

Council Annual Effectiveness Report 2023/2024



Contents

1. Introduction from the Lord Provost	3
2. The Role of the Council.....	4
3. Membership during 2023/2024	4
4. Membership Changes.....	5
5. Member Attendance	5
6. Meeting Content.....	7
7. Reports and Decisions	9
8. Reports with links to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan	10
9. Training and Development	11
10. Code of Conduct Declarations and Transparency Statements.....	11
11. Civic Engagement.....	11
12. Executive Lead - Commentary	12
13. The Year Ahead	12
Appendix 1 – Local Outcome Improvement Plan Stretch Outcomes	14
Appendix 2 - Council Terms of Reference.....	15

1. Introduction from the Lord Provost

- 1.1 I am pleased to present the fifth annual effectiveness report for Full Council. During 2023/24, the Council made a number of significant decisions, for example the progression of the City Centre and Beach Masterplans and in relation to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within some of the city's housing stock. Furthermore, the annual review of the Scheme of Governance has resulted in a number of positive changes in terms of how the organisation conducts its business and makes decisions.
- 1.2 One of my many highlights of the past year was in September, when I hosted a civic reception at the Town House for Community Councillors and the staff who support them. I was honoured to present a number of long service certificates to Community Councillors who have given many years of distinguished service to their communities and the city as a whole. In my speech that evening, I commented that Community Councils are the first pillar of local government, and I hugely appreciated the work they do. On that note, it was very pleasing to see the progress made with the review of the Community Council governance documents which were unanimously approved by Council in April 2024.
- 1.3 It is very encouraging to see that only one exempt/confidential report was considered by Full Council in the past year, and this demonstrates our commitment to conducting as much business in public as possible. Furthermore, there were no late reports which provides a good level of assurance with regard to our governance arrangements.
- 1.4 The number and length of Full Council meetings remains a challenge, however I remain resolute in my view that it is better to adjourn lengthier meetings and re-convene on a second day, rather than continuing late into the night, without sufficient breaks and where due diligence on very important matters could be sacrificed.
- 1.5 As we approach the end of the year and the start of the festive season, I wish you all the best and good wishes for 2025.



