The income for this service is contained in line 49 of the budget statement above which is shown as "Housing Other Service Charge". No increase to this charge is being recommended (this is contained in miscellaneous rents page 17) as this is an outstanding action of the Housing for varying needs review. A pay as you go system is being considered as part of this review.

18. Integrated Housing System

This budget is based on the IT requirements for 2015/16 which includes all the support and maintenance costs.

19. Mediation Service

For 2015/16 budget has been uplifted by 1%.

20. Energy Advice

The Energy Advice budget is currently a payment to SCARF (Save Cash and Reduce Fuel). SCARF encourage the sustainable use of energy, achieving affordable warmth, eradicating fuel poverty and extending the life of natural energy resources across the North East of Scotland.

21. Aberdeen Families Project

This budget is used to fund the Aberdeen Families Project. The Families project is based in the Torry area and provides intensive support and supervision to families (mainly council tenants) who are involved in serious antisocial behaviour which could result in their eviction and subsequent homelessness. The service aims to reintegrate tenants or former tenants who are homeless and have a history of not sustaining a satisfactory tenancy, back into a tenancy without requiring intensive housing management. The budget is based on the anticipated cost increase of the service.

22. Loss of Rent Council Houses

The budget has been calculated using void targets and known movement of tenants between sheltered and main stream tenancies.

23. Haudagain Home loss and disturbance payments

This budget is for home loss and disturbance payments for those tenants effected by the Haudagain road improvements, this was approved at Housing & Environment Committee on 26 August 2014. The payments have been allocated over three years as no further information is known at this time.

24. Supporting People Contribution

This budget is a contribution to cover the costs of providing the former Wardens salaries for people who were not in receipt of Housing Benefit as at 31 March 2003. The contribution in 2015/16 is based on the actual expenditure for 2014/15.

This does not reflect the costs associated with the former warden's salaries as this forms part of the General Fund.

The contribution is being considered as part of the review for Housing for Varying Needs and therefore will be subject to change.

25. Capital Financing Costs

The budget for Capital Financing Costs is based on the likely level of capital spend in 2014/15 as at the end of September 2014 and a possible future programme for 2015/16 of £35.3 million as well as the level of historic debt that has to be financed. It also assumes that the consolidated loans pool rate (the rate used to calculate debt charges) is 4.22%.

Income

26. Dwelling Houses Rent Income

The budgeted income from Dwelling House Rent has increased by the potential rent increase of 3.3% (RPIX at September 2014 +1%) which is in line with current

Council policy on rent setting. This budget also takes into consideration movements in rent capping.

27. Housing – Heat with Rent Income

A review was undertaken of the income and expenditure of Heat with Rent.

- Gas
The projected energy consumption and contract rates were provided by the Council's Energy Management Unit for each sheltered complex. As from 1 April 2011 the Gas Supply is through Scottish Government National Procurement and is reviewed on an annual basis. The revised consumption has been multiplied by the agreed rate to be paid on the gas contract.
- Electricity
The projected energy consumption and rates were provided by the Council's Energy Management Unit for each sheltered complex. The new electricity contract will start on 1 April 2015. The consumption has been multiplied by the agreed rate on the electricity contract.
- Combined Heat & Power (CHP)
Aberdeen Heat and Power are to advise the Council of the rate increase in November, indications are that there will be no increase.

28. Housing – Garages Rent Income, Housing Parking Spaces Rent, Housing – Other Service Charges

This line will move depending on the level that miscellaneous rents are set at, as covered on page 17. The current budget therefore assumes that there will be no increase at present.

29. Interest on Revenue Balances

This is akin to bank interest received on the HRA's cash flow during the year. Budget is based on the income received in 2013/14 and current economic conditions.

	HOUSING REPAIRS DRAFT BUDGET	Approved Budget 2014/15 £'000	Projected Spend 2014/15 £'000	Base Budget 2015/16 £'000
<u>PLANNED AND CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE</u>				
1	External Joiner work Repairs including external painter work etc.	1,500	1,244	1,275
2	Boiler Maintenance – Sheltered Housing	310	350	359
3	Controlled Entry Systems – Maintenance	240	397	407
4	Fire Precautions - Servicing & Renewal of Equipment inc. Smoke Detectors & Dry Risers	400	187	192
5	Flat Roofs/Dormers – Renewal & Insulation	55	9	10
6	Common Rooms – Replacement of Furniture	25	40	41
7	Gas Servicing, Maintenance and Repair	2,940	4,443	4,554
8	Laundry Equipment Replacement & Maintenance	90	122	125
9	Legionella Testing incl. Repair/Renewal of Tanks	100	32	33
10	Lift Maintenance	370	184	189
11	Mutual Repairs outwith Housing Action Areas	30	25	26
12	Pumps & Fans - Maintenance & Renewal	75	50	51
13	Sheltered Housing - Replacement of Carpets, furnishings etc	40	40	41
14	Standby Generators – Maintenance	80	44	45
15	Warden call systems- maintenance and Repair	90	90	92
16	Provision of Community Alarm	230	230	236
17	Environmental Improvements (including internal communal areas)	1,200	820	840
18	Void Properties	3,600	3,911	4,009
19	Asbestos	200	16	16
20	Former Housing Capital budgets – energy efficiency, upgrading entrance halls and laundry facilities			235
Planned/Cyclical Maintenance Sub Total		11,575	12,234	12,775
<u>DAY TO DAY RESPONSE MAINTENANCE</u>				
21	Blacksmith General incl. Renewing & Repairing Rotary Driers/Handrails	230	154	158
22	Car Park Repairs	25	9	9
23	Chimney heads - Repointing and Rebuilding	5	0	0
24	Condensation - Treatment of Walls	50	59	60
25	Electrical Work - General Repairs	1,150	1,138	1,166
26	Emergency Work - Out of Hours Service	550	367	376
27	External/Internal Response Paintwork	210	163	168
28	Fire Damage Repairs	200	71	72
29	Garage Repairs	30	9	10
30	Glazier work	170	163	167
31	Joiner work - General Repairs	2,750	2,267	2,324
32	Mason work and Water Penetration Repairs	500	490	502
33	Minor Environmental Services	550	363	372
34	Plasterwork – General	275	230	236
35	Plumber work – General	1,180	1,066	1,093
36	Slater work	800	824	845
37	Snow Clearance	52	52	53
38	TV Aerial	60	55	56
39	Rubbish Removal	50	13	13
40	Vandalism	65	57	58
41	Water Services Charges	10	10	10
Day to Day Response Maintenance Total		8,912	7,559	7,748
42	Fees	1,920	1,920	1,939
TOTAL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET		22,407	21,713	22,462

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET 2015/16

General

The projected spend figures have been taken from invoicing up to the end of July 2014 and a projection to year end.

