ITEM No ...4.....

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 26 SEPTEMBER 2022

REPORT ON: CORPORATE SERVICES SERVICE PLAN 2021-24 PROGRESS REPORT

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT NO: 258-2022

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide a mid-year progress report on the Service Plan for Corporate Services for the period 2021-2024.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee note the attached service plan progress report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In November 2020, elected members endorsed the Council's Action Plan to address the recommendations from the Best Value Audit (Article IV of the minute of the meeting of Dundee City Council on 16 November 2020, Report No: 284-2020 refers). The Action Plan sets out that all services are to develop a Service Plan for the period 2021-24 and present these plans to the appropriate Committee and provide progress reports twice yearly.
- 4.2 Report No 21-2021 presenting the Service Plan for Corporate Services for the period 2021/2024 was approved at the Policy & Resources Committee on 21 June 2021 (article IV refers). The Service Plan sets out the strategic direction for Corporate Services for the next three years (financial years 2021/22 to 2023/24) and outlines key priorities and improvements which the service intends to deliver, based on the financial and employee resources which are expected to be available. It also sets out in more detail the service's key responsibilities and identifies the key actions to be undertaken to meet these priorities, as well as the performance indicators which will be used to monitor progress.
- 4.3 The report attached in Appendix 1 is the first performance report in relation to this service plan and reports on performance for Quarters 1 and Quarter 2 of financial year 2021/22. It provides an update on the performance indicators and actions under each priority theme in the plan and in each theme where required identifies further improvement activity to achieve the targets and action in the plan.
- 4.4 As a strategic service area the key priorities for Corporate Services are:
 - 1. Sustainable financial strategy
 - 2. Implementation and delivery of Our People Strategy
 - 3. Implementation and delivery of the Digital Strategy
 - 4. Delivering a robust and secure corporate IT platform
 - 5. Improving income collection
 - 6. Developing collaborative partnerships
 - 7. Providing assurance of good corporate governance, including effective audit and benchmarking

4.5 The Corporate Services Service Plan sets out performance measures and actions for each specific service area. Performance in relation to these measures and actions will be monitored in accordance with the Council's Performance Management Framework and reported to Committee on a twice-yearly basis.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

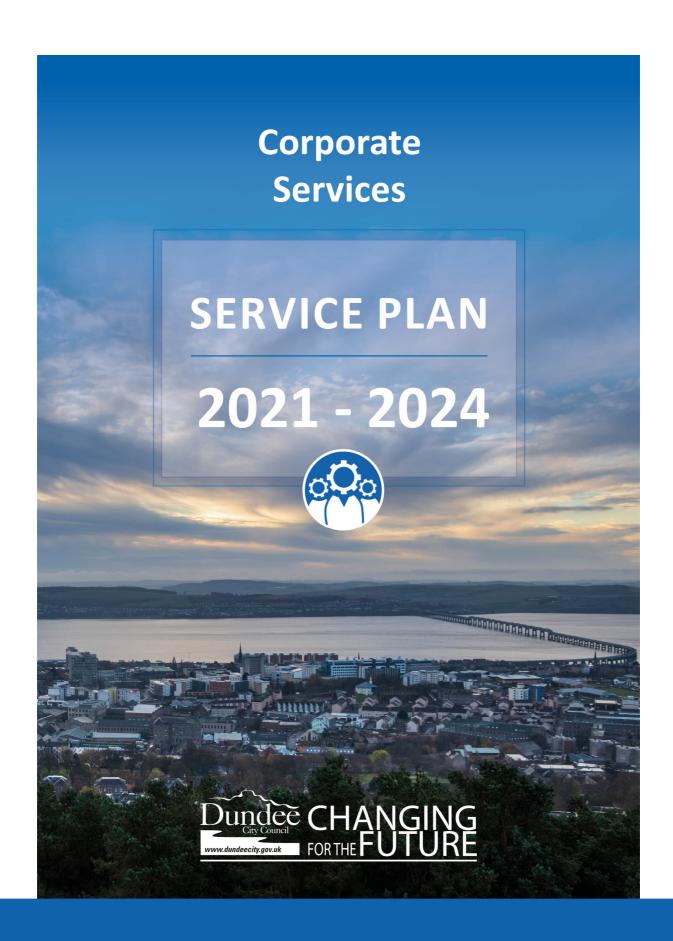
The Council Leadership Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

ROBERT EMMOTT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVCES

14 SEPTEMBER 2022



Corporate Services

Quarters 3 & 4 Performance Report August 2022

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This mid-year report sets out the progress of Corporate Services against its Service Plan for the second half of 2021/22.