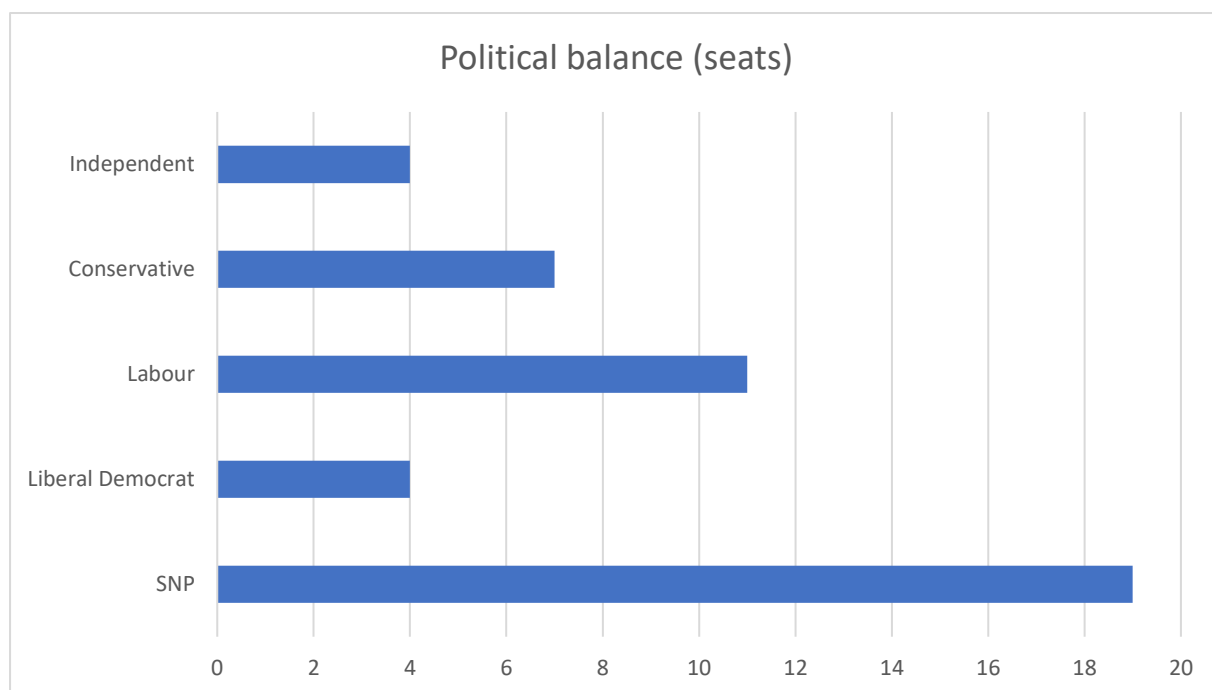
Councillor David Cameron
Lord Provost

2. The Role of the Council

- 2.1 The Council is the overall decision-making body of the organisation. It is responsible for agreeing the Council’s budget and setting Council Tax. Council delegates the discharge of its functions to various committees and joint committees, as well as officers under the terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. However, any delegation to a committee or an officer does not prevent the Council from determining the matter, or exercising the power so delegated.
- 2.2 The Terms of Reference for Council, as approved by Council in August 2024, are appended to the report.

3. Membership of the Council during 2023/2024

- 3.1 The Council has 45 Elected Members, and the composition during the reporting period (15 October 2023 to 15 October 2024) was:-



4. Membership Changes

4.1 There were no membership changes during 2023/24.

5. Member Attendance

Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances
Lord Provost	18	18
Depute Provost	18	18
Councillor Al-Samarai	18	16
Councillor Ali	18	18
Councillor Allard	18	18
Councillor Alphonse	18	18
Councillor Blake	18	15
Councillor Bonsell	18	18
Councillor Boulton	18	16
Councillor Bouse	18	17
Councillor Brooks	18	18
Councillor Hazel Cameron	18	18
Councillor Clark	18	18
Councillor Cooke	18	18
Councillor Copland	18	18
Councillor Cormie	18	18
Councillor Crockett	18	18
Councillor Cross	18	10
Councillor Davidson	18	18
Councillor Fairfull	18	10
Councillor Farquhar	18	18
Councillor Graham	18	18
Councillor Grant	18	18
Councillor Greig	18	18
Councillor Henrickson	18	18
Councillor Houghton	18	7
Councillor Hutchison	18	18
Councillor Kusznir	18	14
Councillor Lawrence	18	18
Councillor Macdonald	18	18
Councillor MacGregor	18	18
Councillor McLellan	18	18
Councillor McLeod	18	16
Councillor McRae	18	14
Councillor Malik	18	16