Projections are based on the average monthly spend, updates from Surveyors and in the case of the general trades historical information has been taken from previous spend patterns.

Projected spend in 2014/15 is currently anticipated to be approximately below budget however this can be subject to change as this budget is demand led.

Specific Items

Planned and Cyclical Maintenance

Item 7 Gas Servicing , Maintenance and Repairs

An increase in the budget is anticipated in order for the Council to ensure it achieves the required gas safety record renewed by the anniversary date. As at 31 March 2014 Aberdeen City Council had achieved 67% renewal date by the anniversary date compared to 94.2% for comparable large local authorities.

Item 17 Environmental Improvements

This line includes crime prevention measures, bird proofing including the removal of nests, area fencing, security doors, sound insulation, security lighting and other estate management improvements identified by Housing Officers.

Item 18 Void Properties (Relets)

It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the voids budget due to an increase in the level of work required to be undertaken in order to bring the properties back to a standard which can be let to tenants.

Day to Day Response Maintenance

The items listed under Day to Day response are more susceptible to weather /climate/fluctuations in costs from year to year. The projected and budget costs are in part based on historical data taken from previous years.

Fees

The fees include the recharge for the call centre who receive the repairs calls. Also uplifted by 1% for wage inflation.

	Management & Admin		Proposed	
		Budget	Budget	
		2014/15	2015/16	Notes
		£000's	£000's	
	Staff Costs			1
1	Salaries	4,974	5,471	
2	Overtime	91	46	
3	Superannuation	947	1,018	
4	N.I	388	393	
5	Other Staff Costs	376	237	
		6,776	7,165	
	Premises Costs			2
6	Rates	29	29	
7	Rent	26	26	
8	Insurance	2	0	
9	Electricity/Gas	23	23	
10	Rubbish Removal	3	3	
11	Cleaning	24	25	
12	Repairs and Maintenance	3	3	
		110	109	
	Administration Costs			2
15	Printing	90	77	
16	Photocopying	16	14	
17	Stationery	25	18	
18	Subscriptions	23	23	
19	Postages	79	87	
20	Telephones	39	40	
21	Bank Charges(inc Cash in transit	85	76	
22	Advertising	44	45	
23	Course Expenses	14	14	
26	Tenants Participation Expenses	17	11	
		432	405	
	Transport Costs			
	Travel Costs	99	97	
		99	97	

			Proposed	
		Budget	Budget	
		2014/15	2015/16	
		£'000	£'000	Notes
	Supplies & Services			2
28	Equipment Purchases	15	15	
29	Computer Software Support	226	302	
30	Sundry Outlays	159	155	
		400	472	
	Corporate/Directorate Recharge			
31	Corporate/Directorate Recharges	2,143	2,184	3
	Expense Total	9,960	10,432	
	Income			
	Recharges:-			
34	Management & Admin – HRA	(8,657)	(8,863)	
35	Tenants Participation – HRA	(208)	(210)	
36	Other Housing	(219)	(220)	
37	Homeless Persons	(143)	(53)	
38	Housing Capital	(733)	(784)	
	Integrated Housing	0	(302)	
		(9,960)	(10,432)	
	Income Total	(9,960)	(10,432)	
	Net Expenditure	0	0	

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION BUDGET

Variances and Notes

The 2015/16 budget for management and administration is based on the current structure of Housing.

1. Staff Costs

The staff costs have been increased to reflect annual salary increments and the pay award.

2. Premises Costs, Fees & Charges, Administration Costs, Transport Costs, Supplies and Services

All the above budgets have been reviewed with certain costs being adjusted based on current service provision.

3. Corporate/Directorate Charges

This budget is based on the current services being provided to Housing and may be subject to change. It covers services such as Legal, Finance, Office Accommodation, IT, Corporate Director and Heads of Service etc.

Miscellaneous Rents

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT					
Proposed Increase to be included in the HRA budget – Miscellaneous Rents					
		2015/16			
		Current	Proposed	Increase	Percentage
		Rental	Rental	Per Week	Increase
Note	Miscellaneous Increases	£	£	£	%
	Garages	10.40	10.80	0.40	3.85
	Denburn and West North Street Spaces	4.70	4.90	0.20	4.26
1	Denburn and West North Street Spaces – Non Resident	35.00	35.00	0.00	0.00
	Garages Sites	4.00	4.20	0.20	5.00
	Car Ports	4.40	4.60	0.20	4.55
	Car Parking Spaces – Local Residents	3.60	3.80	0.20	5.56
1	Parking Spaces Non Local Residents	35.00	35.00	0.00	0.00
2	Window Cleaning	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.00
2	Meals at Denmore & Kingswood	35.00	35.00	0.00	0.00
	Mortgage Reference Fees	64.50	64.50	0.00	0.00
3	Guest Rooms	10 & 15	10 & 15	0.00	0.00
4	Factoring Charge	62	62	0.00	0.00

The above proposed prices for 2015/16 have been increased broadly in line with the proposed rental increase subject to:

Note 1 These charges will be subject to an overall review of car parking charges during 2015/16.

Note 2 These charges are being considered as part of the overall review of Housing for Varying Needs.

Note 3 No increase is being recommended in 2015/16.

Note 4 This is an annual charge per owner as a result of the Property Factors Act which was introduced on 1st October 2012 no increase is being recommended in 2015/16 .

Heat with Rent calculations for 2015/16

It was agreed in the 2014/15 budget process to apply an **increase of £1.50 per week for bedsits, £2.00 per week for 1 bed roomed dwellings, £2.50 per week for 2 bed roomed dwelling and £3.00 per week for 3 bed roomed dwellings** across all the Council's Heat with Rent properties.

A review of consumption and costs is required each year and especially as only the electric contract is fixed for a number of years (a new contract is to negotiated for 3 years). There is also potential revised costs for CHP and Gas each year.