It reflects good progress in the context of significant additional demands for support due to COVID.

Highlights are the maintenance of essential public services, the continued delivery of support to citizens businesses, the setting of the Council Budget for 2022/23, and the continuation of core support services, including the delivery of online Council meetings.

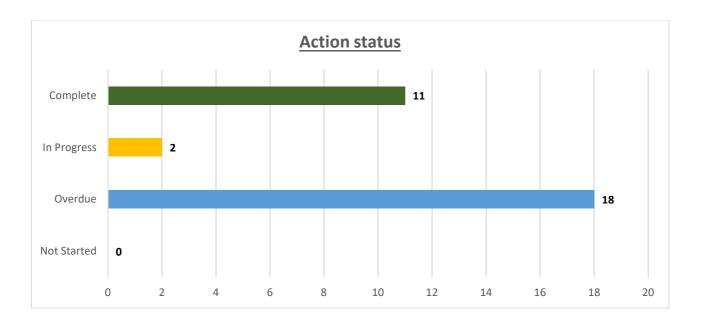


Corporate Services

Service Priorities

- Sustainable financial strategy
- Implementation and delivery of Our People and Workforce Strategy
- Implementation and delivery of the Digital Strategy
- Delivering a robust and secure corporate IT platform
- Improving income collection
- Developing collaborative partnerships
- Providing assurance of good corporate governance, including effective audit and benchmarking





Action status Key:

Not started: Action has been assigned to an officer but not started **Overdue:** The action's due date has passed, and the action is not yet complete. **In Progress:** The action has progress and is not at no update. **Complete:** The action is complete.

Corporate Finance

Action we have taken

Accounting Strategy

The Capital and Revenue Budgets were approved by Committee in January and February respectively. Looking ahead the team will liaise with services to monitor these budgets and report the outcome of this regularly to Committee. In addition, a review of the longer-term financial strategy will be undertaken that will consider the impact of the Scottish Governments Resource Spending Review, this will be submitted to elected members later this year.

Financial Services & Investment

The service has supported the budget preparation exercises by providing affordability analysis in relation to loans charges and has undertaken analysis of budget efficiencies in relation to treasury management. Accurate cashflow management and projections ensured that the Council could take advantage of low borrowing costs which will support future financial sustainability. The service has also continued to provide operational solutions to support pandemic related payments to citizens and businesses. Specifically, in relation to the management of Tayside Pension Fund a revised funding strategy was introduced to accommodate employers requiring to exit the fund at minimised risk to remaining employers and we have introduced self-service pension systems for both employers and fund members. Statutory requirements in relation to the publication of annual benefit statements were met. Internal and external audits have been completed that have provided assurance on governance and operations of the pension fund.

Internal Audit, Corporate Fraud & Risk Management

The service has assisted, through the provision of advice and guidance, to make improvements to the governance, risk management and control framework. The Senior Audit Manager continues to deliver the internal audit plan with regular reports and updates being submitted to Scrutiny Committee. Throughout the remainder of 2021/22 the Corporate Fraud Team continued to work with services in reviewing Covid-19 grants and mitigate the risk of fraud occurring. In addition, the team continued to carry out routine investigation, participate in the Nation Fraud Incentive exercise and deliver ongoing training to raise awareness of fraud. The Corporate Risk Management Co-ordinator continues to provide advice and support to all service and maintain the various risk registers that are reported separately to Committee for information.

Corporate Procurement

The team continues to support services on procurement and payment activities. Key performance indicators were all maintained above targets. The team also continues to lead the development of the Council's Community Wealth Building Strategy.