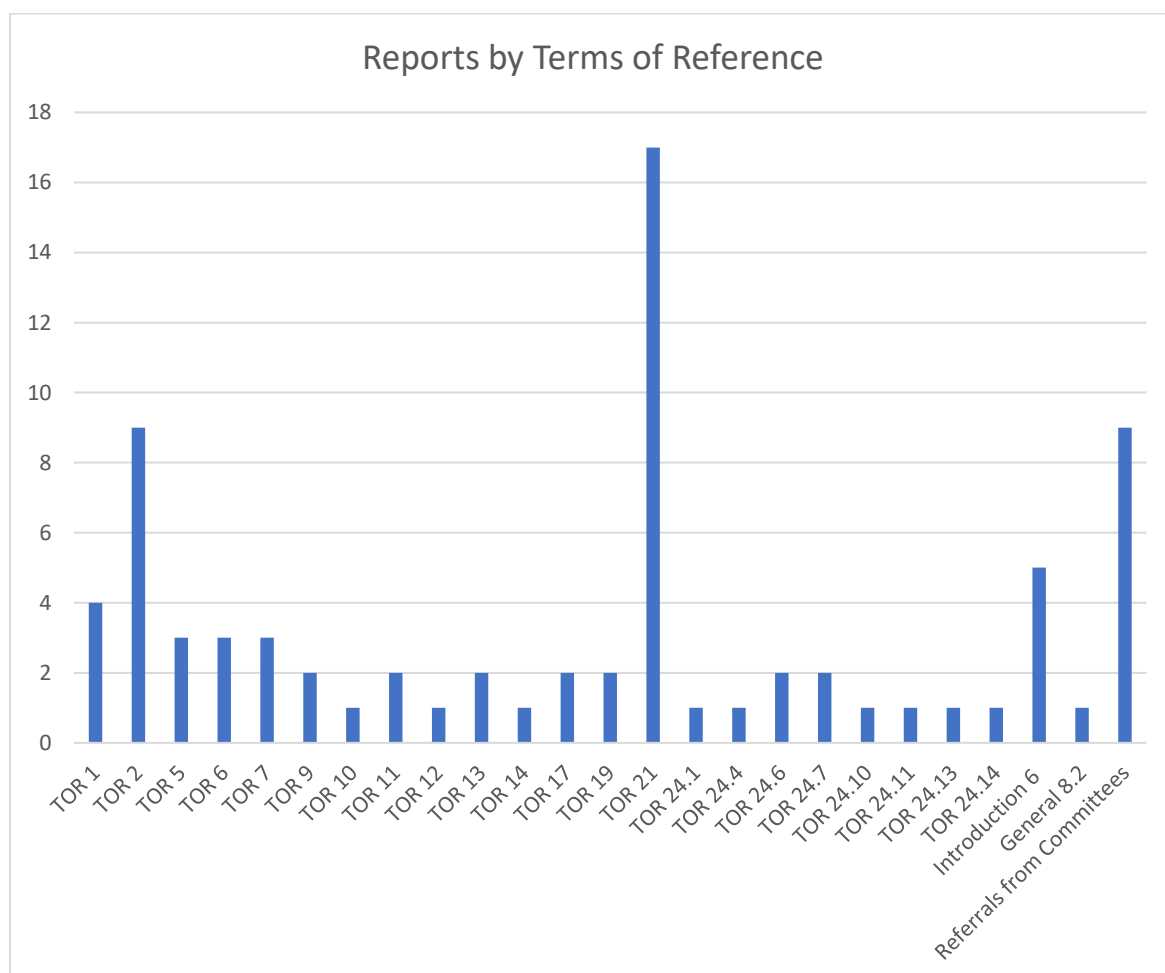
Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances
Councillor Massey	18	14
Councillor Mennie	18	18
Councillor Nicoll	18	17
Councillor Radley	18	18
Councillor Mrs Stewart	18	10
Councillor van Sweeden	18	18
Councillor Thomson	18	17
Councillor Tissera	18	14
Councillor Watson	18	17
Councillor Yuill	18	18

6. Meeting Content

6.1 During the 2023/2024 reporting period (15 October 2023 to 15 October 2024), the Council had 18 meetings and considered a total of 64 reports. This is a higher number of meetings than previous years, and an increase of 4 meetings from last year. Of the 18 meetings, 7 were scheduled meetings, 2 were special meetings for Community Council Governance, 4 were re-convened meetings and 5 were requisitioned meetings under Standing Order 8.2.

6.2 Terms of Reference

6.2.1 The following chart details how reports aligned to the Terms of Reference for Council. A small number of reports (5) did not fall within specific Terms of Reference and were reported to Council in accordance with Introduction 6 within the Terms of Reference document - "in accordance with Standing Order 47.7, Council can determine any matter which would otherwise fall to be determined by a committee or sub-committee". It should be noted that the combined total is more than 64 as some reports fell within more than one of the Terms of Reference.



- 6.2.2 During the course of 2023/2024 the Council received reports under 22 of the 38 sections of the Terms of Reference, with the highest number (17) of reports falling under Terms of Reference 21 – “to consider any matter which the Council has previously considered and agreed to receive a further report on”. This is predominantly due to reports relating to the City Centre and Beach Masterplans and Reinforced Autoclaved Aeriated Concrete (RAAC) having been considered, which were previously considered at the Finance and Resources Committee or the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.
- 6.2.3 Of the sections of the Terms of Reference where there were no reports, no reports were required in 2023/2024 - for example no members required to be elected to the Licensing Board and no reports needed to be considered relating to the Standards Commission for Scotland with regard to the overseeing of members’ standards of conduct. However, those Terms of Reference need to remain in place as reports will fall under those Terms of Reference in the future.
- 6.2.4 As the committee structure was reviewed in late 2022, few changes to the Terms of Reference were made following the Scheme of Governance reviews in 2023 and 2024. Any changes that were made, were generally in relation to committees to provide clarity where required, to ensure consistency between committees and to reflect the new management structure. The Terms of Reference will continue to be monitored throughout the year, in preparation for the 2025 Scheme of Governance review.

