

City Growth and Resources Committee Annual Effectiveness Report



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 I am pleased to present the first annual effectiveness report for the City Growth and Resources Committee. As members will be aware, as part of their interim assessment of the Council's governance arrangements in 2016, CIPFA recommended that committees review the extent to which they have operated within their Terms of Reference, through an annual report. This has been an aspiration for some time, representing good practice in governance terms and evidencing the Council's progress towards achieving CIPFA accreditation and I'm glad to see the first report for the City Growth and Resources Committee presented.
- 1.2 This first annual report is a good mechanism for the Committee to support the Council's improvement journey by demonstrating the ways that the Committee supports the principles of the Target Operating Model; contributes to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, whilst also providing the opportunity to reflect on the business of the Committee over the past year and to look to the Committee's focus for the year ahead.



Councillor Douglas Lumsden
Convener, City Growth and Resources Committee

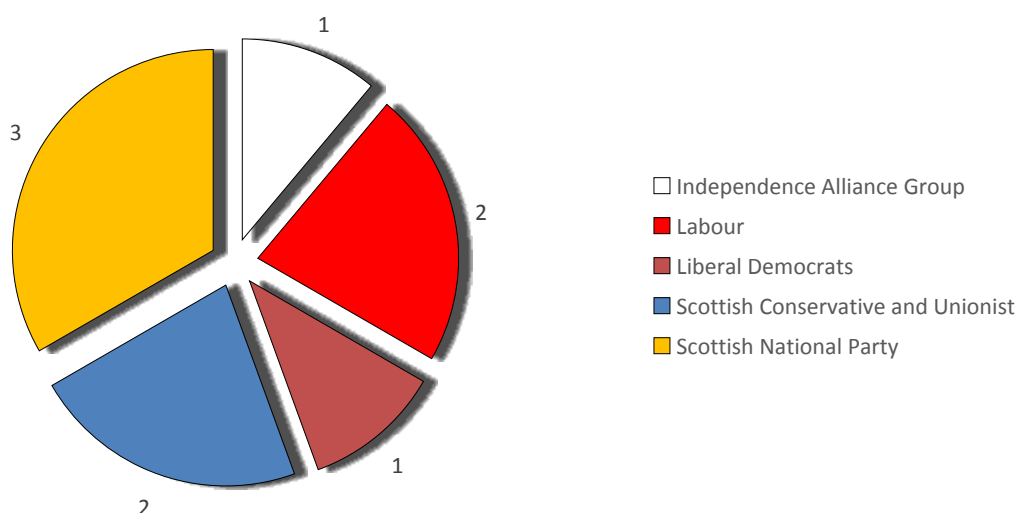
2. THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The role of the Committee is to focus on the Council's management of the institution's resources and place shaping strategies for the future growth of the city. This will include for example, local transport strategies. This mirrors the focus on the annual credit rating assessment.
- 2.2 The Terms of Reference for the Committee as approved by Council on 5 March 2018 are appended to the report.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE DURING 2018/2019

- 3.1 The City Growth and Resources Committee has 9 members and the composition is presented below.

Committee political balance (seats)



4. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 4.1 There were two changes to the Committee's membership throughout the reporting period with Councillor Catriona Mackenzie replacing Councillor Jackie Dunbar in September 2018 and Councillor Ross Grant replacing Councillor Gordon Graham as Vice Convener in April 2019.