Insurance

The team have continued to run an effective service to ensure that the Council's assets are adequately and effectively insured and have provided regular professional advice and guidance to departments on insurance and operational risk management issues. The Home Contents Insurance Scheme continues to be administered for Council tenants.

Corporate Finance Performance Indicators

Annual

Performanc e Data Traffic Light Icon	Performance Indicator	Performance Data Current Value	2020/21 Target	Short Term Trend	Comments
	Cost of Pension Fund administration per member.	£34.63	£30.00	•	The main reason for higher costs is one-off system costs for Altair software. Cost per member will reduce in 22/23.
	Pension Fund investment performance relative to benchmark.	-5.87	0	•	Extreme market volatility during period. All longer-term performance targets remain positive.
	Variance between capital budget and actual expenditure	0%	5%		The final actual capital outturn for 2021/22 was £57.375m against an approved budget of £117.271m. The majority of this variance reflected delays and slippage as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. A breakdown of these projects was included in the Annual Accounts.

Monthly as at the end of each quarter

-	Statu s	Performance Indicator	Decemb er 2021	March 2022	Current Target	Term	Notes & History Note
ı			Value	Value		Trend	
		Payment of creditors - % < 30 days	96%	94%	95%	•	This is to be kept under review, in conjunction with No P/Order, No Pay Policy.
		Payment of local creditors - % < 14 days	94%	93%	90%	•	One off dip with root cause identified and corrective actions put in place

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
	Explore opportunities to better link our financial planning and Transformation priorities to address the significant financial impacts of COVID-19	1070	A new board has been established which will oversee the Council's transformation programme, including the financial benefits of projects.
	Community Wealth Building	45%	Process ongoing with various pillar leads reviewing their

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
			respective parts of the action plan. It is envisaged an overall progress update will be available for CLT in October 2022.
	Develop a Strategic Asset Management Plan to guide the Council through the recovery phase and support the ambition to build back better	60%	Work at strategic and service level is underway to complete this action.
	Update the medium- and long- term financial plans	80%	Updated long-term forecast almost complete that reflects latest assumptions on pay, inflation, council tax levels and grant settlement. This will be reported to elected members by September 2022.
	Review the areas for improvement in relation to the management of assets within the Council's Annual Governance Statement and their relevance in line with the priorities emerging from Covid19, as set out in the recovery plan priorities.	100%	The Annual Governance Statement is now complete.
	Manage revenue and capital budgets in light of monitoring information	100%	Revenue and Capital Budgets are being monitored and the outcome of this is reported timeously to CLT then detailed information is also submitted regularly to elected members. This position will continue to be closely monitored.
	Review opportunities for collaborative procurement across Tayside	100%	Given there are currently no staff within the TPC and the overall resource within the DCC Procurement Team is extremely limited, the opportunities to prioritise at collaborative procurement are very challenging at this moment. Notwithstanding this, the various tests of change exercise noted there may be possible wider efficiencies that can be generated through reviewing service standards and works specifications with partners e.g., roads maintenance etc. These will be taken forward by the respective leads.

Areas for improvement

The Service is working with Scotland Excel on a commercial partnership proposal that would develop the Council's Corporate Procurement Strategy and assist in delivering the Community Wealth Building Strategy.

Customer Services & IT

Action we have taken

Customer Services (Contact Centre)

The Contact Centre aims for a performance of 90% of all calls answered, however it should be noted this is a centre average and there are variances across the different services. Another target is speed to answer with the target of calls to be answered within 90 seconds. While call answering and speed to answer are important it should be noted the most important criteria is that customers are dealt with by well-informed professional advisors who provide clear advice and leave customers clear as to what happens next. Calls answered has fallen short of the expected target across many of the different services offered, however, number of online services has increased and we continue to encourage customers to self-serve where they can.

Advice Services (Scottish Welfare Fund & Self Isolation Support Grants)

The Scottish Welfare Fund has seen increasing demand over recent years. Demand for Crisis Grants is increasing consistently year on year, 2021/22 saw a 12% increase in the number of crisis grants awarded and a 42% increase in community Care Grants awarded. Self-Isolation Support Grants were introduced in October 2020 to provide financial support to meet basic needs during a period of self-isolation for workers on low incomes. The service has dealt with 7937 self-isolation support grant applications which ranged from between 228 and 1684 in any given week in the last 2 quarters of 2021/22.