7. Reports and Decisions

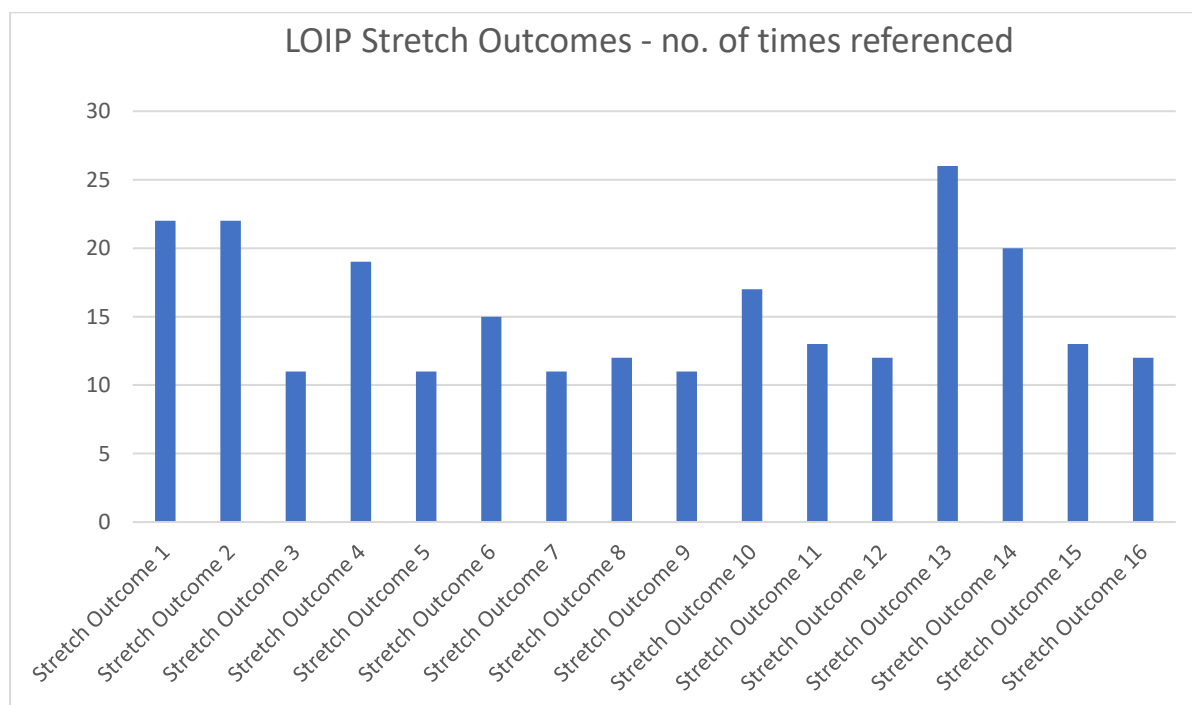
7.1 The following information relates to the reports and Notices of Motion presented to Council throughout the reporting period, as well as the use of Standing Orders and engagement with members of the public.

	Total	Total Percentage of Reports
Confidential Reports	1	2%
Exempt Reports	1	2%
Number of reports where the Council amended officer recommendations	11	17%
Number of reports approved unanimously	22	34%
Number of reports or service updates requested during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in business planner	12	
Number of reports deferred or referred to a committee	7	11%
Number of times the Lord Provost has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour in terms of the Member Officer Relations Protocol/Councillors' Code of Conduct	9 (an increase of 1 from the previous year)	
Late reports received (i.e. reports not available for inspection at least 3 clear days before the meeting)	0	0%
Number of referrals to Council under SO 34.1	7 (an increase of 2 from the previous year)	

Notices of Motion, Suspension of Standing Orders, Interface with the Public	
Number of Notices of Motion to Council	17
Number of times Standing Orders suspended	6
Specific Standing Orders suspended	29.2 (submission of budgets) 40.2 - 4 times (length of meeting) 42.1 ("six month rule")
Number of deputations heard	12
Number of petitions considered	1

8. Reports with links to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan

8.1 The following table details of the 64 reports, how each report linked to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). The LOIP Stretch Outcomes are appended to this report for reference at Appendix 1. As can be seen from the chart below, the most common Stretch Outcomes referred to were Stretch Outcomes 1 (20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/or not be able to heat their home by 2026), 2 (74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026), 13 (Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate) and 14 (increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking; 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026).



