

# City Growth and Resources Committee Annual Effectiveness Report 2019/20



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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** I am pleased to present the second 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 am glad to see the second report for the City Growth and Resources Committee presented.
- 1.2** This second 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

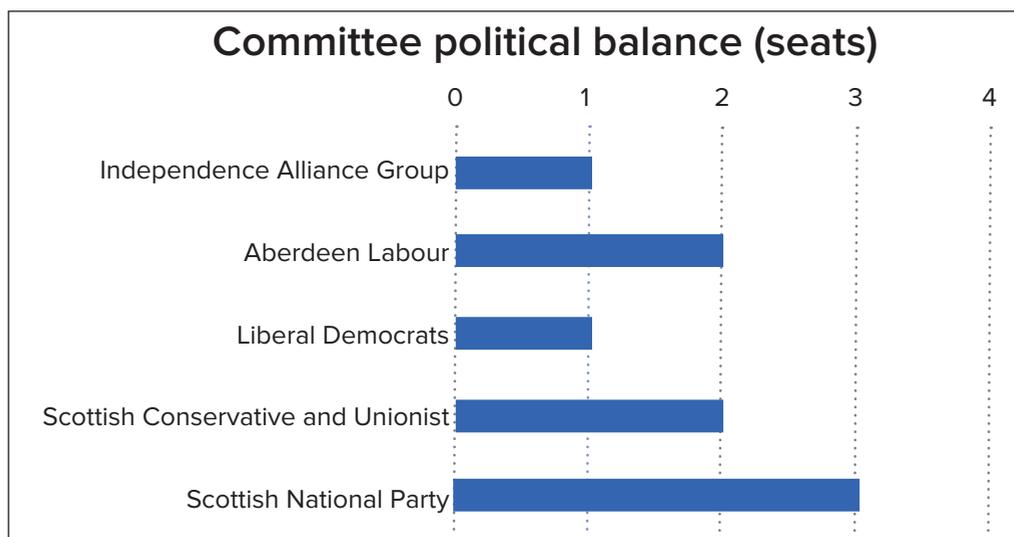
Convener, City Growth and Resources Committee.

## **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 are appended to the report.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE DURING 2019/20

3.1 The City Growth and Resources Committee has nine Elected Members.



### 4. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

4.1 During the reporting period Councillor Jackie Dunbar replaced Councillor Catriona Mackenzie, Councillor Wheeler replaced Councillor Donnelly and Councillor Cooke replaced Councillor Flynn as members on the Committee.

### 5. MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Nominated Substitute
Douglas Lumsden (C)	6	5	John Wheeler
Ross Grant (VC)	6	6	
Marie Boulton	6	5	Jennifer Stewart
Alan Donnelly	5	3	Avril Mackenzie & John Wheeler
Stephen Flynn	5	4	Gordon Townson
Jenny Laing	6	5	Sarah Duncan
Catriona Mackenzie	2	2	
Alex Nicoll	6	6	
Ian Yuill	6	5	Steve Delaney
John Wheeler	1	1	
Jackie Dunbar	4	2	Alexander McLellan & Gordon Townson

## 6. MEETING CONTENT

**6.1** During the 2019/2020 reporting period (29 April 2019 to 30 April 2020), the Committee had 6 meetings (2 of which were Special meetings) and considered a total of 66 reports.