In addition as the charge is the same every week, tenants on Heat with Rent are not faced with the problem of having to pay large gas or electric bills during the colder winter months which extended into the spring months in 2013.

It is proposed not to apply an increase to Heat with Rent as although it is anticipated that electric costs will increase by 29.6% and gas by 3% consumption reduced in 2014/15 negating these cost pressures.

In addition it is proposed that officers form a group to review the heat with rent charges to avoid in future large increases. This group would investigate potentially the following consumption and the potential for using an average, the price differential for property sizes, the impact of pricing on the take up of Combined Heat and Power and common areas.

Heat with Rent – 48 week basis		
	Previous	Proposed
Gas Heated Properties	£	£
Bedsits	10.55	10.55
1 bed roomed flats	11.85	11.85
2 bed roomed flats	13.15	13.15
3 bed roomed flats	14.45	14.45
Electrically Heated Properties		
Bedsits	11.55	11.55
1 bed roomed flats	12.85	12.85
2 bed roomed flats	14.15	14.15
3 bed roomed flats	15.45	15.45
CHP Properties		
All 1 Bed roomed Properties	11.60	11.60
All 2 Bed roomed Properties	12.90	12.90

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
Tenants Consultation**

Aberdeen City Council is committed to ensuring that tenants' views are both sought and listened to. As part of the review on the future of the Council housing stock, a tenant referendum was held to determine what the views of tenants were.

The tenants voted overwhelmingly to retain the Council as their landlord in 2002, provided that continued improvements were made to the housing stock. In 2004, the Council adopted a Housing Business Plan approach. This has allowed us to plan for the future.

Furthermore, a questionnaire was sent out to tenants in September 2014 to ascertain views on the possible rent increase of inflation plus 1%. The table below shows the results of the questionnaire

ANNUAL RENT CONSULTATION – Feedback

Do you agree that the rent policy, inflation + 1%, should be continued to maintain investment in our housing stock and improve services?

	Returns	Percent
Yes	285	80
No	73	20
Total	358	100

Housing Revenue Account		Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Notes
		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Premises Costs							
1	Rates	28	28	29	29	29	
2	Rent	215	223	230	238	247	
3	Repairs and Maintenance	22,462	23,024	23,599	24,189	24,794	1
4	Maintenance of Grounds	3,293	3,359	3,392	3,426	3,461	2
5	Gas	765	842	926	1,019	1,120	4
6	Electricity	3,405	3,575	3,754	3,942	4,139	4
7	Cleaning Service	435	446	457	468	480	3
8	Security Service	380	388	391	395	399	2
9	Window Cleaning	25	25	26	26	27	3
10	Refuse Collection	345	353	362	371	381	2
11	Cleaning – Sheltered Housing	504	514	519	524	530	2
12	Premises Insurance	57	25	26	26	27	3
13	Other Property Costs - Council Tax	201	201	201	201	201	
		32,115	33,002	33,912	34,856	35,834	
Administration Costs							
14	Down sizing Grants/Direct Debit Incentives	52	52	52	52	52	
15	Legal Expenses	201	201	201	201	201	
16	Office Tel / Rent	90	92	95	97	99	3
17	Former Tenants Arrears	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	
18	Charges - Services Admin & Management	8,963	9,142	9,234	9,326	9,419	2
19	General Consultancy	55	55	55	55	55	
20	Training for Front Line Staff	100	100	100	100	100	
21	Benefits Staff	142	145	146	148	149	2
22	Charges - Tenants Participation	210	214	216	219	221	2
23	Charges for Environmental Health	229	234	236	238	241	2
		12,042	12,235	12,335	12,436	12,537	
Supplies & Services							
24	Provision of Meals	234	239	241	244	246	
25	Equipment Purchase	0	0	0	0	0	
26	Television Licence	5	5	5	5	5	
27	Integrated Housing System	302	310	317	325	333	3
		541	554	564	574	585	

	Housing Revenue Account	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	
		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
	Agencies						
28	Mediation Service	100	102	103	104	105	2
29	Energy Advice	83	85	86	86	87	2
30	Citizens Advice Bureau	14	14	14	15	15	2
31	Disabled Persons Housing Service	39	40	40	41	41	2
32	Ethnic Minority Worker	12	12	12	12	12	
		248	253	255	258	260	
	Transfer Payments						
33	Aberdeen Families Project	465	474	479	484	489	2
34	Loss of Rent - Council Houses	1,274	1,319	1,365	1,413	1,462	5
35	Loss of Rent - Garages, Parking etc	226	226	226	226	226	
36	Loss of Rent - Modernisation Works	104	104	104	104	104	
37	Haudagain Home Loss & Disturbance Payments	184	184	184	0	0	
38	Supporting People Contribution	406	406	406	406	406	
39	CFCR	20,681	21,331	22,928	24,588	26,419	
		23,340	24,044	25,692	27,220	29,106	
	Capital Financing Costs						
40	Loans Fund Instalment	5,860	6,681	7,454	8,038	8,510	
41	Loans Fund Interest	9,130	9,608	9,762	9,592	9,246	
		14,990	16,289	17,216	17,630	17,756	
	Expense Total	83,276	86,376	89,974	92,973	96,078	
	Income						
42	Ground Rentals	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	
43	Dwelling Houses Rent Income	(80,000)	(82,800)	(85,698)	(88,697)	(91,802)	5
44	Housing - Heat with Rent Income	(2,047)	(2,047)	(2,047)	(2,047)	(2,047)	
45	Housing - Garages Rent Income	(1,176)	(1,176)	(1,176)	(1,176)	(1,176)	
46	Housing - Parking Spaces Rent	(180)	(180)	(180)	(180)	(180)	
47	Housing - Insurance Income	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	
48	Housing - Other Service Charge	(489)	(489)	(489)	(489)	(489)	
49	Legal Expenses	(225)	(225)	(225)	(225)	(225)	
50	Revenue Balance Interest	(130)	(130)	(130)	(130)	(130)	
	Income Total	(84,276)	(87,076)	(89,974)	(92,973)	(96,078)	
	Net Expenditure	(1,000)	(700)	0	0	0	
	Actual Working Balance	8,261	8,761	8,761	8,761	8,761	

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FIVE YEAR BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

1. Repairs and Maintenance

The analysis of the five year budget is to follow. The budget has been uplifted by 2.5% in 2016/17 to 2018/19. The fee element has been uplifted by 1% to reflect the salary uplift.

