

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

**STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN  
REFRESH 2016-2017**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council's Strategic Business Plan has been in place since 2013. When the Plan was launched it was presented as a medium term view of the Council's ambition and commitments. In July 2015, Audit Scotland published an 'Audit of Best Value and Community Planning' for Aberdeen City Council. The audit recognised that good progress had been made since 2009 in financial planning and management, but that the council needed to:-
- encourage and consolidate elected members' ownership of the Council's vision;
  - more clearly show how its vision was translated into objectives and targets, linked to service plans;
  - ensure clear links between performance information and the Council's strategic plans.
- 1.2 As a result, the Strategic Business Plan has now been refreshed. The refreshed Plan reviews progress in delivering the Council's vision, 'Aberdeen – The Smarter City', and sets out the Council's priorities for the 2016/17. It explains how the Council is transforming the way it does business and delivers services and it shows, through clear and measurable objectives and targets, how we intend to deliver these priorities during 2016/17 and beyond. By refreshing the Plan we are ensuring that it is up to date and continues to be relevant to the challenges and opportunities we currently face as a City.
- 1.3 We have made good progress in meeting our commitments set out in the Strategic Business Plan 2013-2018. The Council remains ambitious for Aberdeen and our strategic plan has a renewed focus on economic growth, through the recent approval of a new regional economic strategy, and an enhanced quality of life for our citizens.
- 1.4 A council budget has been prepared that aligns with the refreshed Strategic Business Plan. The budgetary context for all local councils is one of continuing pressure on public finances. This means that plans contained within this document may experience constraints on service delivery as it may not be possible to deliver to the same timescale and extent. At the same time, public expectations remain high and additional duties for local councils also create new cost and resource pressures.
- 1.5 To meet these challenges, this Strategic Business Plan is supported by Directorate and Service Business Plans which provide detail of how the council will make the best use of available resources, bringing modern and innovative change, to ensure that we can continue to effectively deliver our vision.

1.6 Throughout the period covered by this plan, we will maintain transparent analysis and reporting of our performance in delivering on the commitments we have made. By doing this we will show consistent leadership in focusing on our priorities; increase our accountability; meet our Best Value duties; and deliver improved services to our customers and communities.

## 2. PROGRESS TO DATE AGAINST STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN 5 YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

2.1. The Strategic Business Plan in 2013, identified key goals that would provide the direction and key themes for the delivery of our vision: “Aberdeen – The Smarter City” which:-

- Develops an economy based on knowledge and innovation;
- Encourages more efficient use of greener resource which generates a competitive economy;
- Uses technology and data to enable informed decisions to be taken;
- Enables citizens to interact in a city where there is a sense of place; and
- Encourages a form of governance which engages its citizens.

2.2 Six key priorities work streams were then identified to underpin the delivery of the vision:-

Priorities	What it means
Smarter Governance – Participation	Acknowledging the role that citizens can play in the evolution of the city.
Smarter Living – Quality of Life	Challenging inequality and positively promoting wellbeing building on cultural and physical activity. Also fulfilling the Council’s statutory duties to protect children, vulnerable adults and consumers.
Smarter People – Social and Human Capital	Focusing on education including lifelong learning and nurturing a city of learning with a city-wide workforce which can grow and diversify the economy.
Smarter Environment – Natural Resources	Sustaining the environment by maximising the use of low-carbon technology in our infrastructure and housing. Managing our waste and promoting our streetscape and green space.
Smarter Economy – Competitiveness	Recognising the importance of sustaining a competitive economy with clear financial parameters which attracts people to invest, live, work and export from.
Smarter Mobility – Transport and ICT	Promoting the transport links to and from the city which are sustainable. Maximising digital connectivity for the benefit of all people and the development of business in the city.

Significant progress has been made in a number of areas of the strategic plan which are set out in the following tables:

## Strategic Priority: Smarter Living – Quality of Life

Ref	Goal	Outcomes to date
1a	We will promote and improve opportunities for physical activity and sport to enable Aberdeen's citizens to lead more active, healthier lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were half a million more attendances at indoor sports and leisure facilities and pools in 2014/15 than 2010/11;</li> <li>• New 3G pitch at Northfield and commitment to similar facility at Dyce.</li> </ul>
1b	We aspire to be recognized as a City of Culture, a place of excellence for culture and arts by promoting Aberdeen as a cultural centre hosting high quality and diverse cultural events for the whole community and beyond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant increases in visits to and usage of cultural venues - 3.4M visits in 2014/15;</li> <li>• The Council continues to fund and support a range of festivals; organisations and events across a broad range of cultural activities boosted by an additional £3.3M funding over 5 year, following the unsuccessful bid for City of Culture.</li> </ul>
1c	We will improve access to and increase participation in arts and culture by providing opportunities for citizens and visitors to experience a broad range of high quality arts and cultural activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recorded participation in cultural learning activity rose by 65% in 2014/15;</li> <li>• Highlights of the arts and cultural programme include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Big Noise Torry project launched in partnership with Sistema;</li> <li>- Spectra, the international festival of light;</li> <li>- 17: The Creative Hub at Belmont Street;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• £17m direct investment in venues (Music Hall; Art Gallery; Museums Collection) with further investment committed from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties</li> </ul>
1d	We will provide quality services to our council tenants to ensure that they have a dry, warm home in a safe and enjoyable environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Household Quality Standard achieved for 90% of Council homes;</li> <li>• £39.3M investment in Council's housing stock in 2014/15</li> </ul>
1e	We will meet national legislative targets on homelessness and minimise the impact of welfare reform using early intervention to help people sustain their tenancies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Housing Access Service launched in 2014;</li> <li>• 100% recent performance in timely assessment of cases of homelessness. 47% improvement from 2014/15;</li> <li>• A 14% improved in helping households secure and sustain permanent accommodation since 2013/14.</li> </ul>
1f	We will improve access to affordable housing in both the social rented and private sectors, by supporting first time buyers, regenerating areas within the city and by working with developers to maximise the effective use of planning gain contributions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint venture agreed to deliver 2,030 affordable homes by May 2017 and 2,430 by 2019;</li> <li>• 179 units for social rent being developed at Smithfield Primary School and Manor Walk sites.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Smarter Governance – Participation

Ref	Goal	Progress made/Outcomes
2a & 2b	<p>We will seek to develop a sense of community in Aberdeen based on principles of fairness, reciprocity and responsibility.</p> <p>We will encourage citizens to participate in the development, design and decision making of services to promote civic pride, active citizenship and resilience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events were held for Torry; Tillydrone; and Middlefield, helping the community to be active partners in developing and implementing plans for these neighbourhood;</li> <li>• A participatory budgeting approach was taken for youth and children’s services in regeneration areas, building on the Council’s Fairer Aberdeen Fund;</li> <li>• Engagement and consultation has been ongoing across services and a including major engagement for the City Centre Masterplan;</li> <li>• Scottish Household Survey shows 72% of citizens feel part of a community. Up 6% from 2012/13.</li> </ul>
2c	<p>We will seek to reduce the levels of inequality in the city and plan with key partners to try and ensure that welfare reform does not increase the inequality gap.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A major programme of welfare reform mitigation was established and continues to be delivered. To date 5,500 people have been given support, including:-               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct financial awards;</li> <li>- Employment services;</li> <li>- Debt and budgeting advice;</li> <li>- Mental health support;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Council committed to be a Living Wage employer.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Smarter People – Social and Human Capital

Ref	Goal	Progress made/Outcomes
3a	<p>We will provide a high quality education service within our schools and communities which will improve attainment and life chances of our children and young people to achieve their full potential in education, employment or training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major delivery and commitment to improving the school estate:-               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- new Brimmond School; and commitment to</li> <li>- new Additional Support Needs school;</li> <li>- South of the City Academy;</li> <li>- new Milltimber School;</li> <li>- Greenbrae Primary extension;</li> <li>- Stoneywood Primary.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3b, 3c & 3d	<p>We will provide opportunities for lifelong learning which will develop knowledge, skills and attributes of our citizens to enable them to meet the changing demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century</p> <p>We will create a city of learning which will empower individuals to fulfil their potential and contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of our communities</p> <p>We will aim to have a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the city / region economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council, with its partners, launched Aberdeen Guarantees, giving a commitment to providing all young people between 14-25 year olds with opportunities to participate in learning, training and work;</li> <li>• Expanded Council programme of apprenticeships and placements to support young people into employment.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Smarter Environment – Natural Resources