9. Training and Development

- 9.1 Committee specific training opportunities for Members during the reporting period are covered within the committee annual effectiveness reports. Further development opportunities will be considered for next year based on committee business throughout the year, Executive Lead proposals and Member feedback on what may be required to assist them in performing their roles.

10. Code of Conduct Declarations and Transparency Statements

- 10.1 14 declarations of interest and 113 transparency statements were made by Members during the reporting period. Information in respect of declarations of interest and transparency statements is measured to evidence awareness of the requirements to adhere to the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the responsibility to ensure fair decision-making.

11. Civic Engagement

- 11.1 Civic leadership and engagement are at the heart of the Council's Operating Model. The values and principles of civic leadership and engagement are being driven through the Council's transformation programme.
- 11.2 There have been good examples of civic engagement in the course of business submitted to Council in 2023/24, for example in relation to Community Council Governance, the City Centre and Beach Masterplans, the Council's budget consultation and in relation to the review of polling districts and polling places. A number of different consultation events took place with good levels of attendance and high levels of engagement.
- 11.3 Further civic engagement activities are set out in each committee's individual annual effectiveness report.

12. Executive Lead - Commentary

- 12.1 This has been an extremely busy year for Council which has made key decisions on city centre masterplanning projects, transformation activity and the very complex response to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in some of the city's housing stock. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy was the subject of two comprehensive reports, updating members on the serious financial challenges faced within the city and on the public's response to two rounds of engagement on potential budget options. It has also responded to an increased number of referrals from committees. The volume of business under consideration has resulted in some scheduled Council meetings being adjourned in order that business can be concluded on a second day.
- 12.2 Notwithstanding, Council has achieved some significant milestones by setting a balanced budget in March 2024, approving the revised Council Delivery Plan and Community Planning Aberdeen Outcome Improvement Report and Locality Reports, and the Scheme of Governance following its annual review by the cross-party Governance Reference Group. In addition, the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils was unanimously approved, including some boundary changes, in order to support our growing number of operational community councils in the city.

13. The Year Ahead

- 13.1 In December 2024, the Council will consider a report on Phase 2 of the Budget consultation which follows on from the Council decision of 3 July 2024 to update the Budget Protocol as part of the Scheme of Governance. This helps to ensure that elected members understand the impact, under the Public Sector Equality Duty, of the budget agreed by Council in March 2025.
- 13.2 During the 2024/25 annual reporting period, officers will progress the transformation programme to allow the Council to set a budget in a manner that strategically allocates resources against the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The Council's outcome focused approach recognises the influence which local authority services can have on the health and wellbeing of citizens. These wider determinants of health, specifically how they might prevent poor outcomes, will be reflected in the budget report and associated delivery plan due to come before Full Council in March 2025. A development programme to increase awareness and understanding of the wider determinants of health and support the use of relevant evidence in decision making will be available for elected members and staff during 2024/25.

14. Combined Committee Data

- 14.1 During the reporting period, 366 reports were considered by the 10 committees which are the subject of annual effectiveness reports. This does not include reports relating to planning or licensing applications which are subject to a separate reporting process, however these are covered in the annual reports for the Planning Development Management and Licensing Committees.

	Total	Total Percentage of Reports
Confidential Reports	0	0%
Exempt Reports	24	6.5%
Number of reports where the Committee amended officer recommendations	11	3%
Number of reports approved unanimously	304	83%
Number of reports or service updates requested during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in business planner	16	
Number of reports delayed for further information	0	0%
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour in terms of the Code of Conduct	0	
Late reports received (i.e. reports not available for inspection at least 3 clear days before the meeting)	2	0.5%
Number of referrals to Council under SO 34.1	7	

Number of Notices of Motion	12
Number of times Standing Orders suspended	9
Number of deputations heard	16
Number of petitions considered	0

Appendix 1 - Local Outcome Improvement Plan Stretch Outcomes

Economy	
1.	20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/ or not be able to heat their home by 2026
2.	74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026
People (Children & Young People)	
3.	95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026
4.	90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026
5.	By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026
6.	95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026
7.	83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026
8.	100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination
People (Adults)	
9.	10% fewer adults (over 18) charged with more than one offence by 2026
10.	Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026
11.	Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026
12.	Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.
Place	
13.	Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate
14.	Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking; 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026
15.	26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026
Community Empowerment	
16.	100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026

Appendix 2 - Council Terms of Reference

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

The Council reserves the following functions:

