

City Growth and Resources Committee

Annual Effectiveness Report 2020/21



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 I am pleased to present the third annual effectiveness report for the City Growth and Resources Committee. This represents good practice in governance terms and evidences the Council's commitment to having achieved CIPFA accreditation.
- 1.2 This 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.
- 1.3 Following an audit from December 2020 to April 2021, the Council was praised by Scotland's Accounts Commission for significant further improvements made since the 2015 and 2008 Best Value reports. This included organisational restructuring and sound financial stewardship – helping the council deliver major building projects at pace, vital public services within budget, and at the same time make significant savings under the direction of the City Growth and Resources Committee. The Commission noted that the redesign of services and a move to a commissioning-led approach had meant the council was successfully on track to meet its £125 million five-year target.



Councillor Ryan Houghton
Convener, City Growth and Resources Committee.

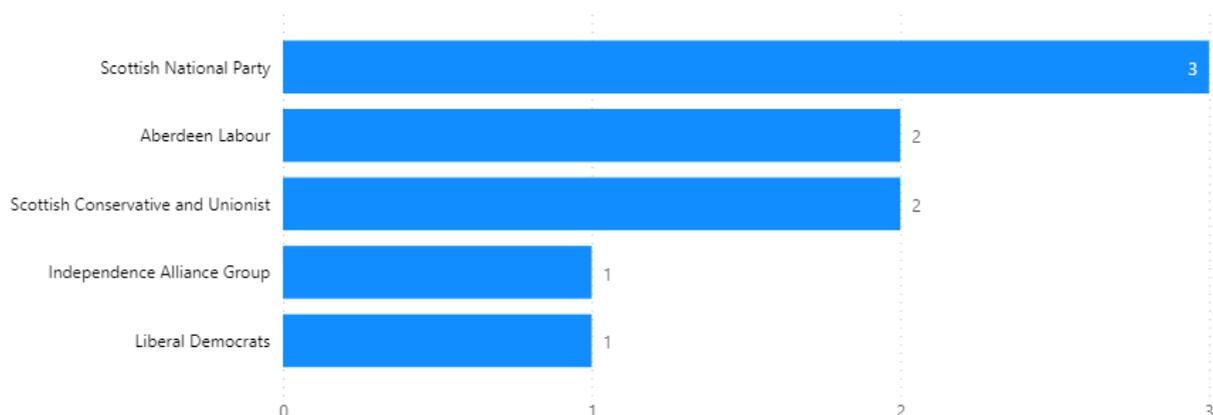
2. THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

- 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 2020/2021

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

Committee Political Balance (Seats)



4. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 4.1 During the reporting period Councillor Ryan Houghton replaced Councillor Douglas Lumsden MSP as the Convener and also as a member on the Committee; and Councillor Jenny Laing replaced Councillor Ross Grant as the Vice Convener.
- 4.2 In addition, Councillor John Cooke replaced Councillor Jackie Dunbar MSP, Councillor Freddie John replaced Councillor John Wheeler and Councillor Alex McLellan replaced Councillor Ciaran McRae as members on the Committee.

5. MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Substitutions	Nominated Substitute
Alex Nicoll	6	5		Alexander McLellan
Alexander McLellan	3	2	2	David Cameron
Ciaran McRae	3	2		Alexander McLellan
Douglas Lumsden	3	3	2	
Freddie John	3	1		Phillip Bell & Douglas Lumsden
Ian Yuill	6	6		
Jackie Dunbar	1	0		David Cameron
Jenny Laing	6	5		Barney Crockett
John Cooke	5	5		
John Wheeler	3	2		Ryan Houghton
Marie Boulton	6	5		Douglas Lumsden
Ross Grant	6	6		
Ryan Houghton	3	3	1	

6. MEETING CONTENT

6.1 During the 2020/2021 reporting period (1 May 2020 to 31 October 2021), the Committee had six meetings, one of which was a Special meeting and considered a total of 84 reports.

Terms of Reference

6.2 Of the 84 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 A majority of reports have fallen under City Growth and Strategic Place Planning Remit 3.2 (approve the Council's actions for city growth and place planning except in relation to major infrastructural planning and the Local Development Plan); and Remit 3.3 (approve key actions required by the Council to facilitate the delivery of strategies (including partnership strategies) and the Inward Investment Plan to support city growth and place planning.