Ref	Goal	Progress made/Outcomes
4a	We will design and construct all new infrastructure to be energy efficient by maximising the use of low carbon technology and materials. We will use recycled materials where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Carbon Management Plan on track to meet its target of a 23% reduction in carbon emissions by 2015;</li> <li>• Sustainable Building Standards implemented for Council controlled buildings and developments.</li> </ul>
4b	We will increase energy efficiency and introduce carbon reduction measures in our processes and our housing and non-housing assets to reduce our carbon footprint, save money and to bring people out of fuel poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of the Council's housing stock is now classified as energy efficient;</li> <li>• Last year 378 council properties benefitted from external wall insulation, of these, 138 connected to a District Heating Combined Heat &amp; Power (CHP) and a further 144 properties connected to the Combined Heat &amp; Power (CHP) network. A further 1249 properties benefitted from a gas central heating upgrade.</li> </ul>
4c	We will manage waste effectively and in line with UK and European legislative requirements by maximizing recycling and reducing waste to landfill, thereby reducing our costs and carbon footprint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced food waste collection to all households in Aberdeen and recycling collection to all multi-occupancy households;</li> <li>• Waste recycling is at its highest ever and major investment and partnership working will see the Council on track for zero landfill.</li> </ul>
4d	We will provide a clean, safe and attractive streetscape and promote bio-diversity and nature conservation. We will encourage wider access to green space in our streets, parks and countryside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Community Safety Hub is well established and a reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime has been seen;</li> <li>• Purple Flag accreditation has been achieved for the City centre night time experience;</li> <li>• There has been prize winning recognition of gardens and parks;</li> <li>• A rolling programme of refurbishment for the entire City's play parks is underway.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Smarter Economy – Competitiveness

Ref	Goal	Progress made/Outcomes
5a	We will work with partners to promote the city as a place to invest, live, work and export from.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Economic Strategy approved;</li> <li>• City Region Deal under negotiation;</li> <li>• Oil and Gas Summit hosted in 2015;</li> <li>• Business Gateway helped 1,080 businesses to start trading, an 8% increase on the previous year.</li> </ul>
5b	We will aim to have a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the city / region economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoted the city on a national and international level to attract appropriately skilled personnel to address local skill shortages;</li> <li>• Developed Local Supplier Procurement programme to develop and grow business opportunities in the north east;</li> <li>• Worked with partners to develop, launch and continuation of Aberdeen Guarantees.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority: Smarter Mobility – Transport and ICT

Ref	Goal	Progress made/Outcomes
6a	We will maximise digital connectivity to ensure equal opportunity of access to services for all people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31 council owned public buildings now have free public Wi-Fi access</li> <li>• Commitment has been made for a northern regeneration digital network;</li> <li>• Use of the Council's Library Learning Centres and Learning Access continues to increase.</li> </ul>
6b	We will maximise digital connectivity to promote and develop business growth in the city / region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has administered the Connection Vouchers Scheme which supports faster and better broadband for businesses, with c £100k paid;</li> <li>• Innovation hubs have been launched, based at the two universities. The focus on:-               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- accelerating the delivery of products, services and businesses;</li> <li>- supporting digital technology in existing business and attracting entrepreneurs from a worldwide network to develop their projects in Aberdeen.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6c	We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major roads infrastructure improvements are under construction:-               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route;</li> <li>- the Third Don Crossing;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other major projects include:-               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Berryden Corridor;</li> <li>- South College Street;</li> <li>- Access from the South;</li> <li>- Cross City Transport Connections.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Work with partners has contributed to commencement of the improvement of the rail link between the City and Inverness and the expansion of air destinations.</li> </ul>
6d	To provide and promote a sustainable transport system which reduces our carbon emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1000 space Park and Choose facility at Dyce is under construction;</li> <li>• improved cycle links across the City have been introduced;</li> <li>• enforcement of bus lanes has generated a surplus which has been invested in improved cycle measures; core paths; bus shelters; etc.</li> </ul>

### 3. Key changes that impact on this plan

A thorough understanding of the context within which we operate reflects a number of significant socio-economic and political changes as well as acts of parliament which have been introduced over the last three years that materially impact on the services we provide and the citizens we serve. A PESTLE has been done to help better identify these major changes:

Political Landscape	Economic Trends	Social & Demographic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Withdrawal from Cosla and membership of SLGP</li> <li>• Majority Conservative UK government</li> <li>• Holyrood elections 2016</li> <li>• EU referendum 2016</li> <li>• Austerity economics continued in public finances</li> <li>• Emerging Fiscal Framework to support The Scotland Bill</li> <li>• Freeze on Council Tax / Review of Local Taxation System</li> <li>• Scottish Government “Programme for Government” 2015</li> <li>• Welfare Reform including introduction of Universal Credit</li> <li>• Devolution of Non-Domestic Rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downturn in oil &amp; gas industry</li> <li>• High operating costs in the North Sea basin</li> <li>• Skills, expertise and employment leaving the region</li> <li>• Intense global competition</li> <li>• Local unemployment rising</li> <li>• Tight labour market, especially for key workers</li> <li>• High house price inflation</li> <li>• Consumer inflation affecting standard of living</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing population</li> <li>• Increasing aging population / cost of health &amp; social care</li> <li>• Increasing school age population</li> <li>• Increasing migrant workers / multi-ethnic diversity</li> <li>• Geographical variations in deprivation</li> <li>• Multi-generational deprivation</li> </ul>

Technological/Technical Changes	Legislation	Environmental Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate digital infrastructure and high cost of connections</li> <li>• Increase in use of digital channels</li> <li>• Greater automation of processes and objects</li> <li>• Rise of sensors and devices connected to the internet</li> <li>• Rise of the smartphone society</li> <li>• New techniques to gather and analyse data</li> <li>• Transformation of IT infrastructure and operations</li> <li>• More sophisticated security requirements</li> <li>• Integrated approach to public service ICT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scotland Bill</li> <li>• Children &amp; Young People’s Act (2014)</li> <li>• Public Bodies (joint working) Scotland Act 2014</li> <li>• Social Care Scotland Act 2013</li> <li>• Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act</li> <li>• Housing (Scotland) Act 2014</li> <li>• Community Justice (Scotland) Bill</li> <li>• Education (Scotland) Bill</li> <li>• Land Reform (Scotland) Bill</li> <li>• Private Housing(Tenancies) (Scotland) Bill</li> <li>• Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2014</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to Zero Waste</li> <li>• Climate change and Paris Agreement implications</li> <li>• Scottish Government’s Low Carbon Economic Strategy</li> <li>• Flooding</li> </ul>

## **4. ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES FOR 2016-2017**

### **4.1 Review of our Strategic Framework**

The purpose of this Strategic Business Plan is to set out how Aberdeen City Council will deliver its agreed policy priorities, as well as the duties which fall to it through Scottish, UK and European legislation.

Through this refresh of the Strategic Business Plan, the Council is responding to Audit Scotland's 2015 'Audit of Best Value and Community Planning', which highlighted a need to ensure the council's vision is translated into objectives and targets which are linked to service plans; as well as demonstrate clear links between performance information and the Council's strategic plans.

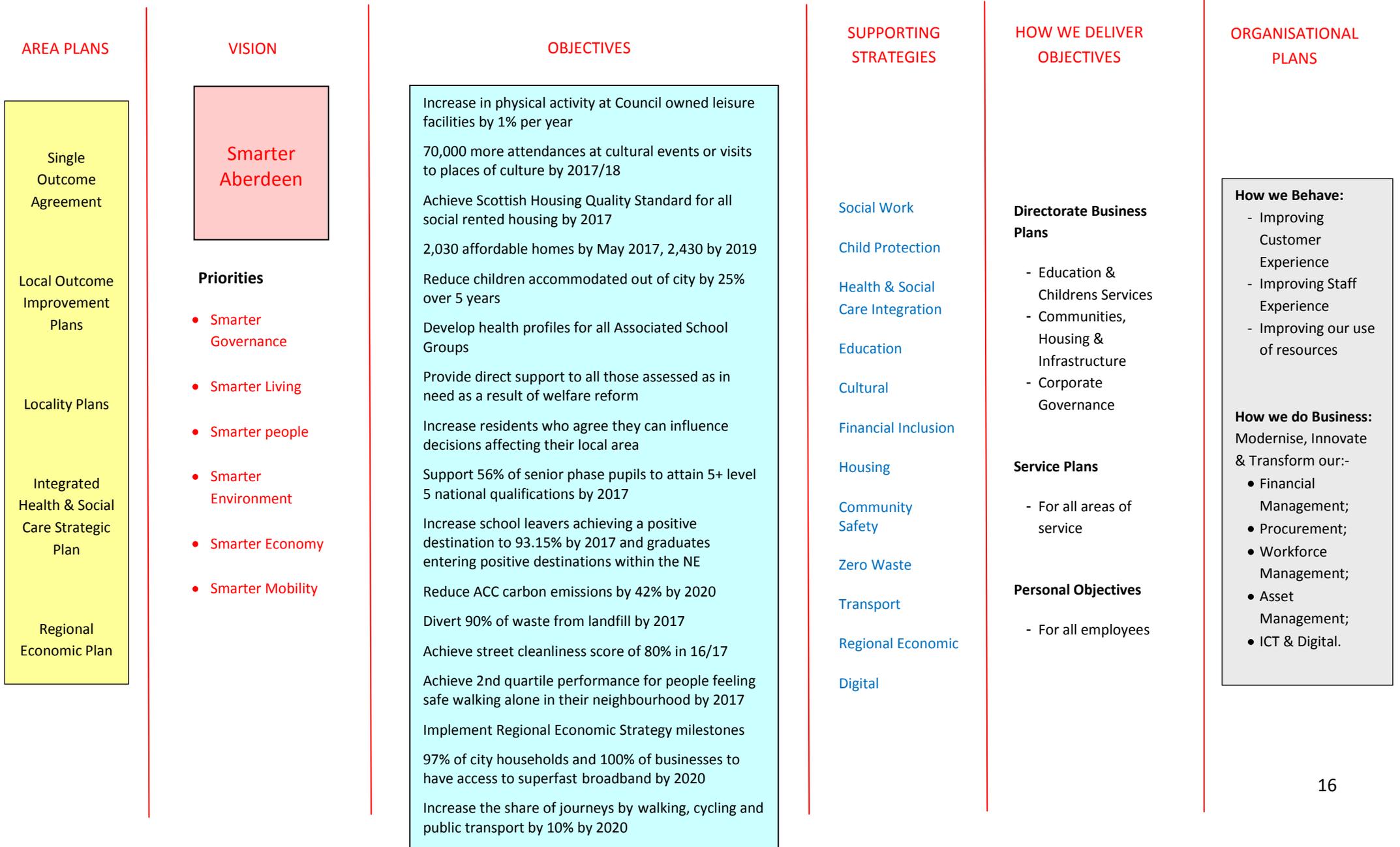
As a result, the Council's Strategic Framework has been reviewed and overhauled to make the linkages between policy priorities, strategies and plans clearer and more defined. The strategic framework diagram below, shows the clear and measurable objectives which will direct the actions we take, the services we provide and the resources we use over the period covered by this Plan.