5. MEMBER ATTENDANCE

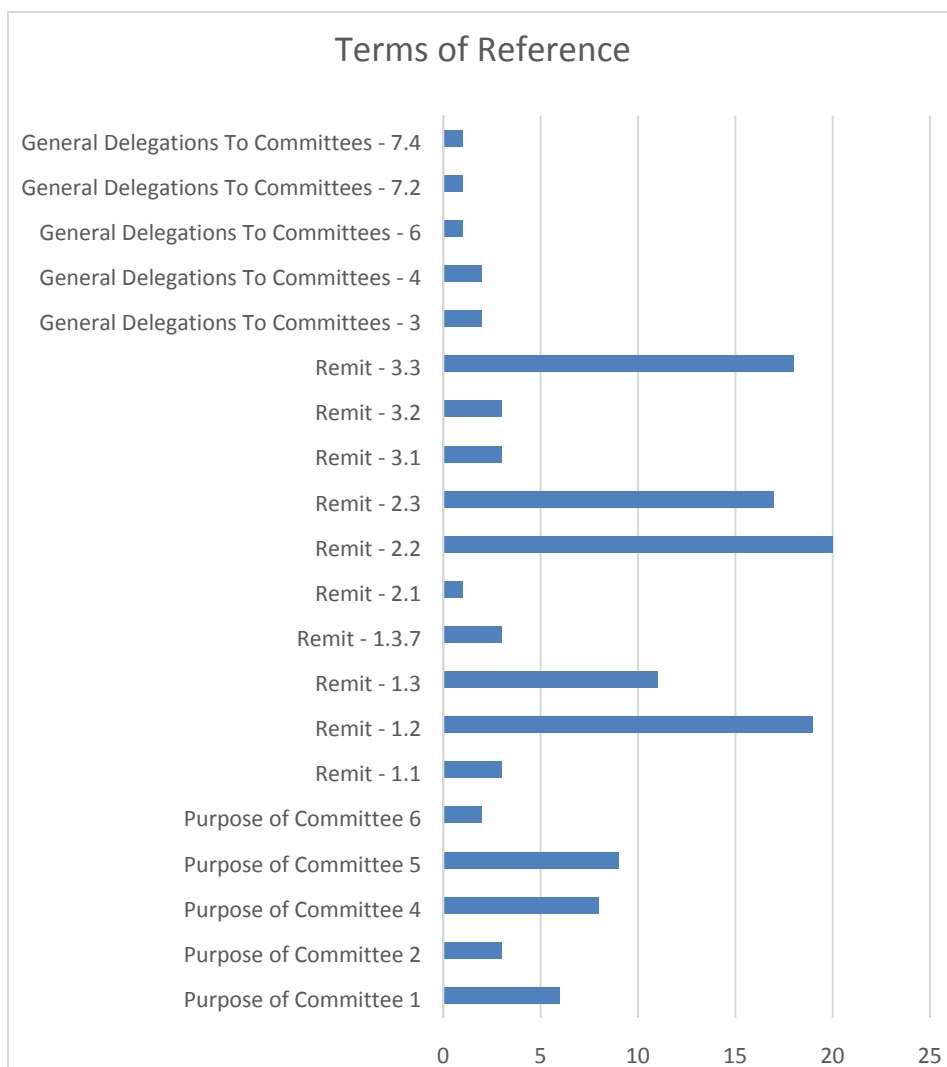
Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Nominated Substitute
Douglas Lumsden (Convener)	8	8	
Gordon Graham (Vice Convener)	7	7	
Ross Grant (Vice Convener)	1	1	
Marie Boulton	8	7	1 – Councillor Malik
Alan Donnelly	8	6	1 – Councillors Grant and Avril McKenzie
Jackie Dunbar	3	3	
Stephen Flynn	8	7	1 – Councillor McLennan
Jenny Laing	8	8	
Alex Nicoll	8	8	
Ian Yuill	8	7	1 – Councillor Greig
Catriona Mackenzie	5	5	

6. MEETING CONTENT

- 6.1 During the 2018/2019 reporting period (6 March 2018 to 29 April 2019) the Committee had 8 meetings and considered a total of 95 reports.