2. Maintenance of Grounds, Security Service, Refuse Collection, Cleaning – Sheltered Housing, Charges – Services Admin & Management, Benefits staff, Charges – Tenants participation, Charges for Environmental Health, Mediation Service, Energy Advice, Citizens Advice Bureau, Disabled Persons Housing Service, Aberdeen Families Project

As these budgets are principally for staffing within the Council an uplift of 2% in 2016/17 and 1% for all other years has been applied to reflect the anticipated public sector pay awards.

3. Cleaning Service, Window Cleaning, Premises Insurance, Office Telephone, Integrated Housing

These budgets have been uplifted by the inflationary increase in the HRA Business Plan.

4. Gas & Electricity

Gas has been uplifted 10% each year, Electricity 30% in 2015/16 when the contract is renegotiated and 5% thereafter & Combined Heat & Power 5% each year.

5. Dwelling Houses Rent Income and Transfer Payments

The budgeted income from Dwelling House Rent is calculated by using the anticipated income from the new rent structure uplifted by the potential rent increase of 3.3% for 2015/16 and then uplifting each year by 3.5% (RPIX of 2.5% used in the business plan, this is the standard inflationary increase plus 1%).

HOUSING REPAIRS DRAFT BUDGET		Base Budget 2014/15 £'000	Base Budget 2015/16 £'000	Base Budget 2016/17 £'000	Base Budget 2017/18 £'000	Base Budget 2018/19 £'000
PLANNED AND CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE						
1	External Joiner work Repairs including external paintwork etc.	1,275	1,306	1,339	1,373	1,407
2	Boiler Maintenance - Extra Care Housing	359	368	377	386	396
3	Controlled Entry Systems – Maintenance	407	417	428	438	449
4	Fire Precautions - Servicing & Renewal of Equipment inc. Smoke Detectors & Dry Risers	192	197	202	207	212
5	Flat Roofs/Dormers – Renewal & Insulation	10	10	10	10	11
6	Common Rooms - Replacement of Furniture	41	42	43	44	45
7	Gas Servicing, Maintenance and Repair	4,554	4,668	4,785	4,904	5,027
8	Laundry Equipment Replacement & Maintenance	125	129	132	135	138
9	Legionella Testing incl. Repair/Renewal of Tanks	33	34	34	35	36
10	Lift Maintenance	189	193	198	203	208
11	Mutual Repairs outwith Housing Action Areas	26	26	27	28	28
12	Pumps & Fans - Maintenance & Renewal	51	52	53	55	56
13	Extra Care Housing - Replacement of Carpets, furnishings etc	41	42	43	44	45
14	Standby Generators – Maintenance	45	46	47	48	50
15	Warden call systems- Maintenance and Repair	92	95	97	99	102
16	Provision of Community Alarm	236	242	248	254	260
17	Environmental Improvements	840	861	883	905	928
18	Relets	4,009	4,109	4,212	4,317	4,425
19	Asbestos	16	17	17	18	18
20	Former Housing Capital budgets – energy efficiency, upgrading entrance halls and laundry facilities	235	241	247	253	259
Planned/Cyclical Maintenance Sub Total		12,775	13,095	13,422	13,757	14,101
DAY TO DAY RESPONSE MAINTENANCE						
21	Blacksmith General incl. Renewing & Repairing Rotary Driers/Handrails	158	162	166	170	175
22	Car Park Repairs	9	9	10	10	10
23	Chimney heads - Repointing and Rebuilding	0	0	0	0	0
24	Condensation - Treatment of Walls	60	62	63	65	66
25	Electrical Work - General Repairs	1,166	1,195	1,225	1,256	1,287
26	Emergency Work - Out of Hours Service	376	386	395	405	415
27	External/Internal Response Paintwork	168	172	176	180	185
28	Fire Damage Repairs	72	74	76	78	80
29	Garage Repairs	10	10	10	10	11
30	Glazier work	167	171	175	179	184
31	Joiner work – General Repairs	2,324	2,382	2,442	2,503	2,565
32	Mason work and Water Penetration Repairs	502	515	528	541	554
33	Minor Environmental Services	372	382	391	401	411
34	Plasterwork – General	236	241	247	254	260
35	Plumber work – General	1,093	1,120	1,148	1,177	1,206
36	Slater work	845	866	887	910	932
37	Snow Clearance	53	55	56	57	59
38	TV Aerial	56	57	59	60	62
39	Rubbish Removal	13	14	14	14	15
40	Vandalism	58	59	61	62	64
41	Water Services Charges	10	11	11	11	11
Day to Day Response Maintenance Total		7,748	7,942	8,140	8,344	8,552
Fees		1,939	1,978	1,998	2,018	2,038
TOTAL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET		22,462	23,014	23,560	24,119	24,692

Draft Housing Capital Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20

Project	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS					
1 Compliant with the tolerable standard					
1.1 Major Repairs-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Roofs Renewal/Gutters/RWP/Roughcast					
Undertaking large scale repairs to Roofs/Gutters/RWP/Roughcast					
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2 Free from Serious Disrepair					
2.1 Primary Building Elements					
Structural Repairs Multi Storey	9,259	9,424	4,489	1,100	1,115
Multi Storey blocks are surveyed on a 5-7 year cycle to identify any works required to the structure of the buildings in order to keep the buildings safe and prolong their life.					
Structural Repairs General Housing	1,500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Structural works carried out in order to keep the building stable and structurally sound.					
Secondary Building Elements					
2.2 Upgrading Of Flat Roofs General	350	100	50	50	350
Replacement of existing roof covering and upgrading of insulation to meet current building regulations.					
2.3 Upgrade Flat Roofs Multi Storey	957	1,507	791	1,662	1,745
Full replacement of the flat roofs and also checking the replacement of roof ventilation as required					
2.5 Mono Pitched Types	750	750	650	650	650
Replacement of the external render of the building, replacement of gutters and downpipes, environmental works					
2.6 Window Replace General	290	2,637	2,720	1,249	2,302
A rolling programme of double glazing where previously single glazing, or replacing existing double glazing to meet current standards. This is based on a cyclical programme.					
2.8 Balcony Storm Doors	154	0	0	0	0
	13,260	15,418	9,700	5,711	7,162
3 Energy Efficient					
Effective insulation					
3.2 General Houses Loft Insulation	72	77	77	82	87
Installation of loft insulation where there is none previously or the topping up of existing insulation to comply with current building regulations.					
Efficient Heating					
3.3 Heating Systems Replacement	7,232	6,598	7,703	9,597	9,794
Replacement of boiler/whole system as deemed necessary.					
3.5 Energy Efficiency Major Blocks	1,500	1,575	1,654	1,736	1,823
Contribution to Aberdeen Heat & Power for the creation of Combined Heat & Power Plants					
3.6 Energy Efficiency Sheltered	270	250	200	200	350
Introduction of energy efficiency measures in extra care housing such as new or upgraded heating systems.					
Additional Energy Efficiency measures					
3.8 Solid Wall Insulation	500	500	500	500	500