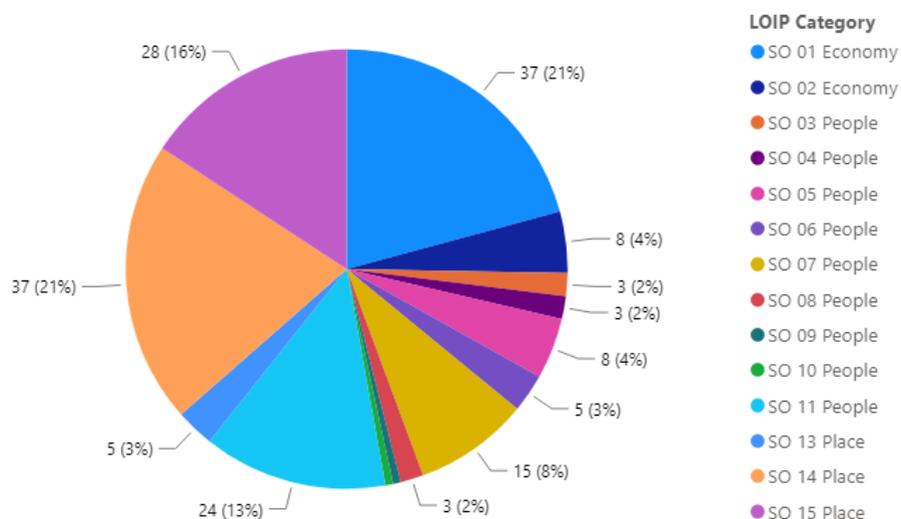
Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference	Count of Terms of Reference
General Delegations To Committees 8.5	1
Remit of Committee 2.1	2
Remit of Committee 1.1	19
Remit of Committee 1.1.2	1
Remit of Committee 1.1.3	1
Remit of Committee 1.1.4	1
Remit of Committee 1.1.5	1
Remit of Committee 1.1.6	1
Remit of Committee 1.1.7	9
Remit of Committee 1.1.8	1
Remit of Committee 1.1.11	1
Remit of Committee 2.1.1	6
Remit of Committee 2.1.2	2
Remit of Committee 2.1.3	2
Remit of Committee 2.1.4	4
Remit of Committee 2.1.5	8
Remit of Committee 2.1.6	2
Remit of Committee 2.2	2
Remit of Committee 3.2	24
Remit of Committee 3.3	25
Remit of Committee 4.1	17
Remit of Committee 4.4	5

6.4 Local Outcome Improvement Plan

The following table details how many reports had a link to the themes of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Stretch Outcomes from Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2020/21 are attached as Appendix 2.

Reports with links to the LOIP



6.5 Reports and Committee Decisions

The following table details the outcome of the Committee’s consideration of the 84 reports presented to it throughout the year.

Reports	Total
Number which were Exempt/Confidential	12
Number of reports where the Committee has amended officer recommendations	8
Number of reports approved unanimously	67
Number of reports requested by members during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in forward planner	8
Number of Service Updates requested	4
Number of decisions delayed for further information	0
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour and the ethical values of Public Life	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
Number of referrals to Council, or other Committees in terms of Standing Order 33.1	0

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

Number of notices of motion	7
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.	0

7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- 7.1** Training opportunities for elected members in the financial year 2020/21 were limited due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In April 2021, responsibility for the training of elected members transferred from Customer Experience to People and Organisational Development.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 8.1** 24 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** 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** Where Directors or Chief Officers were unable to attend, a substitute attended the meeting on their behalf.

Officer	Anticipated Attendance	Attendances
CO-Data and Insight	2	2
CO-Capital	5	5
CO-City Growth	5	5
Head of Service - Commercial and Procurement	3	3
CO-Corporate Landlord	6	6
CO-Finance	6	6
CO-Governance	6	6
CO-Operations and Protective Services	3	3
CO-Strategic Place Planning	6	6
Chief Operating Officer	1	1
Director of Customer	1	1
Director of Resources	6	6

11 EXECUTIVE LEAD'S COMMENTS

- 11.1** In 2020 the Council achieved the CIPFA Mark of Excellence in Good Governance. As part of our work to achieve this the Council adopted the CIPFA recommended practice, 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** The Covid-19 pandemic meant that changes to Council Governance were approved by the Urgent Business Committee in March 2020 that meant for a period of the year the City Growth and Resources Committee did not meet and operate in accordance with the approved Council diary. Over the period April to August 2020, there were no meetings of the Committee, with urgent and necessary decisions being taken by the Urgent Business Committee.
- 11.3** Despite this, it was a very busy year for the Committee with the statistics indicating, on average, 14 reports considered at each meeting, although this is a little understated as one of the Committee meetings was a Special meeting for a single report (the Quarterly monitoring), which means that each regular meeting of the Committee considered 16 or 17 reports. Often a considerable commitment in time for both Members and officers.
- 11.4** A substantial amount of business was undertaken in public (85% of reports), 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.
- 11.5** 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.
- 11.6** It is noted that a number of changes in membership were implemented during the period, and that membership is more settled now. Twelve out of thirteen Members who were expected to be at the Committee missed no more than a single meeting. This provides evidence of strong continuity in the membership of the Committee with Members rarely being absent enabling knowledge to build up over time to assist in the effective operation of the Committee.
- 11.7** In general, Committee business has resulted in decisions being agreed unanimously, 80% of reports in the period.
- 11.8** 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 and it is welcome to see that no reports were issued without sufficient time to provide 3 clear days notice prior to the meeting.
- 11.9** Changes were made to the Committee's Terms of Reference when they were presented to Council in March 2021, which were mainly of a minor nature.