Every directorate, team and staff member will have a direct role in turning this Plan into reality. Each of the Council's Directorates have corresponding Plans, both at whole Directorate and specific Service level, which give increasing detail on the management of budgets, assets, staff and services to customers. These Plans, in turn, inform personal objectives for all Council staff, which support our priorities and allow each and every staff member to understand how they play their part in delivering 'Aberdeen: the Smarter City'.

Of course, the way that councils work continues to change and, increasingly, this involves working via a range of partnership models. The City's Single Outcome Agreement is an agreement between The Scottish Government, the Council, communities, the voluntary sector, businesses and other public sector bodies. It sets strategic priorities for the City, which require partners to work together. At the time of this refresh, the City's Single Outcome Agreement was under review. A revised Single Outcome Agreement will be agreed during 2016/17. Any changes to priorities and commitments in the Single Outcome Agreement will be reflected, as necessary, in further refreshes of this Plan.

In addition, 2016/17 will see a new arrangement for the strategic planning and delivery of services for adult health & social care. An Aberdeen City Integrated Joint Board, made up of Council, NHS and partner representatives, has responsibility for joint planning and delivery of integrated adult health and social care services (see Section 4.3 below). As with the Single Outcome Agreement, when an Integrated Health & Social Care Strategic Plan is agreed before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, the Council's Strategic Business Plan will be reviewed and further refreshed.

# Aberdeen City Council's Strategic Framework



## 4.2 DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES

Section 2. above, shows the progress made to date against our policy priorities. The following section shows the further deliverables, under each of the “Aberdeen: the Smarter City” themes, which we aim achieve for 2016/17. Further detail on these deliverables will be reflected in our Directorate and Service Plans.

### 4.2.1 SMARTER GOVERNANCE - Participation

In order to create a sense of community in Aberdeen, based upon principles of fairness, reciprocity and responsibility, we want citizens to feel that they can influence their communities through engagement in the development, design and decision-making of services.

#### **Objective**

Through implementing locality based planning and participatory budgeting we will seek to increase the % of residents who agree with the statement “I can influence decisions affecting my local area”

#### **Strategies which Support this Objective**

Revised Single Outcome Agreement  
Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2011-17

#### **How we will deliver this Objective**

Key deliverables to achieve further progress in this area are shown below, with further activity reflected in Directorate and Service Plans:-

- Developing and implementing the city’s locality planning model to meet new requirements within the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- Developing and implementing locality plans for our priority regeneration neighbourhoods - Torry, Woodside, Tillydrone, Seaton, Middlefield, Northfield, Cummings Park and Mastrick.
- Deliver the Middlefield Community Project Relocation, which includes the extended Henry Rae Community Centre
- Continuing to support the Fairer Aberdeen Fund. The fund is aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation, supporting partners to work together to tackle poverty and to help more people access and sustain employment. There is a sum of £1.625m which is managed by the Fairer Aberdeen Board on behalf of CPA. There are 5 key themes:
  - Maximising income
  - Getting people into work
  - Improving mental health and wellbeing

- Building stronger, safer communities
  - Increasing skills and creatively.
- Developing an Anti-Poverty Strategy. Priorities will be identified in January 2016 and will influence the new SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.
- Continue to implement a broad programme of work to respond to and mitigate negative impacts of welfare reform. This includes responding to the statutory changes to current schemes (e.g. Universal Credit; Scottish Welfare Fund; Council Tax reduction; Under Occupation legislation; Help to Work Scheme).
- People with protected characteristics have their social care needs met as part of the Reclaiming Social Work initiative.

## 4.2.2 SMARTER LIVING – Quality of Life

In order to enhance all our citizens' physical and emotional wellbeing, we will seek to reduce levels of inequality within the city, improve access to and participation in cultural and physical activity, support people to have a warm, dry home in a safe, enjoyable environment, and minimise the impact of welfare reform on those most vulnerable within our community.

### Objectives

- We will increase access to leisure schemes and facilities to encourage individuals to participate in more active and healthier lifestyles. We seek to increase physical activity at Council owned leisure facilities by 1% per year.
- We aspire to be recognised as a place of excellence for culture and arts by promoting Aberdeen as a cultural centre hosting high quality and diverse cultural events for the whole community and beyond. We will attract 70,000 more attendances at cultural events or visits to places of culture by 2017/18 (15/16 base).
- We will achieve Scottish Housing Quality Standard for all social rented housing by 2017, where practicable
- We will build 2,030 affordable homes by May 2017
- We will increase the number of people feeling very or fairly safe when walking alone in their neighbourhood by 2017 and achieve performance comparable to the top 50 per cent of local authority areas

### Strategies which Support these Objectives

- Sports Strategy 2009-2015.
- Aquatics Strategy 2014-2020.
- Vibrant Aberdeen Cultural Strategy 2010-2015 (under review).
- City Centre Masterplan.
- Local housing strategy
- Housing Revenue Account 30 year business plan and asset management strategy.
- Local Development Plan.
- Strategic Infrastructure Plan.

## How we will deliver these Objectives

Deliverables to achieve further progress in this area are shown below, with further activity reflected in Directorate and Service Plans:

- Establish joint venture company to help achieve affordable housing target, develop and approve the business plan and build homes by 2017 and continue to develop identified sites for affordable housing.
- Develop 179 council homes at the former Smithfield Primary School and Manor Walk sites.
- Continued investment in sports and recreation facilities and support for the arms length external organisations delivering these services.
- Development of all-weather 3G sports pitch at Dyce.
- Continued development of the Big Noise Torry learning programme.
- Redevelopment of the Art Gallery to offer increased exhibition space in a world class environment.
- Redevelopment of the Music Hall.
- Construction of Museums Collections Centre in Northfield to widen public engagement and access to the City's extensive art collection.
- Development of projects within the City Centre Masterplan.

### 4.2.3 SMARTER PEOPLE – Social and Human Capital

Our citizens should be empowered to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes to allow them to fulfil their potential, contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of our communities and meet the changing demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We will do this by providing opportunities for lifelong learning, create a city of learning and develop a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the city and region's economy.

#### Objectives

- We will reduce the number of children who need to be accommodated by the local authority, in out of city placements by 25% over the 5 years (15/16 base).
- We will reduce by 10% the number of children with Additional Support Needs or Looked After by the authority, who attend a school outwith their local area or outwith Aberdeen City.
- We will improve the health of children and young people by developing health profiles for all linked school groups
- We will provide direct support to all those assessed as in need as a result of welfare reform through full use of Crises and Community Grant Funds.
- We aspire to improve learning outcomes and performance with 56% of senior phase pupils attaining 5+ level 5 national qualifications by 2017.
- We will increase the % of school leavers achieving a positive destination to 93.15% by 2017 and increase the % of graduates entering positive destinations within the North East.
- We will reduce inequalities by raising attainment in primary literacy and numeracy in underperforming schools by 3% per year.

#### Strategies which support these Objectives

- Corporate Parenting Strategy.
- Permanence and Care Excellence Strategy.
- Reclaiming Social Work Strategy.
- Raising Attainment Strategy.
- Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2011-17.
- Community Learning and Development Strategic Plan 2015-2018.
- 'Vibrant Aberdeen' Cultural Strategy 2010-2015 (under review).