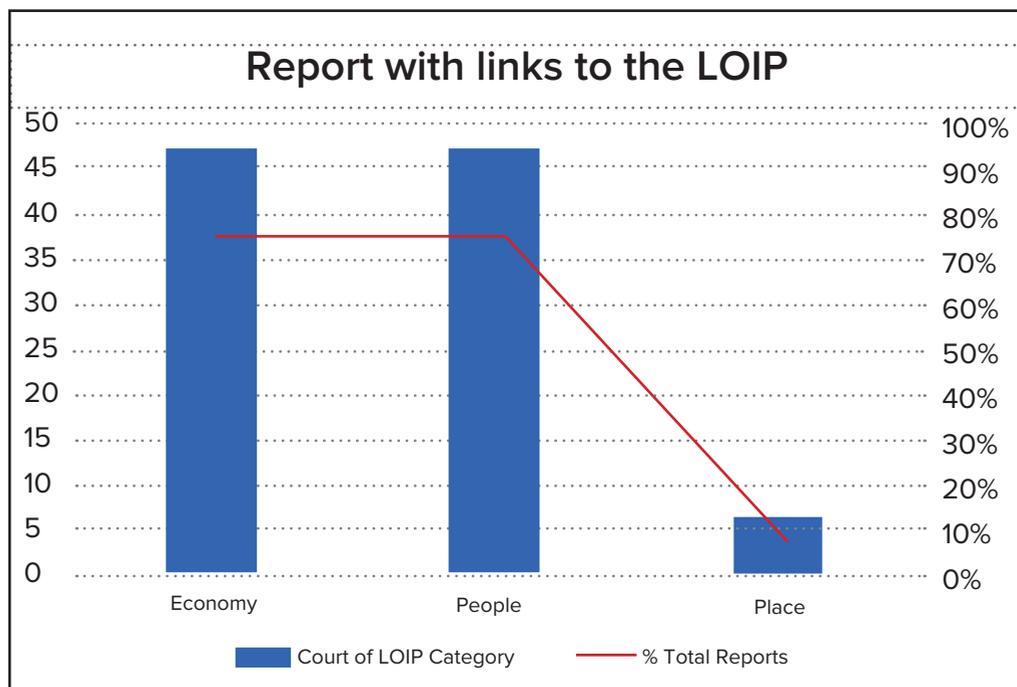
### 6.2 Terms of Reference

Of the 66 reports received the following table details how the reports aligned to the Terms of Reference for the Committee. It is worth noting that some reports fall under more than one Terms of Reference.

**6.3** The vast majority of reports have fallen under Purpose of Committee 2 (To approve the addition of new projects and associated budgets to the capital programme, to approve additional funding for existing projects and to approve procurement relating to the Capital Programme) and Remit 2.2 (Determine the Council's Strategies for City Growth and Place Planning Except in Relation to Major Infrastructural Planning. All Terms of Reference were used, this would indicate that the Committee has discharged its role throughout the course of the reporting period

### 6.4 Local Outcome Improvement Plan

The following table details of the 74 reports how many had a link to the themes of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.



## 6.5 Reports and Committee Decisions

The following table details the outcome of the Committee's consideration of the 66 reports presented to it throughout the year.

Reports	Total	% Total Reports
Number which were Confidential	1	1.5%
Number which were Exempt	15	23%
Number of reports where the Committee has amended officer recommendations	3	4.5%
Number and percentage of reports approved unanimously	38	57.5%
Number of reports requested by members during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in forward planner	4	6 %
Number of Service Updates requested	3	4.5%
Number of decisions delayed for further information	0	0%
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour and the ethical values of Public Life	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)	0	0%
Number of referrals to Council, or other Committees in terms of Standing Order 33.1	0	0%

## 6.6 Notices of Motion, Suspension of Standing Orders, Interface with the Public

Number of notices of motion	1
Number of times Standing Orders were suspended and the specific Standing Orders suspended	0
Standing order number (ref)	N/A
Number of deputations or other indicators of interface with the public, i.e. engagement and social media.	1
Number of petitions considered	0
Number of Members attending meetings of the committee as observers	18
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	As and when required

## 7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- 7.1** Although there were no specific training requirements required for the members of the Committee this year, relevant training was made available by officers and included training on the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Effective Decision Making, 'paper-light' meetings. These training opportunities were designed to help members carry out their roles at committee meetings.

## 8. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 8.1** Thirty declarations of interest were made by Councillors during the reporting period. Information in respect of declarations of interest is measured 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** The timing of the financial settlement for financial year 2020/21 was much later than in previous years therefore there was no opportunity to undertake a similar engagement event to the one that had been carried out in 2019.
- 9.2** Ongoing engagement with individual stakeholder organisations continued on a regular basis through representation on a range of external organisation boards.

## 10. OFFICER SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE

Officer	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Substitute Attendances
Chief Officer - Capital	3	2	Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord
Chief Officer - City Growth	4	4	
Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord	4	3	
Chief Officer - Finance	6	6	
Chief Officer - Governance	6	6	Legal Services Manager
Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning	4	3	Policy and Strategy Manager
Chief Operating Officer	2	2	
Director of Customer Services	1	1	
Director of Resources	6	5	

## 11. EXECUTIVE LEAD'S COMMENTS

- 11.1** One of the Council's transformation projects was to deliver the CIPFA Mark of Excellence in Good Governance, and this was successfully achieved in March 2020. 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 for the four regular meetings, sixteen reports were considered at each. Two meetings were Special meetings for specifically for the quarterly financial performance reports and in total only three reports were considered at these two meetings. The volume of reports was similar to the previous year.
- 11.3** A substantial amount, approximately 75%, of business was done 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** Despite a few changes in membership of the Committee, there was a strong continuity attendance of the Committee with Members rarely being absent and knowledge built up over time can assist in the effective operation of the Committee. Nine out of eleven Members who were expected to be at the Committee missed no more than a single meeting.
- 11.6** There was a healthy interest in the Committee business from other Members, where on 18 occasions Members attended as observers, 3 per meeting on average.
- 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 no reports that were not issued in sufficient time to give 3 clear days notice prior to being considered, an improvement on the previous year.