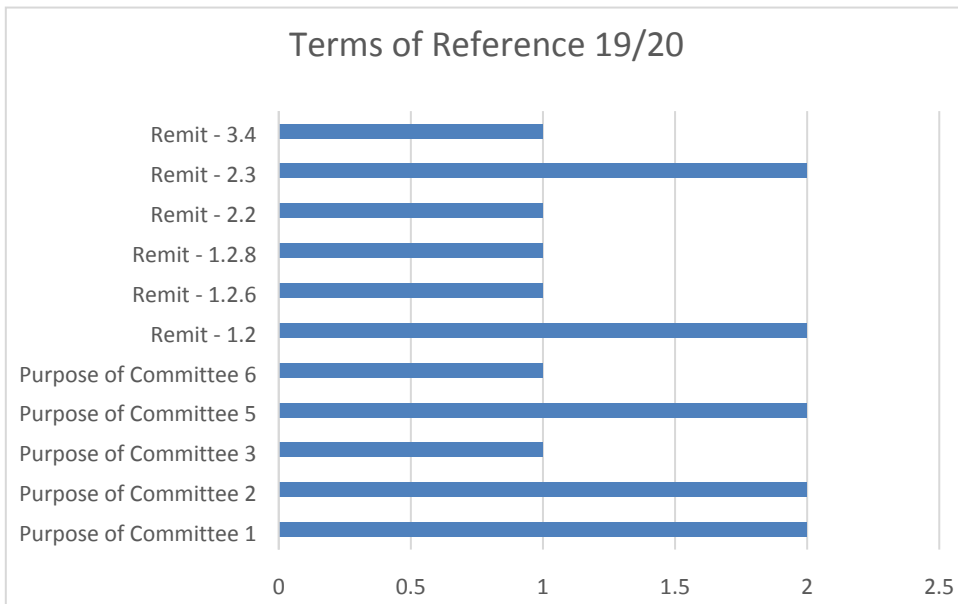
6.2 Terms of Reference

Of the 95 committee reports received during the reporting period, 81 reports were considered under the Terms of Reference approved by Council on 5 March 2018 and the following table details how the reports aligned to the Terms of Reference for the Committee:-



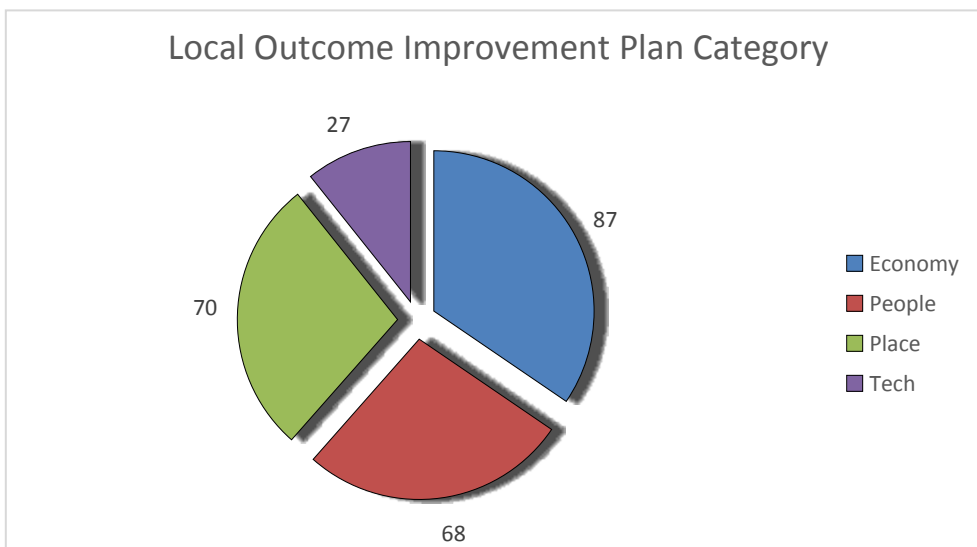
The vast majority of reports have fallen under Remits 1.2 (Oversee the Council's Resources – Finance, Systems and Technology, Staff and Property), 2.2 (Determine the Council's Strategies for City Growth and Place Planning Except in Relation to Major Infrastructural Planning) and 3.3 (Oversee the Acquisition and Disposal of Land and Property). Purpose 3 (Oversee and Ensure Adherence to the Council's Budgetary Control System) had not been reported.

The last Committee meeting on 24 April 2019 had 14 reports which were considered under the new Terms of Reference approved by Council on 4 March 2019 and the following table details how the reports aligned to those Terms of Reference for the Committee:-



6.3 Local Outcome Improvement Plan

The following details the 95 reports which had links to the themes of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.



6.4 Reports and Committee Decisions

The following table details the outcome of the Committee's consideration of the 95 reports presented to it throughout the year.

	Total	% Total Reports
Number of confidential reports	1	1.2%
Number of exempt reports	24	29.6%
Number of reports where the Committee has amended officer recommendations	17	21.0%
Number and percentage of reports approved unanimously	56	69.1%

	Total	% Total Reports
Number of reports requested by members during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in forward planner	4	
Number of service updates requested by members during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in forward planner	1	
Number of decisions delayed for further information	0	0.0%
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour and the ethical values of Public Life	0	0.0%
Number of late reports received by the Committee (i.e. reports not available for inspection by members of the public at least three clear days before a meeting)	2	2.5%
Number of referrals to Council, or other Committees in terms of Standing Order 33.1	0	0.0%