12. NEXT YEAR'S FOCUS

- 12.1** On 10 March 2021 the Council approved a budget for financial year 2021/22. 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 year requires one 'special' meeting of the Committee to meet, end of the start of August.
- 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 City Centre and Beach Masterplanning work; the condition and suitability of Council buildings/properties; developer obligations; the Energy Transition Zone; the UK Prosperity Fund; and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Regular reports on performance, quarterly financial monitoring reports and an update on the Credit Rating annual review will also be prepared for the Committee.
- 12.4** Council on 3 March 2021 approved new Terms of Reference and a further review will be reported to Council in March 2022. 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.

APPENDIX 1

City Growth and Resources Committee Terms of Reference approved by Council 03 March 2021

CITY GROWTH AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

To approve and monitor financial strategies, budgets and financial performance in light of available funding. The Committee will also consider:

- strategies to support the city's economic growth;
- additions to the Capital Programme; and
- recommendations regarding the Council's property and estates portfolio.

The Committee monitors the delivery of all services provided by the Resources Function and City Growth, Governance and Strategic Place Planning. It scrutinises performance and approves options to improve those services within set budgets to ensure best value and delivery of the Council's agreed outcomes.

REMIT OF COMMITTEE

1. Budgets

The Committee will:

- 1.1** approve recommendations regarding the Council's resources including finance, staffing structures and property; and monitor all Council budgets including all Useable Reserves, and in particular:
 - 1.1.1** scrutinise function budget monitoring reports and make decisions to ensure that Council spending is delivered on budget;
 - 1.1.2** hold budget holders to account for the proper control of the budget for which they are responsible;
 - 1.1.3** approve changes to the budget including vire between function budgets where this is in excess of the amount delegated to officers in the Financial Regulations and Powers Delegated to Officers;
 - 1.1.4** consider and approve Outline and Full Business Cases for projects added to the Capital Programme outwith the budget process;
 - 1.1.5** approve annual procurement workplans in respect of the Capital Programme;
 - 1.1.6** approve Procurement Business Cases in respect of projects added to the Capital Programme outwith the budget process, submitted in accordance with Procurement Regulations;
 - 1.1.7** approve the allocation of additional funding or removal of funding to existing projects, both capital and revenue;
 - 1.1.8** approve the addition of new projects to the Capital Programme outwith the budget process;
 - 1.1.9** approve use of the Council's Useable Reserves;
 - 1.1.10** 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;
 - 1.1.11** receive Moody's formal credit rating reassessment;
 - 1.1.12** approve financial guarantees, including requests received from relevant Admitted Bodies of the Pension Fund; and
 - 1.1.13** consider numbers and values of Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Housing Benefit overpayments and Rent made unrecoverable, as required in terms of the Financial Regulations, and approve Non-Domestic Rates write offs.

2. Service Delivery

2.1 The Committee will, for the Resources Function and the City Growth, Governance and Strategic Place Planning Clusters:-

2.1.1 make decisions relating to service delivery;

2.1.2 approve options to improve/transform service delivery;

2.1.3 scrutinise operational performance and service standards in line with the Performance Management Framework and consider recommendations for improvements where required;

2.1.4 receive the cluster risk registers relative to its remit and scrutinise to ensure assurance that efficient controls are in place;

2.1.5 approve all policies and strategies relative to its remit; and

2.1.6 receive reports on inspections and peer reviews in order to ensure best practice and note any actions arising from those inspections and reviews.

2.2 In undertaking the aspects at 2.1, the Committee will ensure that it is acting within the budget set by Council and overseen by this Committee and in accordance with best value and supporting delivery of the Council's agreed outcomes, commissioning intentions, service specifications and service standards.

3. City Growth and Strategic Place Planning

The Committee will:

3.1 approve reports to support the annual re-assessment of the Council's credit rating;

3.2 approve the Council's actions for city growth and place planning except in relation to major infrastructural planning and the Local Development Plan; and

3.3 approve key actions required by the Council to facilitate the delivery of strategies (including partnership strategies) and the Inward Investment Plan to support city growth and place planning,

4. Property and Estates The Committee will:

4.1 approve recommendations regarding the Council's assets, property and estates;

4.2 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;

4.3 approve the procedure for the Community Asset Transfer Sub Committee; and

4.4 approve the acquisition and disposal of land, and property.

Executive Lead: Chief Officer - Finance

APPENDIX 2

Stretch Outcomes from Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2020/21.

Economy

1. 10% increase in employment across priority and volume growth sectors by 2026.
2. 90% of working people in Living Wage employment by 2026.

People

3. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026.
4. 90% of children and young people will report that they feel mentally well by 2026.
5. 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.
6. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.
7. Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026.
8. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.
9. 25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction each year by 2026.
10. 2% fewer people reconvicted within one year of receiving a community or custodial sentence by 2026.
11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.
12. Rate of harmful levels of alcohol consumption reduced by 4% and drug related deaths lower than Scotland by 2026.

Place

13. No one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty by 2026.
14. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.
15. 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026