	9,574	9,000	10,134	12,115	12,554
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000

Modern Facilities & Services

Bathroom and Kitchen Condition

4.1 Modernisation Programme

Replacement of bathrooms and kitchens.

	2,957	1,489	1,479	927	1,096
	2,957	1,489	1,479	927	1,096

5 Healthy, Safe & Secure

Healthy

5.1 Condensation Measures

Installation of heating systems and ventilation measures to combat condensation.

	20	21	22	23	24
--	----	----	----	----	----

Safe

5.3 Rewiring

Replacement of cabling, fittings and distribution boards as necessary. This work is carried out in every property on a cyclical basis

	2,512	2,411	2,226	1,812	2,365
--	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

5.4 Lift Replacement Multi Storey/Major Blocks

Replacement of lifts where they are beyond economical repair. This can be full replacement or replacement of specific parts of the lift.

	815	254	266	280	292
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

5.5 Smoke Detectors – Common Areas Major Blocks

	170	159	125	109	92
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

5.6 Services

Cyclical maintenance/replacement of the following services
Ventilation Systems, water tanks/pipe work, refuse chutes/chamber, Dry risers systems, Standby Generators

	50	50	50	50	50
--	----	----	----	----	----

Secure

5.11 Door Entry Systems

Installation of door entry and replacement of existing doors where required

	10	10	11	12	12
--	----	----	----	----	----

5.12 Replace Door Entry Systems - Major Blocks

Installation of door entry and replacement of existing doors where required

	25	26	56	88	153
--	----	----	----	----	-----

5.13 Other Initiatives

Upgrading of stairs and installation of security doors and door entry systems

	281	163	120	120	120
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

	3,883	3,094	2,876	2,494	3,108
--	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

NON SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

6 Community Plan & Single Outcome Agreement

6.1 Housing For Varying Needs

New build including extra care housing.

	600	250	50	50	50
--	-----	-----	----	----	----

6.2 Community Initiatives

Refurbishment of properties or environmental improvements in designated areas.

	600	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
--	-----	-------	-------	-------	-------

6.5 Regeneration/Acquisition of Land or Houses

Early Action projects linked to Regeneration and Master planning Briefs for Regeneration.
Acquisition of Land/Houses for the new build programme.

	0	0	0	0	0
--	---	---	---	---	---

6.6 CCTV – Multi Storey

Provision of CCTV for the Multi Storey Service

	147	154	162	170	179
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

6.7 Adaptations Disabled

Installation of level access showers, ramps, stair lifts and kitchen adaptations

	1,250	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
--	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000
6.8 Special Initiatives/Barrier Free Housing	1,000	200	150	150	150
Provision of specialist facilities or housing for tenants with particular needs i.e. extensions					
6.9 Housing For Varying Needs- Amenity/Adaptations	75	75	75	75	75
Conversion of properties to Amenity Level standard					
6.10 Housing For Varying Needs- Extra Care/Adaptations	25	25	25	25	25
Adaptations required to ensure existing sheltered housing stock meets current standards					
6.11 Roads	100	100	100	100	100
Upgrade of Roads to an adoptable standard					
6.12 Paths	100	100	100	100	100
Formation or upgrading of paths					
6.14 New Affordable Housing	0	0	0	0	0
	3,897	2,904	2,662	2,670	2,679
9 Service Expenditure					
Corporate Fees	5,187	5,519	4,694	3,943	4,130
	5,187	5,519	4,694	3,943	4,130
Gross Programme	39,758	38,424	32,545	28,860	31,729
Less Slippage					
	4,373	4,226	3,579	3,175	3,490
Net Programme	35,385	34,197	28,966	25,685	28,239
Financed by :-					
Borrowing	14,744	12,867	6,038	1,098	1,820
CFCR	20,641	21,331	22,928	24,588	26,419
Total Funding	35,385	34,197	28,966	25,686	28,239

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE	4 December 2014
DIRECTOR	Ewan Sutherland
TITLE OF REPORT	Treasury Management – Mid Year Review
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/14/141

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on Treasury Management activities undertaken to date, during financial year 2014/15.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee considers and recommends this report to Council for approval as follows:

- a) Notes the Treasury Management activities undertaken in 2014/15 as detailed, and
- b) Approves the revised Counterparty list as detailed at Appendix 1.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Treasury Management activities influence the loans pool interest rates and aims to minimise the cost of borrowing. This directly impacts upon costs chargeable to the Council's revenue budgets through the interest rates that are applied to capital financing costs. Whilst the level of borrowing a Council can undertake is now devolved from the Scottish Government to individual Councils, it will still be constrained by the requirement for capital investment to be affordable, sustainable and prudent. The main test of affordability will be whether the capital financing costs can be contained within the revenue budgets.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Introduction

The Council previously approved a Treasury Management policy on 21 February 2014. Part of this policy is to report a mid-year review to committee on Treasury Management activities undertaken.

With effect from 1 April 2004, Councils are now required by regulation to have regard to the Prudential Code (the Code) when carrying out their duties under part 7 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Historically, the Council's annual programme of capital investment has been funded by Treasury Management activities, such as additional long-term borrowing.

It is a requirement of this Code that Treasury Management is carried out in accordance with good professional practice. The Code requires the Council to comply with CIPFA "Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services", which this Council does.

This "mid-year" review on activities undertaken is also in line with current reporting requirements from the latest update of the CIPFA Code of Practice.