6.5 Notices of Motion, Suspension of Standing Orders, Interface with the Public

	Total
Number of Notices of Motion	4
Number of times Standing Orders were suspended	0
The specific Standing Orders suspended	N/A
Number of deputations	0
Number of Petitions Considered	0
Number of Members attending meetings of the committee as observers	9
Number of Meetings held by the Convener with other Conveners, relevant parties, to discuss joint working and key issues being raised at other Committee meetings	Weekly

7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND ATTENDANCE

- 7.1 The following specific Scheme of Governance training which is related to the operation of all Committees was provided:-
- Scheme of Governance Effective Decision Making on 23, 27 and 28 March 2018;
 - Financial and Procurement Regulations on 23 and 29 March 2018.
- 7.2 Training on the Councillors' Code of Conduct was provided in January and February 2018.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 8.1 Thirty-eight declarations of interest were made by Councillors during the reporting period. We measure this information to evidence awareness of the requirements to adhere to the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the responsibility to ensure fair decision making.

9. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- 9.1 In relation to the preparation of the Budget for financial year 2019/20 an engagement event on 1 February 2019 was undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders on the financial challenges that the Council faces. This event was very well attended and included, representatives from the third sector, local communities, trade unions, private sector and political parties, providing an opportunity for information sharing and for hearing the views of others.

- 9.2 In addition, engagement with individual stakeholder organisations happen on a regular basis through the Council's representation on a number of external boards.

10. OFFICER SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE

10.1

Officer	Total Expected Attendances	Total Attendances	Substitute Attendances
Steve Whyte, Director of Resources	8	6	0
Stephen Booth, Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord	8	6	0
Richard Sweetnam, Chief Officer - City Growth	8	6	0
Gale Beattie, Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning	8	6	0
Sandra Buthlay, Interim Chief Officer - Finance	3	3	0
Jonathan Belford, Chief Officer - Finance	4	4	0
John Wilson - Chief Officer Capital	4	4	0

11. EXECUTIVE LEAD'S COMMENTS

- 11.1 One of the Council's transformation projects is to deliver the CIPFA Mark of Excellence in Good Governance. As part of this project, CIPFA recommended that each Committee should annually review its effectiveness, including its information reporting needs, to help ensure that each Committee was following its Terms of Reference; operating effectively; and would assist in identifying any training needs or improvements to the Council's decision-making structures.

- 11.2 This was a busy Committee with the statistics indicating, on average, 12 reports considered at each meeting, although this is a little understated as two of the Committee meetings were Special meetings for single reports (the Quarterly monitoring), which means that each regular meeting of the Committee considered 15 or 16 reports. Often a considerable commitment in time for both Members and officers.

- 11.3 A substantial amount of business was undertaken in public, which assists in

maintaining transparency in the democratic process. Given the nature of the Committee and specifically the financial nature of some of the subjects there was a proportion of business conducted in private. Exempt and confidential reports are only used where they meet the legal definitions set out in the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1973 (Schedule 7A). Where appropriate reports have been split so that exempt information is considered separately from information that can be included in a public report.

- 11.4 Compliance with London Stock Exchange (LSE) reporting requirements have been maintained throughout the year, notice being given to the LSE ahead of Quarterly financial reports being published for the Committee.
- 11.5 Strong continuity is evident in the membership of the Committee with Members rarely being absent and knowledge built up over time can assist in the effective operation of the Committee.
- 11.6 A substantial number of motions and amendments were considered by the Committee during the year and some of these have been submitted very close to the start of the Committee, although this has been the exception rather than the norm. Proper consideration of motions and amendments by officers is an important part of the decision-making process and the Executive Lead may seek short adjournments where appropriate to ensure robust consideration has been given to ensure all Members are suitably advised to assist with making fully informed decisions.
- 11.7 Giving due consideration and making fully informed decisions are founded upon having access to reports in line with the approved Scheme of Governance. In pursuit of this late reports are not helpful. The Committee had two reports that were not issued in sufficient time to give 3 clear days notice prior to being considered. The Executive Lead will endeavor to eliminate late reports in the future.
- 11.8 Changes were made to the Committee's Terms of Reference when they were presented to Council in March 2019, which were mainly of a minor nature. One additional purpose was added, in relation to the approval of additional projects and associated budgets of a capital nature, and also to approve procurement related to the Capital Programme. These additions were as a result of changes to the Terms of Reference for the Capital Programme Committee.

12. NEXT YEAR'S FOCUS

- 12.1 On 5 March 2019 the Council approved a budget for financial year 2019/20. In order to effectively and efficiently monitor the progress of the budget and the forecast for the year a continued emphasis will be placed on presenting comprehensive quarterly reports one month after the quarter end. This requires two 'special' meetings of the Committee to meet, end of July and October.
- 12.2 The approved changes to the Committee Terms of Reference will bring additional emphasis on the Capital Programme and, specifically, making changes or approving procurement. The scrutiny of the delivery of the Capital Programme will continue to be undertaken by the Capital Programme Committee.
- 12.3 The Business Planner shows a focus on Strategic Place Planning, City Growth, Capital and Resources. The Committee expects to receive reports on the School Estate and business cases for four new schools that are outlined in the Capital Programme; the condition and suitability of Council buildings/properties; developer obligations; and Following the Public Pound. Regular reports on performance, quarterly financial

monitoring reports and an update on the Credit Rating annual review will be prepared for the Committee.

- 12.4 Council on 4 March 2019 approved new Terms of Reference and a further review will be reported to Council in March 2020. Throughout the next reporting year, we will review the Terms of Reference in line with the business submitted to the Committee and reflect on whether any areas require refinement moving forward to ensure the efficient operation of the Committee.

CITY GROWTH AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

1. To oversee and monitor the development and approval of appropriate short, medium and long term financial strategies and plans for the Council in light of available funding.
2. To review the in-year financial performance of the Council and its committees and to make appropriate recommendations where a forecast overspend is projected.
3. To oversee and ensure adherence to the Council's budgetary control system.
4. To oversee and monitor the development and approval of an appropriate strategy for the Council's estate, including plans for investment, disposal and maintenance.
5. To oversee and monitor the development, approval and delivery of Council place based strategies to support the City's plans for future economic growth.
6. On receipt of the annual re-assessment of the Council's credit rating, to advise Council on appropriate financial strategies in order to preserve or improve the Council's credit rating.

REMIT OF COMMITTEE

1. Budgets

The Committee will:

- 1.1 approve an Investment Strategy for the Council;
- 1.2 oversee the Council's resources – finance, systems and technology, staff and property; and
- 1.3 monitor all Councils budgets, and in particular:
 - 1.3.1 scrutinise service budget monitoring reports;
 - 1.3.2 hold budget holders to account for the proper control of the budget which they are responsible;
 - 1.3.3 ensure that the Council's budget is always balanced;
 - 1.3.4 approve changes to the budget including to vire between Service budgets where this is in excess of the amount delegated in the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation;

- 1.3.5 approve use of the Council's General Reserve;
- 1.3.6 scrutinise the implementation of plans and monitor budgets accordingly; and
- 1.3.7 oversee the Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound to ensure that the Council meets its duties.

2. City Growth and Place

The Committee will:

- 2.1 receive the annual report from the Economic Policy Panel set up to support the annual re-assessment of the council's credit rating;
- 2.2 determine the Council's strategies for city growth and place planning except in relation to major infrastructural planning; and
- 2.3 consider reports on key actions by the Council towards the delivery of the Regional Strategy and the Inward Investment Plan.

3. Property and Estates

The Committee will:

- 3.1 oversee a Portfolio Management Strategy for the Council;
- 3.2 approve an Estate and Investment Strategy; and
- 3.3 Oversee the acquisition and disposal of land and property.

JOINT WORKING WITH OTHER COMMITTEES:

The Committee will maintain an awareness of key issues arising through the work of other committees of the Council, through lead officers, conveners and vice conveners working together, and attending other committees as observers. Specifically:-

The City Growth and Resources Committee and Strategic Commissioning Committee will cooperate to ensure that resources are allocated strategically to support outcomes.

The City Growth and Resources Committee and the Capital Programme Committee will cooperate in promoting City Growth and Place Planning.

JOINT WORKING WITH NON COUNCIL BODIES:

The Committee, through its lead officers, will regularly consider key issues arising through other external organisations, including:

- the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee
- Opportunity North East
- the Regional Advisory Board

- Aberdeen Inspired
- VisitAberdeenshire
- the Scottish Cities Alliance
- the Aberdeen Renewables Energy Group
- the Strategic Development Planning Authority
- EU Regional and Thematic Groups
- the World Energy Cities partnership
- CoSLA
- coordinating structures emerging from the Council's Urban Governance Framework

Executive Lead: Director of Resources