- Aberdeen Learning Strategy.
- Regional Economic Strategy 2015.
- Shaping Our Future Workforce 2015-2020.
- School Estate Management Plan: Secondary 2010 / Primary 2013.

### **How we will deliver these Objectives**

Deliverables to achieve further progress in this area are shown below, with further activity reflected in Directorate and Service Plans:

- Develop the next generation Children's Service Plan 2017 to ensure outcomes for all children are improved and their needs met.
- Provision of a new additional support needs school to provide a hub for resources, support and sharing of best practices.
- Implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work (RSW) early intervention model, working directly with families to refocus the existing service to help vulnerable children remain with their families.
- Implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 with particular emphasis on Getting It Right For Every Child; Keeping Children Safe; Corporate Parenting; Early Years and After Care and Continuing Care.
- Implementation of the recommendations of the Inclusion Review 2014, developing best practices to improve the experiences of Aberdeen's children and young people including those with the most severe and complex needs.
- Further steps to attract and retain quality teaching and social work staff.
- Develop the Closing the Gap agenda to reduce the educational attainment gap associated with children in poverty.
- Implementation of the Developing Scotland's Young Workforce to help align educational activity with the needs of the economy.
- Create quality learning environments that are fit for purpose and will facilitate the delivery of high quality education to Aberdeen's children and young people. This includes rebuilding and refurbishment works at Greenbrae and Stoneywood Schools and the building of a new Academy to replace Torry and Kincorth Academies.
- Create quality living environments that are fit for purpose and will facilitate the delivery of high quality care to Aberdeen's children and young people by completing the refurbishment of 311 Clifton Road and Kingsfield residential homes and increase the number of local foster placements.

## 4.2.4 SMARTER ENVIRONMENT- Natural Resources

We strive to further reduce our carbon footprint, maximise recycling of waste and minimise waste sent to landfill as well as keep a clean, safe and attractive streetscape. We will do this by increasing energy efficiency and introducing carbon reduction measures in our processes and assets to reduce our carbon footprint, save money and to bring people out of fuel poverty. We will also manage waste effectively and in line with UK and European legislative requirements by maximising recycling and reducing waste to landfill, thereby reducing our costs and carbon footprint.

### Objectives

- We will reduce ACC carbon emissions by 42% by 2020
- We will divert 90% of waste from landfill by 2017 and 100% by 2020
- We will achieve a street cleanliness score (LEAMS) of 80% during 2016/17

### Strategies which support these Objectives

- Aberdeen Local Development Plan
- Carbon Reduction Plan
- Zero Waste Strategy
- Powering Aberdeen-Aberdeen's Sustainable Energy Action Plan.
- Air Quality Action Plan.
- School Estate Management Plan.

### How we will deliver these Objectives

Deliverables to achieve further progress in this area are shown below, with further activity reflected in Directorate and Service Plans:

- Establish Powering Aberdeen as part of the Council's commitment to the Covenant of Mayors with targets of reducing emissions by 20%, energy produced by renewables by 20% and improvement in energy efficiency by 20% by 2020.
- Provide co-mingled recycling to all households, achieving 100% coverage by April 2017
- Expanding recycling and food waste services to businesses by December 2016
- Build and upgrade Materials Recovery Facility.
- Recycling collection to all multi-occupancy households in Aberdeen

- Construct an energy from waste facility generating heat and power from non-recycled waste.
- Investment in waste collection, Waste Transfer Stations and new and existing Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- Ness Landfill Leachate & Gas Control Measures.
- Investment in a refuse derived fuel plant.
- Continue to work with partners such as Aberdeen Inspired to improve the city centre's environment and link to City Centre Masterplan.
- Undertake flood alleviation measures.
- Deliver our Play Area Refurbishment and Equipment Replacement Programme. In total 12 play areas will be totally refurbished.

## 4.2.5 SMARTER ECONOMY- Competitiveness

We need to continue to be recognised as a good place to invest, live, work and export from. We also need to be recognised as key providers of access to affordable housing in both the social rented and private sectors. We can only do this by working with partners to promote the city and create a city of learning which empowers its individuals and workforce to reach their full potentials (skills) and contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of our communities. Furthermore, we will improve access to affordable housing by supporting first-time buyers, regenerate areas within the city and work with developers to maximise the effective use of planning gain contributions.

### Objective

- To deliver the Council's contribution to the strategic objectives of the Regional Economic Strategy.
- To develop and deliver proposals in the City Region Deal

### Strategies which support these Objectives

- International Strategy to promote the city and its economic offer
- Regional Economic Strategy-Securing the Future of the North East Economy is the new regional economic strategy and sets out the Council's and its partners' 20-year vision for the wellbeing of the place and our people, up to 2035. The Strategy has been developed in the context of challenging local economic conditions due to a downward trend in oil prices and cost pressures, consequent 'ripple' across the supply chain and wider economy, a backdrop of cuts in public expenditure and recovery from the wider 2009 economic downturn. It sets out a strategic approach to the development of the regional economy under key programme areas of:
  - i. Investment in Infrastructure
  - ii. Innovation
  - iii. Inclusive Economic Growth
  - iv. Internationalisation

### How we will deliver these Objectives

Deliverables to achieve further progress in this area are shown below, with further activity reflected in Directorate and Service Plans:

We will develop Implementation Plans for each of the four Programme Areas in the Regional Economic Strategy. In response, the Council's Economic Development Service is being restructured to reflect the anticipated increase in demand of the Council as the city's local economic development agency for the City, and in particular prioritise:

- Support to Opportunity North East, a private sector-led Economic Leadership Board and new regional economic coordination group in support of the Regional Economic Strategy and City Region Deal.
- Support implementation of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan.
- Delivery of the AECC Project and other major infrastructure projects and maximising the economic impact of these in the City (e.g. the Council's Strategic Infrastructure Plan, Aberdeen Harbour Expansion, City Region Deal).
- Increase investor support, through direct investment (company); institutional (capital); inward investment prospectus.
- Through our Employability and Skills Unit, support the implementation of the regional skills strategy, "Developing the Young Workforce" and narrow the gap between communities living in income deprived areas and the City averages.
- Undertake, with partners, a Tourism Review for the city.
- Implement and deliver benefits from our Aberdeen / Japan Strategy.

## 4.2.6 SMARTER MOBILITY- Transport and ICT

We need to promote sustainable transport links to and from the City. We need to maximise digital connectivity for the benefit of all people and the development of business in the City.

### Objectives

- We will ensure that 97% of city households and 100% of businesses will have access to superfast broadband by 2020
- We will increase the share of journeys by walking, cycling and public transport by 10% by 2020 (baseline 33%)

### Strategies which support the Objectives

- Digital Strategy and Digital Place Strategy
- Local Transport Strategy

### How we will deliver these Objectives

Deliverables to achieve further progress in this area are shown below, with further activity reflected in Directorate and Service Plans:

- Delivery of major transportation infrastructure projects, including:-
  - Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route
  - South College Street
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing
  - Access from the South
  - Berryden Corridor
  - Cross City Transport Connections
  - Dyce Drive Link Road / A96 Park & Choose
  - Harbour Development
  - Hydrogen Energy Storage
- Ensure that the Council and the place of Aberdeen have world class internet and mobile connectivity which will support citizens across their lives as they learn, work and enjoy their free time.
- Upgrade Council network to fibre in the next two years.

- Upgrade Council buildings to one gigabit from the existing programme that provides for between 20 to 200mb. This upgrade would provide a city wide core network from which the private sector would invest a further £30m to provide one gigabit internet speeds to homes and businesses.
- Introduce free wireless to the city centre at no cost to the Council. Wider free wireless could be delivered to other areas through Accelerate Aberdeen funding as well as explore City Region Deal funding options.

## **4.3 Working in Partnership**

### **4.3.1 Community Planning Aberdeen**

Community Planning Aberdeen is the City's community planning partnership, through which Aberdeen City Council, its statutory Community Planning Partners, and representatives from communities, the voluntary sector, businesses and higher and further education work together to tackle local issues which need all of us to work together.

Each of Scotland's Community Planning Partnerships set out their priorities in a Single Outcome Agreement – which is an agreement between all of the partners and The Scottish Government. Aberdeen City's Single Outcome Agreement is under review and will be updated during 2016/17. This Council's Strategic Business Plan will respond to any changes within the Single Outcome Agreement when these are known.

### **4.3.2 Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Position**

#### **Introduction**

Aberdeen City Council and its partners NHS Grampian have made significant progress in implementing health and social care integration for the city, as required under recently implemented legislation.

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act, which came into effect on 1 April 2014, is the legislative framework which requires local authorities and health boards to work together and integrate certain adult health and social care services.

A shadow Integrated Joint Board (IJB) has been in place in the city since January 2015 and has overseen the implementation programme to ensure all requirements for formal integration and delegation of services are in place by the prescribed date of 1 April 2016.

The IJB will become responsible for the planning and delivery of those integrated services on 31 March 2016.

The IJB Chief Officer is accountable to the IJB for the effective delivery of our integrated services, in line with the nine national health and wellbeing outcomes, and to the partner organisations (ACC and NHS Grampian).