5.2 Treasury Management 2014/15

The following is a summary of Treasury Management activities which have been undertaken thus far in 2014/15: -

Long Term Borrowing

Three new PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) loans for £10 million each were borrowed in October. These loans were taken to replace loans which had previously matured earlier this financial year. Long term loan interest rates reached an historic low during October. The average rate of the new borrowing is 3.63%, while the matured loans were running at an average rate of 9.39%. This difference in interest costs equates to an annual saving of £1.7m for the Loans Fund.

We remain open to the possibility of undertaking a small amount of longer-term borrowing later in this financial year, if favourable market conditions were to return.

Short Term Borrowing

Short-term borrowing is still available from other Local Authorities at relatively low levels. Temporary Loans, for up to six months, are available at rates around the 0.45% level, making these an attractive option.

The Council's borrowing strategy for the last few years has been to borrow short-term where possible, to take advantage of these lower rates.

The Council currently has some £40m of Temporary Loans from other Local Authorities, at an average rate of 0.45%. This debt is gradually being replaced over time with long-term PWLB loans, as temporary loan rates will start to rise along with the Bank of England Base Rate. Current forecasts are that the Bank's Base Rate should begin to rise midway through 2015.

Investments

Due to the downturn in the global economy, many previously undoubted financial institutions have been removed from the Council's Counterparty list over the past the last few years. The Counterparty list is the list of approved banks and building societies that the Council may lend to either directly or through the Money Markets, on a temporary basis.

Reviews of the Council's Counterparty list were undertaken and approved by Committee as the situation deteriorated. Some of these institutions have since stabilised their financial positions are starting to return to the Council's Counterparty list.

Some proposed changes to the Counterparty List are attached at Appendix 1. All proposed changes are in line with current recommendations by Capita, the Council's appointed Treasury Management advisors.

Money Market Funds

Money Market Funds are AAA rated, short term pooled investment vehicles. They offer security, counterparty diversification and instant access to funds, when required.

The Council currently has five Money Market Fund accounts opened, each with a £10m limit. These Money Market Fund accounts have greatly assisted the Council in spreading its Counterparty risk and also improve short-term cashflow liquidity.

6. IMPACT

Corporate - If an active Treasury Management policy is not undertaken and implemented there may be future budgetary implications for the Council through greater than budgeted capital financing costs.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The CIPFA Code of Practice states that in the use of financial instruments for the prudent management of risk, priority must be given to security and liquidity, when investing funds.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Neil Stewart, Treasury Officer,
nstewart@aberdeencity.gov.uk, 01224 522696

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
COUNTERPARTY LIST**

Changes are required to the current counterparty list as follows:

1. Remove Ulster Bank Ltd from the Royal Bank of Scotland Group
2. Increase the HSBC Bank plc limit from £10m to £20m
3. Standard Chartered Bank - Reduce maximum lending period from 'up to 12 months' to 'up to 6 months'
4. Barclays Bank plc, Santander UK plc and Nationwide Building Society – Increase maximum lending period from 'up to 3 months' to 'up to 6 months'
5. Add Close Brothers, Coventry Building Society and Leeds Building Society with a lending period of 'up to 3 months'

Deposits up to 12 months

UK Nationalised and Part Nationalised Banks - £30m limit

Lloyds Banking Group (includes Lloyds TSB Bank plc, Bank of Scotland)

The Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc
(includes Royal Bank of Scotland plc, National Westminster Bank plc)

UK Banks - £20m limit

HSBC Bank plc

Other Banks - £10m limit

Handelsbanken

UK Local Authorities, including Police Authorities - £10m limit

Deposits up to 6 months

UK Banks - £10m limit

Barclays Bank plc

Santander UK plc (includes Cater Allen)

Standard Chartered Bank

UK Building Societies - £10m limit

Nationwide Building Society

Deposits up to 3 months

Council's Bankers - £20m limit

Clydesdale Bank plc

UK Banks - £10m limit

Close Brothers

UK Building Societies - £10m limit

Coventry Building Society

Leeds Building Society

Collective Investment Schemes - £50m total limit

Money Market Funds - £10m limit

Deutsche Managed Sterling Fund

Federated Short Term Sterling Prime Fund

Goldman Sachs Sterling Liquid Reserve Fund

Ignis Liquidity Fund

Morgan Stanley Sterling Liquidity Fund

FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Meeting of
4 December, 2014

BUSINESS RATES APPEALS SUB COMMITTEE (CG/14/165)

23. The Committee had before it a report by the Acting Director of Corporate Governance which sought approval to establish a body to hear appeals against rating liability under section 238 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1947. An appeal has now been received and must be considered.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) establish a small Business Rates Appeals Sub Committee comprising five members and that arrangements are made to hear the current appeal;
- (b) agree that training be provided to the nominated members and possible substitutes prior to the hearing of the appeal;
- (c) agree that the Senior Democratic Services Manager be appointed clerk to the sub committee and be authorised to delegate in writing the day to day operation of the sub committee to a Committee Services Officer in his team; and
- (d) agree that the procedure appended to the report for the making and hearing of appeals be adopted.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report and to refer it to Council to establish the Business Rates Appeals Sub Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE	4 December, 2014
DIRECTOR	Corporate Governance (Acting)
TITLE OF REPORT	Business Rates Appeals Sub Committee
REPORT NUMBER	CG/14/165
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Committee is required to establish a body to hear appeals against rating liability under section 238 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1947. An appeal has now been received and must be considered.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (1) That the Committee establishes a small Business Rates Appeals Sub Committee comprising five members and that arrangements are made to hear the current appeal;
- (2) That training be provided to the nominated members and possible substitutes prior to the hearing of the appeal;
- (3) That the Senior Democratic Services Manager be appointed clerk to the sub committee and authorised to delegate in writing the day to day operation of the sub committee to a Committee Services Officer in his team; and
- (4) That the procedure appended to this report for the making and hearing of appeals be adopted.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be minor operational costs arising from establishing another sub committee.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There is a legal requirement for a body of members of the authority to be established to hear appeals made in terms of the legislation.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 A liable business ratepayer is held to be the owner of a non-domestic subject, tenant, sub tenant or person in occupation. The existence or otherwise of a lease is not conclusive in determining rateable occupation but rather three tests have to be satisfied; these are possession, actual use and permanence. Where a dispute over liability arises, the Council as Rating Authority must look to which party has more (or less) of the three principal tests.
- 5.2 Ratepayers have the right of appeal to a Valuation Appeals Committee in respect of valuation matters, or to their Rating Authority where rates have been improperly charged. Section 238 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1947 allows an appeal on the basis that the person named is not liable or a mistake has been made in the amount of rates demanded.
- 5.3 An appeal has now been received in terms of the above section and the Council is required to establish a body to hear it. It is proposed that a small Rating Appeals Sub Committee be established to hear the appeal, comprising five (three Administration, two Opposition) members, and that arrangements be made to have the appeal heard. An appeal to the courts against collection has been made and this is currently sisted, being due to call again on 8 January, 2015.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the Senior Democratic Services Manager be appointed as clerk to the sub committee, and that he be authorised to delegate the day to day operation of the sub committee, in writing, to a Committee Services Officer in his team.
- 5.5 It is proposed that the appended procedure for the hearing of appeals be adopted.
- 5.6 All members of the sub committee, and substitutes, shall be trained prior to hearing an appeal.