1. The setting of council tax in accordance with s93(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 or the setting of a reduced amount of council tax under s94 of that Act or paragraph 3 of Schedule 7 to that Act.
2. The setting of a balanced budget annually, including the setting of fees and charges, including the approval of commissioning intentions and service standards.
3. The approval of the capital programme.
4. The borrowing of money as provided for in s56(6)(d) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.
5. The approval of any annual investment strategy or annual investment report required by any consent issued by Scottish Ministers under s40 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
6. The approval of the Council's Treasury Management Policy and Strategy.
7. The appointment of committees, including external members, and the number and allocation of committee places, the appointment and removal from office of the Lord Provost, Depute Provost, Leader or Co Leaders and/or Depute Leader and a convener for each committee and a vice convener as appropriate and the approval of senior councillor allowances. However the appointment of external *advisers* to committees is not reserved to the Council and may be undertaken by the relevant committees themselves.
8. The election of members to the Licensing Board.
9. The review of polling districts and polling places.
10. Subject to the Powers Delegated to Officers, the administration of trusts in respect of which the Council is sole Trustee.
11. The approval of the Local Development Plan.
12. The approval of an Administration's political priorities.
13. The consideration of the Council's Delivery Plan.
14. The consideration of its annual report of its effectiveness.
15. The consideration, where required, of reports by both the Standards Commission for Scotland and the Financial Conduct Authority, and the overseeing of members' standards of conduct.
16. The establishment of the Appointment Panel in accordance with the Standing Orders for Council, Committees and Sub Committees.
17. The approval of the Council's Scheme of Governance.
18. The approval of the Council/Committee Diary.
19. The approval of Schemes for the Establishment for Community Councils and the review or amendment of such Schemes in terms of sections 52 and 53 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973; and the revocation of such Schemes (or amended Schemes) and the making of new Schemes in accordance with section 22 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994.
20. The establishment of Working Groups.

- 21. To consider any matter which the Council has previously considered and agreed to receive a report (or further report) on.
- 22. To consider Monitoring Officer reports under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 23. Making schemes for the reorganisation of educational endowments under section 112(2) or 112(3) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

24. ANALYSIS

- 24.1 to receive a bi-annual Population Needs Assessment to understand the needs which public bodies must address;
- 24.2 to receive, as appropriate, an in-depth analysis of key groups, priorities and challenges across public services to identify and action potential efficiencies and improvements to help ensure that the needs of customers and citizens are met and commissioning intentions are delivered; and
- 24.3 to receive, as appropriate, sufficiency and market analyses to understand existing and potential provider strengths and weaknesses, and identify and take action in respect of any opportunities for improvement or change in providers.

PLANNING

- 24.4 to endorse the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) including recommending any changes which may be required; and
- 24.5 to approve annual procurement workplans, reflecting the LOIP, the Population Needs Assessment, the Council's commissioning intentions, the Council's service standards, the views of customers and citizens, and the best evidence of effective interventions to ensure a preventative focus on demand reduction.

DOING

- 24.6 to establish Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) where it is determined that services should not be provided in-house;
- 24.7 to decommission services, including ALEOs, that do not meet the Council's commissioning intentions and outcomes;
- 24.8 to take such action to ensure that appropriate supply management and capacity building (market facilitation) is in place to ensure a good mix of resilient service providers, that offer customers an element of choice in how their needs are met; and
- 24.9 to approve the Strategy Framework to facilitate the delivery of agreed outcomes.

REVIEWING

- 24.10 to approve amendments to the Council's Performance Management Framework (PMF);
- 24.11 to receive annual reports on the LOIP and Locality Partnership Plans;
- 24.12 to consider and monitor performance associated with the Council's agreed commissioning intentions and ultimate contribution to the LOIP outcomes;
- 24.13 to receive annual reports from each of the Council's ALEOs to enable scrutiny of performance;

24.14 to receive an annual procurement performance report to enable scrutiny of performance; and

24.15 to receive reports on any changes in legislative requirements, policy and population needs which may facilitate opportunities to work differently to improve outcomes or may require revisions to existing commissioning intentions and outcomes.

For the avoidance of any doubt, this reservation 24 does not affect the Terms of Reference of the Pensions Committee, Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee or Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board, and it does not prevent the exercise of delegated powers where authority is delegated to officers under the Powers Delegated to Officers, Procurement Regulations or otherwise.

EXECUTIVE LEAD: CHIEF EXECUTIVE