## **Our Caring Partnership**

- We recognise the value of developing effective and sustainable models of care that focus on health and wellbeing and maximise the assets of both individuals and communities.
- We want to move away from models that focus on identifying problems which require professional interventions to resolve them and which do not
- A strong aspiration of the partnership is for a personalised approach to be evident in all our activities and for the individuals and their carers to truly believe that they have choice and control, as far as is reasonably practicable, over the care and treatment that is offered to them.
- Our approach means services are tailored to the individual's needs rather than 'one size fits all". It also encompasses the provision of improved information and advice, investment in preventative services to reduce or delay people's need for care and the promotion of resilience and interdependence among individuals and communities.
- With improved choice and control comes responsibility and we accept that more work is needed to inform and support many people about the appropriate use of certain services, for example GP surgeries and A&E, and what other alternatives may be more suitable for them given their circumstances.
- We want to promote health and wellbeing and strengthen early intervention and prevention. We also want to make sure that people have access to the right treatment, care and support services when they need them, in ways which are effective, personalised and empowering.
- In the coming years, health and social care budgets will probably reduce in real terms while the demand for services will increase. To help people remain independent at home we need to look at how we manage our resources to deliver the best value for all people and their carers.
- Each IJB must begin to plan operationally at a locality, or community-focused, level and must identify at least 2 localities in its area – in Aberdeen we have identified, consulted and agreed on 4 locality areas.

## **Business Planning Processes**

The Council is represented on the Board of the IJB by elected members, but the IJB has oversight and accountability of its business planning processes, including the development of a Strategic Plan, performance management arrangements and public performance reporting. The IJB Strategic Plan was consulted upon over the course of October and November 2015 and a final draft is being prepared which will take account of consultation responses. It is a requirement of the legislation that locality plans and a workforce plan are developed which align to the Strategic Plan. The IJBs Strategic Plan will be submitted to the Council for information. As part of the Council's ongoing reviews of both governance and performance management frameworks, consideration will be given to any reporting required as a result of these new integrated arrangements.

### 4.3.3 ALEO's (Arm's Length External organisations)

The Council has established a number of Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) to provide services on its behalf. In establishing ALEOs, the focus remains to support, in the most effective way, the delivery of the policy priorities set out in "Aberdeen; the Smarter City" whether that is increasing sport and leisure (Smarter Living) or increasing visitor and tourist attractions (Smarter Economy).

The principal ALEOS - which the Council categorises as tier 1 - are Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre, Sport Aberdeen, Bon Accord Care/Bon Accord Support Services and Aberdeen Sports Village (established jointly with the University of Aberdeen). Smaller ALEOs are identified as tier 2, and these categorisations are reviewed as the amount of funding provided by the Council changes. While the ALEO takes on responsibility for service delivery, the Council remains responsible for ensuring that the ALEO uses the public funds the Council provides to the ALEO properly and can demonstrate best value. In other words, the Council remains accountable for the funds used to deliver public services, regardless of the means by which the service is delivered. In each case, the ALEO has entered into a Service Level Agreement with the Council to deliver services and

To monitor these ALEOs, and further to a recommendation in Audit Scotland's July 2015 Best Value report , the Council has established a governance hub which receives assurance from ALEOs on the strength (both effectiveness and adequacy) of their systems of risk management (governance) and on their operational performance, which is dependent on strong and effective governance arrangements. This in turn provides an assurance to members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee as well as to members of the relevant service committee where operational performance is being considered by the hub. The hub remit is:-

*"To receive, through an agreed data set, a high level statement of assurance from ALEOs on the effectiveness of their systems of governance and operational performance, with a view to ensuring that the outcomes of that organisation are being met, and the risks to that organisation and to the Council, mitigated and managed. A detailed minute will be produced and submitted to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee with separate minutes being submitted to each relevant service committee".*

The hub comprises senior managers from the areas including finance, legal services, governance, risk management, human resources, procurement and health and safety with senior service specific representatives attending for each ALEO as appropriate. For the first year, the hub met twice each year but during 16/17 this frequency is being increased to quarterly.

## 5.0 SHAPING ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

By responding to Audit Scotland’s 2015 ‘Audit of Best Value and Community Planning’, this refreshed Strategic Business Plan reaffirms the Council’s vision as expressed through “Aberdeen: the Smarter City”, and brings it up to date by incorporating new and emerging priorities. Through this vision and our agreed objectives, the purpose of the Council is clear. The organisation must be fit for purpose in terms of being able to deliver the vision.

Shaping Aberdeen is the organisational plan ensuring the Council has all the components of a fit for purpose organisation. This includes an enabling culture, appropriate governance and structures, staff with the right capacity and capability, modern and effective systems and processes.

### 5.1 How we Behave as an Organisation - Our Organisational Culture

Our culture is about how we behave in pursuit of our purpose. It’s about our attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours. The culture triangle (below) shows focus on customer and staff supported by good use of resources – known as the triple aim. At all times we need to ensure that these 3 aims are in balance:



**Customer experience** – we want every experience to be right 100% of the time; we want clear and consistent customer standards; we need to recruit for customer service skills; we need the internal and external customer experience to be equally good with a good customer service training programme to support this; we need to be anticipating customer needs not just reacting to them – the path of a citizen from birth to death is relatively easy to predict so we need to be more proactive in dealing with this with systems which allow for information flow and connectivity.

**Staff experience** – we need a culture which is based on strong Leadership, Engaging Managers, Employee Voice and Integrity with a focus on capability, capacity and wellbeing; we're looking to engage staff in how we do our business from induction onwards; we want a more engaged workforce; staff need greater involvement in budgeting, innovation and corporate social responsibility projects; staff need to be freed up from admin tasks to carry out the specialisms and professions they're being paid for – this needs to be addressed through the digital strategy; it's about having a genuine commitment to staff balanced with the need to for staff to take responsibility for finding things out and for asking – based on adult to adult relationships.

**Use of resources** – we need to view resource in its totality – not just as money; we need a one team mentality and a collaborative approach; a single budget mentality with a focus on outcomes; we need future focused business plans with financial stewardship underpinning all while at the same time looking at ways to grow our business; all of us need to feel ownership for the business and for making prudent use of resources

In addition there are 3 comprehensive programmes of work sitting behind each element of this triangle.

## **Improving Customer Experience**

*Why do we need to improve Customer Experience?*

Over the past five years the ways in which customers interact with organisations have changed almost beyond recognition. Aberdeen City Council must transform if we are to thrive in this rapidly changing customer landscape and effectively manage customer expectations. We need to reorganise ourselves so that we provide the customer with a seamless experience whether accessing services online from a laptop or mobile device, by telephone or face-to-face. Digitally empowered customers have reset the bar on acceptable customer experience. For the council to prosper in this new customer world we have to adopt a mind-set where we are all responsible for contributing to an excellent customer experience, every day. We need to adopt leadership capabilities that empower an integrated approach to customer engagement. In simple terms the ability to deliver our vision depends on the extent to which 'customer-centricity' is embedded within every single person in our organisation. Every interaction, every day has the potential to make a difference.

*Where are we trying to get to?*

Our aim is to enrich the lives and experiences of our customers, building to a level of excellence and personalisation where the customer is at the centre of everything we do. We will transform the way in which our customers access services and transform the services themselves

as we continuously review and improve what we do. We will listen to our customers' views and are committed to delivering a great experience while still unlocking significant operational improvements across the organisation's customer contact operations to contribute towards the £50m funding gap.

*How will we get there?*

Our Customer Experience programme sets out our plans for delivering services to our customers. A comprehensive improvement plan has been designed which is centred on 4 key themes:

### **1. Customer Service Framework**

- *Customer Service Charter and Standards*: setting out principles and standards which will be embedded across the organisation. Developing a customer charter with clearly defined and measurable customer service standards.
- *Customer Service Training*: all employees will be provided with training to support them in consistently demonstrating core behaviours.
- *Customer Service Recruitment Framework*: embedding customer service requirements in our recruitment process.
- *Multi-skilled Customer Service*: adopting a holistic personalised approach to better serve each customer's individual needs.

### **2. Improving Quality and Access to Services**

- *City Centre Service Provision*: reestablish a vision for our Customer Service Centre, and corporate receptions, to improve the customer experience. Review opening hours, accessibility, signage, health and safety and customer flow.
- *Community Based Service Provision*: establishing a vision for community based service provision, reviewing and redesign processes for services provided in the community, ensuring consistency of approach across the different sites.
- *Telephony Service Provision*: reviewing and improving service delivery at our Customer Contact Centre by changing the way we work, updating and streamlining processes, improving the use of resources and integrating services. We will implement a customer focused numbering strategy and rationalise our contact numbers for customers.