6. IMPACT

Corporate – This Sub Committee will hear appeals against the identification of an individual as being responsible for the payment of business rates and so the outcome of any appeal will have an impact on the collectability of those rates. The establishment of the Sub Committee is also a statutory requirement and so it require administrative and legal support from Legal and Democratic Services. Legal support will be provided by a different team to that which will be supporting the service in any appeal.

Public – Individuals who believe that they have been assessed wrongly as being responsible for business rates will be able to appeal and to

appear before the Sub Committee in person, thereby improving transparency in the rates collection process.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The Sub Committee is a statutory requirement and so it would be a risk not to establish it. As stated above, the ability of the appellant to present their case in person provides added transparency and reassurance to the business rates collection process.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Roderick MacBeath
Senior Democratic Services Manager
Legal and Democratic Services
(01224) 523054
rmacbeath@aberdeencity.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
BUSINESS RATES APPEALS SUB COMMITTEE
PROCEDURE

1. CONSTITUTION

- 1.1 The Sub Committee shall be appointed by Council and shall comprise such number of members as Council may agree.
- 1.2 Council shall appoint a chair and a clerk to the Sub Committee.
- 1.3 Members may nominate substitutes to attend hearings, but no substitution shall be permissible once a hearing has begun.
- 1.4 Members and substitute members shall be trained prior to hearing any appeal.

2. PROCEDURE

- 2.1 An appeal under section 238 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1947 shall only be competent where the appellant has made representations previously to the Head of Finance or his appointed officer, has been dissatisfied with the response and requires a further review. The notice of appeal shall be submitted to the clerk at the following address:-

Senior Democratic Services Manager
Clerk to the Business Rates Appeals Sub Committee
Legal and Democratic Services
Town House
Aberdeen AB10 1AQ

- 2.2 The notice of appeal shall be in writing and shall be acknowledged by the clerk within seven days of receipt. The notice shall specify the detailed grounds upon which the appellant wishes to rely and grounds not listed in the notice shall not be considered if introduced at a later stage. Where the notice has been sent electronically, an electronic response may be sent, but hard copies will be sent where possible.
- 2.3 The clerk shall notify the Revenue and Benefits Manager or such individual as may be responsible for imposing the rates on the taxpayer (or such person as that officer shall nominate) within seven days of receipt of the appeal and shall provide the notice of appeal and any supplementary documentation.
- 2.4 The Revenue and Benefits Manager shall send any response to the notice of appeal and supplementary documentation to the clerk within fourteen days and shall copy such response to the appellant.
- 2.5 The appellant shall be afforded the opportunity to appear in person before the Sub Committee, to be represented or to allow the appeal to rest on written submissions.
- 2.6 The Sub Committee may require the appellant to provide in writing further particulars of the grounds on which the appeal relies and of any relevant facts, or to produce specified documentary evidence of the position set out in the notice of appeal or any other written representations.

- 2.7 The appellant and Revenue and Benefits Manager shall be given fourteen days' notice of the date of the hearing of the appeal by the Sub Committee. Such notice shall specify the time and place of the hearing of the appeal and, if not sent electronically, shall be deemed to be received on the day following posting by first class mail.
- 2.8 The hearing shall be held within 42 days of the receipt of the notice of appeal, and not earlier than 21 days, except with the agreement of both parties.
- 2.9 At least seven days before the hearing, the clerk shall supply to the members of the Sub Committee, the appellant and the officers of the Council representing it, copies of the following:-
- The determination of the Council;
 - Any statement supplied by the Council showing how the determination had been calculated;
 - The representations made by the appellant;
 - The notification of the decision of the Council;
 - The grounds on which the appellant has required further review;
 - Any written representations by the appellant;
 - Any written response prepared by the Revenue and Benefits Manager in terms of paragraph 2.3 above; and
 - Any additional submissions by either party shall be sent to the other party and to the clerk no later than three working days prior to the date of the hearing and no further documents shall be accepted unless the Sub Committee so determines.
- 2.10 The appellant and the Revenue and Benefits Manager shall send the above documentation to the clerk at least ten days prior to the date of the hearing.
3. PROCEDURE AT THE HEARING
- 3.1 The Sub Committee shall not be bound by any enactment or rule of law relating to the admissibility of evidence in proceedings before Courts of Law.
- 3.2 If the appellant fails to appear or to be represented at the time and place fixed for the hearing, the Sub Committee may (a) adjourn until a later date; or (b) determine the appeal on the basis of the appellant's notice of appeal and any further submissions.
- 3.3 The rights of persons affected at the hearing shall be summarised as follows:-
- To be heard at the hearing;
 - To be represented at the hearing (the representative need not be legally qualified and shall have the same right as the appellant; there shall be no limit to the number of representatives, but the chair shall be entitled to keep the numbers attending within sensible limits, and only one representative shall speak except with the chair's consent);
 - To call people to give evidence as witnesses (the Sub Committee shall have no power to compel attendance); and
 - To question those giving evidence.
- 3.4 The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of natural justice.

- 3.5 The order of procedure at the hearing shall, unless directed otherwise by the chair, be as follows:-
- Opening remarks by the chair, introducing those present, ensuring that the appellant understands the procedure at the hearing;
 - Evidence by the appellant or representative;
 - Questions by the Council's representative;
 - Questions by Sub Committee members;
 - Evidence presented by the Council's representative;
 - Questions by the appellant or representative;
 - Questions by Sub Committee members;
 - Summing up by the appellant;
 - Summing up by the Council's representative; and
 - Withdrawal by appellant or representative and Council representative.
- 3.6 The Sub Committee shall determine the appeal.