## **12. NEXT YEAR'S FOCUS**

- 12.1** On 3 March 2020 the Council approved a budget for financial year 2020/21. 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 would normally require two special meetings of the Committee to meet, end of July and October. With the changes forced by the Coronavirus pandemic the first special meeting was cancelled. Instead early reports on financial implications and budget rebalanced were considered at meetings of the Urgent Business Committee in May and June 2020.
- 12.2** The October 2020 meeting of the Committee will return to consider normal business, and this will include the quarter 2 financial performance report.
- 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 climate and emissions; Socio-Economic Action Plan; the condition and suitability of Council buildings/properties; the Queen Street Redevelopment Project; Strategic Housing Investment Plan; and the Affordable Housing Delivery Programme. 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 2 March 2020 approved new Terms of Reference and a further review will be reported to Council in March 2021. 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

## **13. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **City Growth and Resources Committee Terms of Reference Approved by Council on 4 March 2019**

#### **CITY GROWTH AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

##### **PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE**

1. To approve and monitor appropriate short, medium and long term financial strategies and
2. plans for the Council in light of available funding.
3. To approve the addition of new projects and associated budgets to the capital programme, to approve additional funding for existing projects and to approve procurement relating to the Capital Programme.
4. To review the in-year financial performance of the Council and its committees and to make appropriate recommendations where a forecast overspend is projected.
5. To oversee and take action to ensure adherence to the Council's budgetary control system.
6. To approve and monitor an appropriate strategy for the Council's estate, including plans for investment, disposal and maintenance.
7. To approve and monitor Council place based strategies to support the City's plans for future economic growth.
8. On receipt of the annual re-assessment of the Council's credit rating, to advise Council on appropriate financial strategies in

##### **REMIT OF COMMITTEE**

###### **1. Budgets**

The Committee will:

- 1.1 approve changes to the Council's resources including finance, staffing structures and property; and
- 1.2 monitor all Council budgets including the Transformation Fund, and in particular:
  - 1.2.1 scrutinise function budget monitoring reports;
  - 1.2.2 hold budget holders to account for the proper control of the budget which they are responsible;
  - 1.2.3 take such action as necessary to ensure that the Council's budget is always balanced;
  - 1.2.4 approve changes to the budget including to vire between function budgets where this is in excess of the amount delegated to officers in the Financial Regulations and Powers Delegated to Officers;
  - 1.2.5 review annual workplans and scrutinise and approve outline and full business cases for supporting new capital investments, ensuring that all appropriate consultation has been undertaken;

- 1.2.6** approve the allocation of additional funding to existing projects, both capital and revenue;
- 1.2.7** approve the addition of new projects to the Capital Programme;
- 1.2.8** approve procurement relating to the Capital Programme;
- 1.2.9** approve use of the Council's General Reserve;
- 1.2.10** approve use of the Council's Transformation Fund;
- 1.2.11** scrutinise the implementation of plans and monitor associated budgets; and
- 1.2.12** monitor the Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound and take such action as is required to ensure that the Council meets its duties.

## **2. City Growth and Place**

The Committee will:

- 2.1** consider 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 the Local Development Plan; and
- 2.3** consider reports on key actions by the Council towards the delivery of the Regional Strategy and the Inward Investment Plan and take such appropriate action as it sees fit.

## **3. Property and Estates**

The Committee will:

- 3.1** Determine, review and monitor a Portfolio Management Strategy for the Council;
- 3.2** approve an Estate and Investment Strategy;
- 3.3** hear and determine requests for review under s86(10) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 against the refusal by officers to approve community asset transfers; and
- 3.4** approve 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:-

- 1.** the City Growth and Resources Committee and Strategic Commissioning Committee will cooperate to ensure that resources are allocated strategically to support outcomes.
- 2.** 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

**Executive Lead: Chief Officer – Finance**