### 3. Customer Engagement

- *Whole System Feedback Approach*: adopting a whole system approach to customer feedback and pro-actively use customer data to inform service design and anticipate customer needs.
- *Customer Service Metrics*: identifying key customer service performance metrics to be measured across the whole council. We will make effective use of tools and systems to establish baselines, benchmark and analyse performance to inform service improvements.
- *Customer Insight*: achieving a single customer view through which we will be able to understand customer history, needs, risk, and behaviours, using this to forecast service demands and to inform service priorities and design.
- *Customer Involvement and Co-Design*: engaging customers in the redesign of our services to ensure their needs are met.

### 4. Digital Delivery

- *Customer Relationship Management System*: implementation of a replacement Customer Relationship Management system to support customer service delivery and single view of the customer.
- *Single View of the Customer*: creation of an aggregated, consistent and holistic representation of customer data to better target and personalise future customer interactions.
- *System Integration*: integrate systems to make it easier to service customers, help customers to serve themselves and identify customer needs.
- *Personalisation*: introduction of the My Account system so that customers can use a single authenticated portal to access all council services using online self-service.

## **Improving Staff Experience**

*Why do we need to improve staff experience?*

The ultimate success of an organisation, and in the case of Aberdeen City council, the success of this Strategic Business Plan, depends on staff. It is staff who will deliver it; staff whose behaviours, relationships and ways of doing things form the culture of the organisation. The culture needs to be aligned with our vision and the ways we will do business in the future. This positive culture depends on staff who are engaged, understand our vision and direction, share our values and ambitions and have the drive and desire to play their part; and on managers who take a lead role in this and understand how to engage and empower their teams.

At the same time our recruitment pool is increasingly comprised of a generation whose expectations of work and of their degree of involvement in decision-making is changing and who, despite the recent downturn in the oil and gas sector, still have more employment options than most other Scottish cities. If we are to attract and retain the best people this will be influenced by their perception of whether we are able to provide them with a worthwhile experience.

*Where are we trying to get to?*

Our aim is to create a positive culture which is both customer and staff centred and which is based on open dialogue and adult to adult relationships; a culture where our workforce is actively engaged and where there is a clear focus on the capability, capacity and well-being of staff; where staff are informed, consulted, involved in decision-making, have opportunities to engage and have their contribution recognised and appreciated; where there is a relentless focus on our vision and a genuine acceptance of the organisation's behaviours at all levels.

We aim to be seen as an employer of choice in the area attracting, recruiting and retaining staff whose values are aligned to the organisation's behaviours, who share the council's vision and goals and who have the drive and ambition to make a difference.

*How will we get there?*

## **1. Leadership**

- *Shaping Aberdeen engagement:* a programme to ensure the council's purpose, ways we do business and required culture are widely understood and shared across the organisation.
- *Accountability for culture:* will embed culture as a key management responsibility, ensuring it is regularly reviewed and discussed; and including responsibility for improving customer and staff experience and use of resources as part of managers' performance review and development.
- *Development to improve strategic capability:* the appointment of a specialist provider to work closely with organisational leaders to further develop strategic capability in our senior management team.
- *Raising visibility of senior management:* raise the visibility of our senior managers through a range of actions including the Heads Up! Campaign.

## **2. Engaging managers**

- *Development to support engaging managers:* develop an empowering and engaging management style at all levels in order to support a culture of high performance, improvement and innovation and to recognise the need to unleash the potential for transformation in the workforce.
- *Development to support an empowered and engaged workforce:* support employees to develop the skills and confidence to participate in a bottom up approach where there is true and equal employee voice.
- *Development to support performance and improvement:* help develop skills in improvement and performance planning for managers at all levels.
- *Further embedding Performance Review & Development PR&D):* increase the effectiveness of this process and to further streamline the reporting and business intelligence received through YourHR.
- *Promoting Well-being:* continue to support and extend the range of initiatives to support employee well-being including health checks, alternative therapies, mindfulness and resilience training in order to promote wellbeing and assist in reducing days lost to sickness.
- *Measuring engagement:* introduce mandatory 360 appraisal for all managers as part of their annual PR&D and with quarterly pulse checks to check the temperature and levels of engagement across the organisation.

### **3. Voice (of employees)**

- *Support for innovation:* ensuring a range of mechanisms are in place for staff to feed in their ideas and suggestions as well as developing a means to gather feedback from staff as customers. We will provide a range of tools to promote and encourage innovative thinking such as toolkits, pitstops and the Inspire programme for middle managers.
- *Talent bank:* develop a talent bank which will allow staff to identify the personal and professional skills they have which they would be willing to share with others; the bank will also provide Services with access to key skills to progress specific projects.
- *Improving the effectiveness of communication:* revamp the council web pages to provide greater clarity around who does what and to ensure that the golden thread through vision, purpose and priorities is much clearer and more accessible to managers and staff.
- *Social activities and corporate social responsibility:* continue to promote activities which encourage team spirit and sharing.

### **4. Integrity**

- *Review of recruitment:* review recruitment practices to ensure that the image we are presenting of ourselves as an employer is in line with the culture we are seeking to achieve, to ensure that potential applicants are aware of the need to demonstrate how they meet the behaviours and that recruiters are aware of how to recruit for cultural fit as well as technical skills; we will also develop practices to support young people into employment and to encourage 'grow your own' practices to fill internal vacancies'.
- *Review of our induction:* review our induction practices to include on-boarding in order to make best use of the time between an applicant being appointed and them taking up post.
- *Developing our future leaders:* continue to develop the Aspire programme in order to identify future leaders who share our values and aspirations and who demonstrate the qualities we seek.
- *Fit for purpose policies and procedures:* promote involvement across the council in the development and review of policies and procedures which affect them.

## Improving our use of Resources

*Why do we need to improve use of resources?*

With challenging budgets for the public sector, we need to achieve more with fewer resources and focus on delivering outcomes not just outputs. Despite budget constraints councils are still expected to meet the growing needs of their residents and their communities. Through modernising and innovating the council can make best use of the resources available and make a real difference to the lives of customers and communities.

*Where are we trying to get to?*

Our aim is to create a strong culture which consistently focuses on positive outcomes for our customers, both now and in the future. Our culture will promote working together with our colleagues, our partners and service users, to bring a joined up approach to local services that deliver more for less, including cross public, private and voluntary sector working. We will demonstrate sound governance whilst becoming increasingly innovative and imaginative, including through attracting funding and resources from different source to the benefit of the City.

*How will we get there?*

Improving our Use of Resources programme has 7 themes, each with a stewardship stage and a transformation stage. The “Stewardship” stage looks to embed, strengthen and build on current plans and arrangements. The “Transformation” stage is about significant organisational and cultural changes. This reflects a real step change in the way individuals approach the use of resources.

### 1. **Owning our business**

#### Stewardship

- *Accountable for financial regulations and procedures:* Promoting the importance of financial regulations for all staff and ensuring procedures to support these are fully comprehensive.
- *Fraud prevention:* All staff engaged with fraud prevention policy and practices.
- *Accurate recording and sound audit controls:* A focus on full and accurate recording of transactions to comply with best practice.
- *Finance Framework and Finance Academy – corporate financial skills:* Strengthening corporate financial skills at all levels for all staff.
- *Meet our statutory targets:* Ensure the organisation complies financially and meets the requirements of our funding bodies.

## Transformation

- *Staff as shareholders:* Using good practice to introduce innovative ways of encouraging staff to embrace business ownership.
- *Social change is our responsibility:* Introduce opportunities and an ethos of social responsibility in our business.
- *My Business Ability programme:* All staff to be responsible for their own business learning progression.
- *It's everyone's responsibility – mind the gap:* See the council's resources as if it was your own and go above and beyond responsibility to proactively seek gaps and work together to streamline business management across the organisation.
- *Making a difference – your ideas matter:* A structured programme to collate ideas around use of resources.

## **2. Running our business**

### Stewardship

- *Costing, financial management and forecasts:* Continuous improvement in our core financial processes.
- *Business cases, option appraisal and capital planning:* Improving the consistency and quality of our evidence for forward planning.
- *Assets, procurement, IT and workforce planning:* Implementing improvements based on existing plans, for example asset planning, contract management, enterprise architecture and succession planning.
- *Project and performance management, policy development:* Implementing improvements based on existing plans and embedding these throughout the organisation.
- *Integrated use of technology and applications:* Integrating the way our computer applications work together and sharing knowledge.

### Transformation

- *One integrated efficient business:* Building on improvement plans to develop an end to end approach to business processes.
- *Lessons learned in practice:* Pro-actively focus on lessons learned from business as usual and improvement planning.
- *Right first time and value for money reviews:* Fundamental business reviews based on need.
- *Business acumen task force:* Developing a cross organisational task force to improve business management in targeted services; strengthening the links between professional specialisms such as HR, Finance, Legal and project management.

- *Business management excellence and professionalism:* A cross cutting focus on improving business management excellence taking best practice from all professional specialisms.

### 3. Making good business decisions

#### Stewardship

- *Staff, customer and resources reflected:* Ensure all aspects of Shaping Aberdeen are reflected in council decision making.
- *All relevant evidence reflected in committee decisions:* Ensure a thoroughly consistent approach to ensuring all evidence is reviewed and financial, legal, HR, equalities and environmental implications are considered.
- *Effective challenge and consistent approach across the council:* Increase the council's capability to give and receive challenge.
- *Effective use of business intelligence and data:* Use of business intelligence tools to provide more tailored and holistic information.
- *Clarify decision making roles and responsibilities:* Ensure the roles of individuals and decision making bodies are clear.

#### Transformation

- *One decision making:* A fundamental review of the approach to integrated decision making.
- *Outcome budgeting:* Implementation of an outcomes approach to budgeting building on best practice and linked to service planning and customer and performance information.
- *Cultural change around decision making:* Explore links between corporate culture and decision making practices.
- *Innovation and risk in practice:* Explore a long term approach to strategic innovation and risk management.
- *Data to evidence – the journey:* Strengthen capability and links between performance information, evidence and decision making.

### 4. Connecting our business

#### Stewardship

- *Use the council structure to improve use of resources:* Pro-actively focus on using structure to strengthen use of resources ensuring new staff in the structure understand their roles.
- *Improve connectivity in budget holder meetings:* Improve consistency, widening the focus to the bigger picture and cross resources.
- *Increase connectivity to professional bodies and partners:* Build on existing links to increase our access to professional good practice.

- *Increase events and communication around use of resources:* Build on the interconnectedness to improve business management.
- *Make more links between staff roles and services:* Including links between Business Partners of different specialisms.

#### Transformation

- *Networking – all methods and all levels:* Investigate the future of networking – face to face and using technology.
- *Global best practice:* Look at professional good practice across the globe and link this to other measures such as the Innovation Hub.
- *Public service ethos:* Share public service knowledge across NE Scotland and beyond.
- *Everyone connected:* How can we widen networking around business to include all staff?
- *Cross resources, cross services programme:* Identify cross cutting projects that bring the different specialisms together, develop a database of projects across all services requiring business skills linked to the Talent Bank.

## **5. Future of our business**

#### Stewardship

- *Strengthen long term financial planning:* Build on existing long term financial plan through additional scenarios and wider cost drivers.
- *Ensure pensions and revenues and benefits are future proof:* Respond to external and internal factors impacting these.
- *Respond to organisational and legislative change:* Matching need to resources and staff capability.
- *Wider engagement with budget and 5 year plan:* Strengthen engagement and involvement in the 5 year budget process.
- *Ensure effective use of reserves and sustainability:* Monitor use of corporate reserves, earmarked reserves and the risk fund.

#### Transformation

- *Horizon scanning is for all of us:* If we had our own business, we would make this our responsibility. Make sure all voices are heard.
- *Cohesive vision and strategy:* A fully integrated vision, strategic plan and individual strategies with a golden thread approach linked to the long term financial plan.
- *Future Technology:* Embrace future technology as a city and as a council.
- *Future focus behaviour:* Strengthen the application of our Performance Review & Development future focus behaviour.
- *Sustainability:* Ensure the organisation focusses sufficiently on environmental sustainability of its plans and policies.

## 6. Growing our business

### Stewardship

- *Review fees and charges:* A consistent approach to pricing policy and co-ordinated review of legality, price elasticity, benchmarking.
- *Benchmark more effectively:* Closer links to national benchmarking organisations and improved analysis of findings.
- *Maximise the benefits of being part of the Scottish Local Government Partnership:* Lobby for the council and city's interests.
- *Strengthen customer service around use of resources:* Improve our customer service to support income recovery, supplier management and our reputation.
- *Maximise our use of technology and processes:* Maximise potential to grow our business through effective technology and processes.

### Transformation

- *Securing innovative sources of finance:* Seek out wider opportunities to bring wealth and investment to the city.
- *Generating income:* Review our service delivery models and opportunities to generate income through business expansion.
- *Positive attitude:* Engender a positive attitude to our business vision for the future that is optimistic and forward thinking.
- *Know our markets:* Undertake market analysis to have an improved understanding of our business potential.
- *Destination Aberdeen:* Improve our potential to grow our business through the promotion of the wider city experience.

## 7. Our business into the community

### Stewardship

- *Following the public pound:* Implement fully revised procedures for Following the Public Pound that ensures proper stewardship.
- *Maximise the benefits of Arms-Length External Organisations (ALEOS):* Use the ALEO hub to build strong relationships.
- *Build on links with partners:* Build on wider partner links across the city such as through Integrated Health and Social Care.
- *Maximise the benefit of new capital investment:* Ensure the effective management of the capital programme to deliver asset and infrastructure improvements for the community.

- *Recognise and build on existing community links:* Build on initiatives such as participatory budgeting, the Community Planning Partnership and the new Communities team to improve use of resources.

### Transformation

- *Regeneration through use of resources:* Use resources to regenerate our city in a targeted way – for example our estate management, procurement spend and workforce management.
- *Community empowerment and democracy:* Increase engagement of the community with our decision making processes.
- *Outcomes for the community and pride in our city:* Achieve community outcomes through our use of resources.
- *Community spirit:* Recognise that resources may not be effectively used without community spirit. Invest in projects to support this.
- *Building our community culture:* Explore the culture of our community and extend the practice of our positive examples of corporate behaviour and values to partners and across the city to improve our delivery and success.

## 5.2 How We Do Business

With challenging budgets for the public sector, much more emphasis is being placed on achieving more with fewer resources and with delivering outcomes not just outputs. Despite budget constraints councils are still expected to meet the growing needs of their residents and their communities. This stream of work will show how, even within this reduced financial envelope, the council can, through **innovation**, **transform** how it does business, making a real difference to the lives of citizens by **modernising** services.

Section 4. of this Plan (*“Aberdeen City Council’s Priorities for 2016/17”*), shows the council’s vision and our commitment to positive outcomes for the people of Aberdeen, through improved services and significant investment in infrastructure. This section focuses on how the organisation manages its key resources, or “How we do Business” to allow those outcomes to be realised.

Programmes are in place, and work is already underway, to Modernise our Business in the following areas:

- financial management;
- workforce management;
- procurement;
- asset management; and
- use of ICT and digital technology.

We will continuously apply three principles which, together, show “How we do Business”. These are represented in the triangle below.



- Financial Management:* Against a backdrop of ongoing financial pressures, the council has performed well financially, achieving a balanced budget with no further new savings for the last three years. However, the 2016/17 financial year promises to be challenging, with a number of cost pressures and new obligations. The Council will agree, and monitor and implement, significant savings for 2016/17. Whilst details of the financial settlements beyond 2016/17 are not known, it is clear that these will result in further cash reductions. In response, a key task during 2016/17 will be the development of a new Medium Term Financial Plan which takes account of the uncertainties which currently exist and focuses on transformational change, capital investment, procurement, asset planning and demographic changes. During 2016/17 we will continue to modernise our financial management through innovative approaches, including improved scenario planning and modelling, as well as developing an outcome based approach to budgeting, focusing on early intervention and prevention.
- Workforce Management:* The challenges facing the organisation in the medium to long term will require an unprecedented level of transformational change and, fundamentally, this will be delivered by people. The cultural aspects for our workforce are explained in section 5.1 above, but we also need to ensure that the Council has the organisational capability and capacity to deliver this Strategic Plan. This means that planning our future workforce must be an integral part of our strategic planning process. We have taken positive steps to modernise employee engagement and wellbeing, as well as leadership / management development and talent management, including our Inspire and Aspire programmes. However, we must continue to take a more innovative approach to tackle the challenges and opportunities which may enable or constrain our future workforce. We are increasing the focus on business critical and potentially hard to fill posts (e.g. Craft Workers, Environmental Health Officers, Planners, Teachers and Solicitors) including succession planning and reviewing our Relocation Scheme to provide a 'gold standard' for hard to fill posts. We are taking action to address the ageing nature of our workforce and increase the numbers of young people employed – whether permanently or temporarily as part of a placement; internship; or our Aberdeen Guarantees pledge. Innovation will be encouraged, for example, establishing a panel of representatives from our apprentice, trainee and intern workforce along with Aberdeen College/University students, to give feedback on how well we are catering for the aspirations of our existing and potential young employees. Each Directorate has a workforce plan aligning workforce requirements to the Strategic Business Plan, to their own service business plans and to the delivery of the service improvements included in those plans.
- Procurement:* Our ability to deliver our vision is also supported through a modern approach to procurement. The Commercial & Procurement Team have been driving a transformation programme called PACE (Procurement – Achieving Commercial Excellence) during 2015. The aims of the programme have been to embed systems, processes and creative thinking that enhance the commercial competence within the Council. Focus is also on developing and stimulating the Councils' supply chain; locally, nationally and the voluntary

sector giving excellent goods and services to the Council, but also providing community benefit to the city, directly contributing to our “Aberdeen: the Smarter City” objectives. Early engagement with the pertinent market places drives innovation to continually improve the outcomes from our contracts which our Services are heavily dependent on. Our contracts will look to incorporate community benefit clauses as the norm with the capture of the social value being reported. Modern and innovative contract management methodology will be deployed in the measuring and performance monitoring of all strategic and business critical agreements and partnerships.