4. DECISION OF SUB COMMITTEE

- 4.1 The Sub Committee shall determine the application within 49 days of receipt of the notice of appeal and within seven days of the close of the hearing.
- 4.2 The decision of the Sub Committee shall be by majority; where there is an equality of votes, the chair shall have a second or casting vote.
- 4.3 The decision of the Sub Committee shall be recorded in an anonymised minute of meeting which shall be signed by the chair.
- 4.4 The clerk shall notify the appellant and the Revenue and Benefits Manager of the decision, with the reasons for it. This shall be sent electronically or posted within seven days of the date of the determination of the appeal by the Sub Committee.

5. MISCELLANEOUS POWERS OF THE SUB COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Subject to these provisions, the Sub Committee may regulate its own procedure.
- 5.2 The Sub Committee, if it thinks fit, may extend the time appointed by or under these rules for doing any act, notwithstanding that the time appointed may have expired; and may postpone the date fixed for, or adjourn, any hearing.

6. RETENTION OF PAPERS

- 6.1 Papers relating to an appeal shall be retained for two years, unless there is a continuing need for them, and thereafter shall be destroyed securely in accordance with the Council's retention policy.

7. EXPLANATION

- 7.1 All references to days are to calendar days.
- 7.2 All references to working days are to days on which the Town House is open for business.
- 7.3 All references to the Revenue and Benefits Manager include any person responsible for imposing rates on the taxpayer or such person as that officer shall nominate.
- 7.4 All references to the clerk shall include the person authorised in writing by that officer to undertake the day to day operation of the Sub Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 th December 2014
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Executive
TITLE OF REPORT	Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre
REPORT NUMBER	OCE/14/041
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report provides an explanation for the deferral of the expected report on the proposed Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre (AECC) development to the Council's meeting in March 2015.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council notes this report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This particular report has no specific financial implications, but its subject matter relates to the financial implications of the proposed AECC development.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

As with paragraph 3 above, this particular report has no other specific implications, but its subject matter relates to the implications of the proposed AECC development.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The Council at its meeting of 14th May 2014 agreed to receive a report on the proposed development of AECC. The Council agreed that officers should finalise the financial options to deliver the development at minimum cost to the Council and that such options be reported to Council at its meeting in October 2014.

The expected report was deferred to the Council's December 2014 meeting in order to allow officers more time to ensure that the financing

arrangements and associated commercial sensitivities surrounding the development are fully determined before they are presented to Council.

A draft report on the matter was brought for review to the meeting of the Corporate Management Team at the end of November. At that point, while the business case for the development of the new AECC and the redevelopment of the existing AECC site had been detailed the final report on the due diligence on it undertaken on the Council's behalf by a third-party had not at that point been received.

Given this, and given the fact that the Corporate Management Team will need to make a full assessment of the project's affordability for the Council based on all available information it was felt to be preferable to defer the report for a further cycle to ensure that a clear officer recommendation on the matter can be brought to elected members. On this basis, the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure is liaising with all relevant parties within and outwith the Council in order to bring a final draft of the proposed report to the Corporate Management Team at its meeting on 29th January 2015.

Briefings will be held for elected members during February ahead of the matter being brought to Council at its meeting on 4th March 2015.

6. IMPACT

The proposed AECC development would have a significant impact on the delivery of the Council's *Smarter Aberdeen* programme.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

In deferring the expected report for a cycle in order to ensure a fully-informed recommendation can be made to elected members, officers are seeking to ensure that risks are appropriately managed.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Angela Scott
Chief Executive
chiefexecutive@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522500

Questions to Council

From Councillor Samarai -

- (1) To ask the Chief Executive what the current deficit is for Bon Accord Care?
- (2) To ask the Chief Executive what the projected year end deficit is for Bon Accord Care?
- (3) To ask the Chief Executive why care at Bon Accord Care has moved from A grade at the time of transfer to C grade?
- (4) To ask the Chief Executive if any of the current discussions with Bon Accord Care include changes to staff terms and conditions?

From Councillor Dickson -

- (5) To ask the Chief Executive if the status quo remains what is the projected financial deficit for Bon Accord Care in 2015/16?

The current position with Bon Accord Care is that based on discussions with officers the organisation is expected to break even during the financial year 2014/15 based on the financial uplifts the organisation is entitled to by way of the contractual agreement that is in place with the Council.

The Council, as it does with all the arm length organisations that it operates and funds, continues to work closely with Bon Accord Care to ensure that the services the Council, in essence purchases, are delivered in an effective and efficient manner. The final contractual uplift is currently being finalised.

The funding made available to Bon Accord Care by the Council for 2015/16 will be decided as part of the budget process and will formulate part of the discussion with all the Council's arm's length organisations. A proposal will be placed before the Council at its budget meeting on 5th February 2015 seeking a decision on the services it wishes to purchase and what the cost of these will be.

As the Council has not as yet set its budget for 2015/16 the planned amount has not yet been decided. Officers are in discussion with all arm's length organisations with regard to their funding requirements and the results of these discussions will go through the Council's budget process.

The matters being discussed with the arm's length organisations are commercially sensitive and the likely amount of funding Council funding to the organisations cannot be disclosed at this stage but will be shown as part of the 2015/16 budget. However, the recommendation made by officers to the Council will provide for a final funding position that ensures all its arm's length organisations will achieve at least a break even position.

With regard to care grades, Bon Accord Care reports that grouped registrations of services presented a significant risk to the company and as a result services are now individually registered. Not all services have as yet been inspected during the period since Bon Accord Care went live, but new inspectors and inspection methodologies are impacting on previous gradings.

With regard to staff terms and conditions, Bon Accord Care reports that there are no planned changes.

Angela Scott
Chief Executive

These questions have been placed on the agenda in terms of Standing Order 20(3) as the responses were not received by Councillors Samarai and Dickson in terms of the timescales set out in Standing Order 20(2)(i).

Exempt information as described in paragraph(s) 6, 8 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Exempt information as described in paragraph(s) 9 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Exempt information as described in paragraph(s) 9 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank