ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE	9th March, 2017
DIRECTOR	Richard Ellis, Interim Depute Chief Executive (Director of Corporate Governance)
TITLE OF REPORT	Corporate Governance Performance Scorecard
REPORT NUMBER	CG/17/012
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

    To present the Committee with (a) key performance information for the Corporate Governance Directorate and (b) an updated Directorate Risk Register.

2. RECOMMENDATION

    The Committee are asked to:

    Note both the performance report for the Corporate Governance Directorate and its Risk Register and the information contained therein.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

    There are no financial implications arising from the report although some reported measures are aligned to the priority to improve the use of resources.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

    There are no specific legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, sustainability and environmental, health and safety and/or policy implications arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

    Corporate Governance comprises many support functions, enabling frontline teams to deliver excellent service to our internal and external customers. It

provides the backbone of the organisation, not only supporting frontline delivery but also ensuring effective governance across the council.

The directorate is supported by 699 employees and is responsible for the delivery of a wide range of services:

- Commercial & Procurement Services (Currently shared with Aberdeenshire Council)
- Finance (including council tax & benefits)
- Legal and Democratic services (including Archive services)
- Human Resources
- Customer Service
- IT
- Transformation

Corporate Governances' frontline services are largely represented through revenues & benefits, customer services, registrars and the archive service.

Our performance indicators will be used as a benchmark to measure how well we are meeting the needs of our customers and communities.

Audit Scotland in July 2015 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 more needed to be done to consolidate the improvements (a golden thread reflecting all plans). Of particular relevance to the Corporate Governance Directorate is the increased focus on ensuring the council's overall strategic priorities are translated into objectives and targets which are linked to service plans.

Aberdeen: the Smarter City outlines the Council's policy priorities, included within are 6 'Smarter' themes: Smarter Governance; Smarter Living; Smarter People; Smarter Environment; Smarter Economy & Smarter Mobility.

Corporate Governance's role is to provide efficient and effective support functions. Through the council's organisational plan "Shaping Aberdeen", programmes of work are in place to ensure that we have all the components of a fit for purpose organisation to deliver outcomes. These programmes include modernising, innovating and transforming 'How we do business' and also changing our culture to 'improve customer experience', 'improve staff experience' and 'improve use of our resources'.

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.

We need to measure how successful we are at delivering the Directorate's Business Plan and achieving improved outcomes for our customers. In order to do this we require a strong performance management framework. The Key Performance Indicators will be used to monitor the success of our services and during 2016/2017 we will build on this by reviewing our performance management framework. We will focus on creating a framework which supports improvement across the breadth of our activities, ensuring performance is continually reviewed and monitored by managers and where issues of under-performance emerge, resources and timely remedial action can be targeted effectively. We will also implement a comprehensive and integrated approach to the data and the information we hold, building on our Public Performance Reporting arrangements, allowing the public to hold the council to account and to have the information required to participate in decisions about service redesign.

Timely, accurate performance data supports informed decision-taking, focuses resources on areas for improvement and assists with our commitment to the delivery of Best Value in public service activity. We aim to benchmark as much of our service activity as possible, mainly through our participation in the Scotland-wide Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) whilst also utilising our involvement in other benchmarking clubs where appropriate.

The Council receives an annual assessment of the strength of our Public Performance Reporting (PPR) arrangements from the Accounts Commission. This covers not only the breadth of services and functions for which we have a statutory requirement to report, but also the style, format and accessibility of the information we provide. Increasingly, auditors are requiring that a range of channels and performance information formats are used, to ensure that information reaches audiences in ways in which it is most useful, easy to understand and best illustrative of the Council's activities.

In order to provide the Committee with an effective analysis of performance and trend analysis in each report, it is intended to move to a quarterly reporting frequency.

The attached performance scorecard uses traffic light symbols to aid the better understanding of direction of travel, where possible:

🛑   denotes an indicator which is not meeting target performance;

🔺   denotes an indicator which is at risk of falling significantly below target performance;

✅   denotes an indicator which is meeting target performance;

Targets

Where possible, services are encouraged to set meaningful performance targets as a means of contextualising performance and driving improvement. These are frequently based on benchmarking activity. The revised scorecard provides an accompanying narrative to provide Committee members with more detail on each of the Key Performance Indicators.

As the scorecard has been revised there are Key Performance Indicators which are being developed at the present moment, however once the ongoing outcomes have been reported then the Committee can compare current outcomes against previous outcomes, against the target. Where this is the case the supporting narrative will explain.

Risk Register
The appended risk register sets out the high-level risks with the potential to impact on the delivery of essential Corporate Governance services and the carrying out of core corporate functions, for which the directorate is responsible.

The register is subject to frequent review and risks are added as new issues emerge as well as being removed when the source of the risk is no longer current or when control effectiveness reduces the assessment a level which the directorate is prepared to tolerate. Risks around the delivery of a balanced budget and the council tax increase and adjustment of bandings, have been effectively managed following the completion of these pieces of work. They are detailed here to inform the Committee of that process.

Corporate Governance is leading on the delivery of key business transformation programmes, which underpin the improvement agenda. The risks which have the potential to impact negatively on those programmes have been added to the register.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –
The Corporate Governance Service Plans (of which the key performance indicators are a part) will improve the Customer Experience by providing support functions in the roll out of the Customer Experience Programme, leading to:

- Improved customer satisfaction
- Improved customer service- efficiently managed customer data and greater understanding of customer needs
- Improved use of resources through efficiencies in customer management
- Increased access to services digitally (24/7

Improving Staff Experience –

The Corporate Governance Service Plans (of which the key performance indicators are a part) will improve the Staff Experience by providing support functions in the roll out of the Staff Experience Programme, leading to:

- Increased staff satisfaction as measured through pulse checks and Employee Opinion Survey
- Reduced Sickness Absence
- Alignment of Shaping Aberdeen vision with recruitment, development and internal promotion
- Increased staff retention
- Ability to recruit better staff

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Improving our use of Resources –
The Corporate Governance Service Plans (of which the key performance indicators are a part) will improve the Improving our use of Resources Programme by providing support functions in the roll out of the Programme, leading to:

- Improved use of resources impacting positively on all finance and corporate financial KPI's and reducing finance risks
- Improved customer satisfaction ratings from CG customer survey
- New medium term financial plan and long term financial plans developed
- Improved financial processes, reducing bureaucracy and delivering efficiencies
- Improved customer satisfaction ratings from Finance budget holder survey

Corporate –

From a corporate point of view a Performance Management Framework (PMF) has been agreed by the Committee (at its meeting in June 2016). This work is included in the wider Transformation Programme. The purpose of the project is to implement the corporate performance management framework for the Council to:
i.   ensure the Council's priorities are clearly articulated and delivered through effective service planning and allocation of resources;
ii.   motivate staff by ensuring that individuals are aware of their own targets and goals and how these contribute to achieving the Council's vision;
iii.   ensure that significant risks to the achievement of objectives are identified and managed;
iv.   provide early warning, and rectification, of poor performance;
v.   provide a strong evidence base for improved decision making; and
vi.   through all of the above, improve services and outcomes for local people.

The Framework is designed to make best use of all our resources in a co-ordinated way to ensure effective monitoring of priorities, resulting in better outcomes for our customers and communities.

7.   MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The report identifies areas of performance which are aligned to the achievement of priorities. With service planning and risk identification and management now fully aligned, reviews of the risk register will draw on effective horizon-scanning, risk assessment, mitigation and assurance.

8.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen City Council Strategic Business Plan Refresh
Corporate Governance Directorate Plan
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9.   REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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