- *Asset Management.* Strategic Asset Management creates the framework around which the council manages its resources including Property, Open Space, Infrastructure, Housing, Fleet and ICT. Significant challenges including the local development plan delivery, financial pressures, changes in climate and legislative changes make the effective management of these assets essential. Through the further embedding of comprehensive asset management governance and the development of asset management plans for each asset group, our assets will contribute positively to delivering outcomes to our customers and a positive environment for our staff . As part of this we will continue to work with our partners to encourage joint working, sharing of assets and shared strategies. Assets will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they continue to support our objectives both now and in the future. As part of our modernising approach, the Smarter Working programme has achieved significant efficiencies in the office portfolio. It has transformed how staff work and created opportunities for alternative service delivery. A further phase of Smarter Working will be rolled out allowing further efficiencies and opportunities to transform services.
- *ICT and Digital Technology.* Delivering our vision for the place and people of Aberdeen relies on innovating and modernising our approach to the use of ICT and digital technology. We are developing a digital strategy for the Council that will deliver world class connectivity, data integration, digital services, innovation and a cloud based infrastructure. We must ensure that our services have good connectivity, that information is joined up and that services can be delivered remotely. The council’s ICT strategies also recognise the need to address digital inclusion, data sharing and opening up access to public sector data. In addition this will enable the Council to take advantage of new technology for service improvement. Technological change is moving at an unprecedented rate and it is critical that services are underpinned by effective and reliable systems and with the skills and capabilities to use technology effectively.

Across each of these areas, we will continue to **modernise** the ways in which we deliver our services, embracing new technology and changing our processes to improve our service quality and operational efficiency. Where necessary we will modernise services to ensure that they exploit new opportunities around processes, people or systems. A key component of this will be to introduce an improvement methodology across the Council. Central to this will be the ability to take evidenced based decisions, use recognised techniques, challenge current thinking and exploit technology wherever possible. In doing so we will set out a programme of service reviews across the Council.

We will continue to become more **innovative**, seeking better and new ways to serve our customers, both external and internal. A programme of continuous improvement through doing things better, and a more transformational approach looking at doing better things will demand different thinking and learning from best practice elsewhere. We will create an innovation framework which will encourage innovation at all levels of the organisation. The framework will work towards the goal that innovation is everyone's responsibility, and will empower all staff to get involved. For example there is an Innovation Network which is open to all staff which tackles problems, this network will use innovative ways of tackling problems allowing staff to experience using these techniques and learn how to use these in their day job. An online idea platform 'ideas hub' which allows staff to put forward their ideas, which others can rate, subscribe or comment on. The platform is based around the organisation's goals around customer experience, staff experience or making best use of our resources. An innovation toolkit which aims to embed creative methods and techniques across the council will also be developed.

Putting these new ideas into practice is effectively how we will continue to **transform** the organisation, which will demand courage in decision making, diligence in our assessment and management of risk, and a focus upon rigorous implementation of our plans. We will transform certain services where there are opportunities for new ways to deliver. A significant part of this will be developing a demand management strategy to ensure that we are delivering the right services in right the right way. In supplying this we will look at all options including partnership, shared services or using best practice from the market. We will adopt a common approach to transformation and ensure that initiatives are set up so that that they cross cut services wherever possible.

Putting these new ideas into practice is effectively how we will continue to transform the organisation, which will demand courage in decision making, diligence in our assessment and management of risk, and a focus upon rigorous implementation of our plans.

## 7. Good Governance, Risk & Performance Management

Like all organisations, our ability to deliver our objectives is supported by effective arrangements for good governance and the management of risk. These functions work together to ensure an informed and consistent approach to how processes and structures are designed.

### 7.1 Good Governance

Governance is about our organisational frameworks, responsibilities, systems, processes, culture and values. Good governance happens when these things come together to make us an effective organisation. Good governance is also about ensuring what we do is done in a timely, inclusive, honest and accountable manner.

Our Local Code of Governance is part of the framework we have in Aberdeen City Council to support good governance. It sets out the governance principles that we are committed to and what we have in place to ensure those principles are adhered to.

#### Principles of Good Governance

Our Code adopts seven principles of good governance from the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance - good governance in local government. These core principles guide our internal frameworks for governance and form the basis of how we undertake our annual governance review. They set out what we will do and how we will work to ensure good governance.

Core principles - We will

- 1 Focus on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community, creating and implementing a vision for the local area
- 2 Ensure members and officers work together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
- 3 Promote values for the authority and demonstrate values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour
- 4 Take informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and manage our risks
- 5 Develop the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective

- 6 Engage with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust accountability
- 7 Proper accountability for Arm's length/parented bodies

### Governance Review

Our Local Code of Corporate Governance also determines how we review our governance arrangements. The CIPFA / SOLACE framework has previously underpinned the Council's annual governance statements and the development of an annual work plan, however, in 2016/17 we are conducting a much more comprehensive review given the very significant issues identified in our PESTLE analysis (see section 3 above), including the integration of Health and Social Care Services; the national review of the governance of Police and Fire; provisions of the Community Empowerment Act.

A Governance Project Team has been set up to review and update our governance framework, including our system of risk management, specifically to ensure that this supports the achievement of our strategic objectives, and reflects CIPFA/SOLACE guidance and the revised principles. The Team will oversee a work plan with timetabled actions to review and improve the governance of Aberdeen City Council, making sure that our governance arrangements are fully informed by an understanding of risk and lead to more streamlined, informed and transparent decision making.

### **7.2 Risk Management**

Risk Management is about identifying and responding to risks with the potential to impact on our ability to achieve our objectives.

We continually review and improve our system of risk management and our Risk Management Strategy sets out our approach to risk, how much we are prepared to tolerate and the circumstances in which we may take calculated opportunity risks in pursuit of our transformation and innovation agendas and the delivery of improved outcomes for our communities. The priorities and objectives documented in the Strategic Business Plan have shaped the risks in our Strategic Risk Register and by monitoring the completion of the Business plan actions, we will ensure those risks are properly managed

### **7.3 Performance Management**

Measuring how successful we are at delivering the Business Plan priorities and achieving improved outcomes for our communities, requires a strong performance management framework.

As set out above, the refresh of this Strategic Plan is a response to Audit Scotland's findings in their 2015 "Audit of Best Value and Community Planning" which highlighted that the Council should, more clearly, show how its vision was translated into objectives and targets, linked to service plans. Audit Scotland also stated that the Council should implement plans to refocus performance measurement on outcomes; ensure elected members are receiving consistent information on service performance; and ensure clear links between the performance information submitted to members for scrutiny and the Council's strategic plans.

During 2016/17 we will complete a fundamental review of our performance management framework. We will review the measures we have in place and identify new ones which will serve to directly support our revised priorities and evidence those outcomes.

Our review will focus very strongly on creating a framework which supports improvement across the breadth of our activities. Performance is continually reviewed and monitored by managers and where issues of under-performance emerge, resources and timely remedial action can be targeted effectively.

The Shaping Aberdeen culture change programme offers an approach to evidence based policy and service delivery and is the organisational plan to enable delivery of our ambitious agenda. It is performance and outcomes focused and places the customer at the centre of everything we do as a council.

As well as reviewing our performance measures we will also review our approach to Public Performance Reporting so that our performance is more accessible and transparent. This will help address the recommendations identified by the Accounts Commissions in their annual report published in July 2015.

The information we publish must allow the public to hold the council to account and to have the information required to participate in decisions about service redesign. This will require a comprehensive and integrated approach to the data and the information we hold. Combined with a new approach to information management and a digital strategy a report will be produced for the Audit and Risk Committee to address the above issues.

## **8. Next steps**

### **8.1 Management of Change**

This Strategic Plan represents a significant programme of change which will transform the way in which services are designed and accessed by our customers. This change is driven by our approach to modernising and innovating the way we do business, to improve our customers' experience whilst budgets and resources become increasingly tight.

In order to ensure we have the necessary organisational capacity and capability to deliver this change we have introduced a co-ordinated programme approach to consolidate and manage all change activity. This has created a single governance model which ensures a consistent approach to strategic decision making; resource allocation and, increasingly, programme and project management. Transparent reporting to elected members and senior management is improving scrutiny, challenge and support of change activity. And by identifying all project resource needs we are able to make best use of existing skills and knowledge, as well as, bringing in additional capacity when it is needed.

### **8.2 Area, Directorate, Service and Personal Plans**

As is outlined throughout the Plan, its delivery will be underpinned by embedding our policy priorities and objectives at all levels of organisational planning. Next steps are, therefore:-

- i. Completion and alignment of Directorate and Service plans and submitting these to Committees;
- ii. Aligning personal objectives for staff around the vision and the cultural aims;
- iii. Working with partners to refresh the City's Single Outcome Agreement and revising this Plan as necessary;
- iv. Reflecting the Integrated Health & Social Care Strategic Plan within the Council's Plans;
- v. Reviewing and implementing new frameworks for Governance; Performance Management; and Change.