

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	5 March 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Council Delivery Plan 2025/26
REPORT NUMBER	COM/25/038
DIRECTOR	Andy McDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie
REPORT AUTHORS	Martin Murchie (Chief Officer – Data Insights, HDRC)
TERMS OF REFERENCE	13

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report brings before the Council the Council Delivery Plan for 2025/26.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:-

- 2.1 Notes the content of the Council Delivery Plan 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 1;
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Executive to realign any of the delivery commitments set out in the Plan that may be required, as a result of budget decisions made at the Council budget meeting, to meet Council's instructions;
- 2.3 Instruct all Chief Officers to report performance improvement priorities for 2025/26 and progress towards improvement through the arrangements set out within the Council's Performance Management Framework; and
- 2.4 Instruct the Chief Officer Data Insights (HDRCA) to liaise with University College London's Institute of Health Equity, led by Professor Sir Michael Marmot, and Public Health Scotland, who are in partnership with the Council, through the "Collaboration for Health Equity in Scotland", on further embedding the wider determinants of health and the application of preventative planning as outlined in the Delivery Plan.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Our Commissioning Led Approach to Financial Planning 2025/26

- 3.1 The Council's approved strategic commissioning approach provides the basis for the development of the Council's planning and budgeting. Strategic commissioning includes assessing and forecasting needs; linking investment to agreed outcomes; considering options; planning the nature, range and quality of future services; and putting these services in place. For Aberdeen City Council, this is reflected in the key elements of a commissioning led approach to planning and budgeting, shown in the figure below.



- 3.2 Adopting this commissioning led cycle ensures that:

- agreed outcomes, and the strategies for delivering those outcomes, are addressing the needs of the city; (Population Needs Assessment **(PNA)**, Local Outcome Improvement Plan **(LOIP)**, Strategy Suite)
- annual planning and commissioning intentions focus on implementing our strategic priorities; **(Council Delivery Plan, Commissioning Intentions)**
- the agreed levels of service to be delivered are affordable and reflect the demand for those services; **(Service Standards)**
- a balanced budget is set which aligns to those commissioning intentions and service standards **(Budget)**

- 3.3 The drivers of demand for the Council and its responsibilities to prevent harm are very broad, and incorporate support for and protection of children, young people and adults; the maintenance and protection of the environment; providing the tools and an environment which support the council's workforce; and stewardship of the council's and the city's assets. Further development of

the commissioning cycle has formalised and implemented a tiered analysis of resource allocation, providing the analysis to support a deliberate shift to prevention of demand and harm as an integral part of our commissioning and budgeting cycle.

3.4 The Council Delivery Plan sets out the Council's contribution to:

- Aberdeen City's Local Outcome Improvement Plan
- The Council's Policy Statement
- National, Regional and City Strategy
- New & emerging legislative duties

Each of these establishes a range of commitments and requirements and the Council Delivery Plan identifies how the Council will meet these for 2025/26.

The Council Delivery Plan

3.5 The Delivery Plan is presented at the Council Budget meeting to take account of both agreed strategy and the funding available in planning work for the year ahead. Delivery of the Plan and performance against service standards are then monitored and reported throughout the year to enable the Council's committees to scrutinise performance on a regular basis. Officer groups, such as the Performance Board, lead on the development of service standards and meet on a monthly basis to identify any emerging trends that might indicate performance issues so that proactive action can be taken.

3.6 The Council approved, for consultation, a revised organisational structure at its meeting in February 2024, and this placed the determinants of population health at the core of the structure. The Delivery Plan reflects this revised organisational structure and the priorities identified are designed to positively impact those determinants. The Plan describes a series of drivers and tools which have been applied to shape the priorities. These include:

- i. the draft refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan priorities;
- ii. the priorities contained within the Council's policy statement;
- iii. the social determinants of health
- iv. the 3-tier model of prevention and early intervention to categorise demand and spend across all Council services;
- v. a focus on targeted support to communities and localities most in need;
- vi. an assessment of internal and external resources available and required to deliver commitments.

3.7 Prioritising scarce financial resources inevitably means that some of the activity reduces or stops in order to free up capacity to drive other targeted support. In acknowledging this, the Accounts Commission in their "Local government in Scotland: Financial bulletin 2023/24", published in January 2025 state:

“Scotland’s councils face a challenging future, with significant financial risks and uncertainties. This has been compounded by pressures out with their control, including ever-increasing demand on services and inflation. An expected increase in funding for the year ahead doesn’t cancel out the urgent need for transformation, at a pace and depth we’ve not yet seen.”

Jo Armstrong, chair of the Accounts Commission, January 2025

- 3.8 The commissioning intentions included within the Plan represent significant commitments to be taken forward over 2025/26. These are presented with a high-level assessment of the resources required and available to deliver them. They cannot, however, describe all of the activity which the Council will deliver, rather they show a clear list of priorities.
- 3.9 The Performance Board has co-ordinated a review of service standards for 2025/26, focusing on their deliverability within available resources, as well as the extent to which they enable all stakeholders to effectively understand and improve performance. Standards are presented within the Plan with:
- a note which identifies if the standard has a legislative or other prescribed basis (e.g. national policy). This indicates the level of discretion available to amend or stop any standard;
 - a classification of prevention, early intervention or harm, indicating how services help the Council take a more preventative approach and support longer term decision making;
 - a link to nationally or locally agreed standards / specifications where these are referenced.
- 3.10 Following consideration by the Council, the Delivery Plan and the revised Service Standards will be publicly communicated to all stakeholders.
- 3.11 The Delivery Plan brings together commitments from a range of sources, including legislation, Governments’ policy programmes, Council Policy, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), Council Strategy and the Council’s Budget process. Stakeholder engagement, therefore, is undertaken as appropriate through many complimentary processes.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council Delivery Plan is presented to the Council with the General Fund and Common Good 2025/26 budgets. The Housing budget for 2025/26 was approved by Council in December 2024. The commitments laid out in the Plan will be subject to the budget decisions made by Council on 5 March 2025.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council Delivery Plan details new and emerging statutory duties that may impact the Council during 2025/26. In preparation for the imminent Consumer

Duty, regard has been given to the impact of the Delivery Plan on consumers in Scotland.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The alignment of the Council Delivery Plan with legislative, strategic and operational imperatives will have significant positive impact through the co-ordinated delivery of these.

7. RISK

- 7.1 The Council approved a Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) on 9 December 2020. The RAS sets out how the Council will balance its risks and opportunities in pursuit of delivering the outcomes set out within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and associated strategies. The content of the plan and the risk assessment below is considered to be consistent with the RAS.

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic	None. This report presents the plan for the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives and outcomes	L	None required
Compliance	None. This Council Delivery Plan includes details of new and emerging legislative duties in order to ensure that statutory responsibilities are met	L	None required
Operational	None. The Council Delivery Plan is developed through the Council's commissioning approach which, through service design, aligns resources and processes with the strategic priorities and	L	None required

	outcomes of the Council.		
Financial	Budget decisions made by Council on 5 th March may impact the commitments set out in the Delivery Plan	M	Recommended instruction to the Chief Executive to amend the Council Delivery Plan commitments to align with decisions of the Council.
	The financial challenges facing local government are significant. The Delivery Plan aims to identify what services, actions and standards are achievable within available resources. The financial risks associated with the individual delivery commitments contained within the plan have been identified and are managed within delivery programme risk registers and performance measures.	M	Regular review of programme risk registers and performance indicator data
Reputational	Reputational damage from risks identified in all areas resulting in delivery commitments not being achieved.	M	As set out within mitigation throughout the Plan including performance management arrangements
Environment / Climate	Non-compliance with environmental legislation and failure to achieve or deliver environmental targets and commitments contained within the plan.	M	Monitoring of environmental risks captured within delivery programmes Monitoring of environmental performance monitoring data

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	This report presents the Council Delivery Plan for the Council's consideration.
Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	The alignment of the Council Delivery Plan to Aberdeen City's Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan will have significant positive effects for the delivery of the Partnership's vision. The Council Delivery Plan has been aligned to support the delivery of all stretch outcomes in the LOIP.
Prosperous People	
Prosperous Place	
Regional and City Strategies	The Council Delivery Plan is informed by Regional and City strategies and sets the Council's commitments in the context of those strategies.
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The Council Delivery Plan identifies new and proposed legislation and sets the Council's commitments in that context.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	An integrated impact assessment has been completed. Significant changes highlighted in the Plan describe existing strategy and policy of the Council which are subject to specific and individual integrated impact assessments.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Programmes of work within the Council Delivery Plan which require DPIAs have, or will, be completed as necessary.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [Council Delivery Plan 2024/25](#) – COM/24/060
- Partnership Agreement [“Working in Partnership for Aberdeen”](#) 18th May 2022
- [Council Target Operating Model](#) - OCE/17/024
- [Council Target Operating Model](#) (TOM) 1.2 - CUS/22/171

- [Council Target Operating Model](#) - CUS/24/043
- [Commissioning Approach](#) - COM 18/292 & COM 19/329
- [Refreshed Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26](#) - CUS/21/226
- [Strategy Framework](#) – GOV/19/413
- Guiding Principles – RES/19/12
- [Performance Management Framework](#) – CUS/24/232
- [Population Needs Assessment](#) – COM/23/312

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Council Delivery Plan 2025/26

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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