Advice provision continued on a remote basis with 4,814 incoming calls to Welfare Rights and Connect in 2021/22 of which 4685 (97%) answered.

Benefit Delivery

The service has aimed to balance a varied and changing workload resulting from the impact of the pandemic, in particular redirection of significant resources required to support various grant schemes throughout financial year 2021/22. Despite this speed of processing for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit remained within target ensuring households received this payment timeously.

Corporate Debt

The amount of Council Tax billed for 2021/22 was £60,165,211 the sums collected £56,610,780 which equates to 95% of **the** billable sum calculated on a line by line basis. This represents an increase of 1.3% in cash collection compared with 2020/21. The service continues to work closely with Benefit Delivery and council Advice Services Teams to encourage take up of all benefits to maximise household income. Non-Domestic rates net amount billed for 2021/22 amounted to £48,249,273 the cash receipts amounted to £44,163,565 which is 91.14% of the sum billed. This is a decrease of 1.19% on same period for 2020/21 however this was due to amendments to the valuation roll in the last week of the financial year.

IT Service

The Council has invested significantly in the Microsoft 365 product set. This has already brought great benefits in enabling video conferencing and instant messaging in support of hybrid working. Further adoption of this technology will see the Council utilising Sharepoint as its standard platform for document storage and collaboration with documents available securely on the internet to internal users and third-party partners.

Wi-Fi facilities have been upgraded and extended within Corporate building and high schools. The next phase of the project will see these facilities significantly extended within primary school and early years buildings.

Customer Services & IT Performance Indicators

Annual

Performanc e Data Traffic Light Icon	Performance Indicator	Performance Data Current Value	2020/21 Target	Short Term Trend	Comments
	Cost of collecting Council Tax per dwelling	£11.23	£8.32		Decrease across most cost categories, offset by increased Sheriff Officer Commission and decreased income
	Improve in year Non-Domestic Rates collection rate (monthly)	91.14%	96%		Recovery levels in 21/22 were showing signs of improvement following the impact of covid on businesses throughout the city. However, due to amendments created in the valuation roll and new occupiers being charged near the end of the financial year. The timing of these changes meant there was insufficient time to recover the outstanding balances.

Monthly as at the end of each quarter

Status	Performance Indicator		March 2022	Current Target	Short Term	Notes & History Note
		Value	Value		Trend	
	Average number of days taken to process new claims.	14	14	12	_	Indicator affected due to resources allocated to assist with other areas of work

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
	Review new models of operational front-line work in light of changes in priorities following review of Council and City plans	50%	Service Delivery continues to be reviewed, moving customers to be able to self-serve online where possible.
	Evaluate changing city poverty profiles and ensure service specification meets changing needs at city and ward levels	50%	Work has begun on area profiles of Dundee being used to inform service provision in different areas of Dundee. Area profiles for Linlathen and Stobswell West being used to plan service

		delivery options and advice strategy priorities in first instance.
Update the Digital Strategy	50%	Work is progressing on a Digital Strategy to align with the Scottish Governments vision of a Digital Scotland.
Continued development of IT solutions, including collaboration tools for remote working	70%	

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
	Lead on exploring the potential of MS Teams to enable Council/Committee meetings to continue to take place virtually	100%	Microsoft Teams well established to enable Council/Committee meetings to take place virtually.
	Review and revise city wide co-ordinated advice plan with main local advice partners	100%	Dundee Advice Strategy 2022-24 agreed at P&R committee 27 June 22
	Refresh the IT Strategy	100%	An update of the IT strategy was presented to CLT in November 2021
	Prepare and implement a new advice strategy for Dundee incorporating the recommendations of the Dundee Fairness Commission	100%	Advice Strategy in place and approved at Committee in July 2022. Business plan in place to support strategy.
	Adopt an "advice first" principle and strategy response to food insecurity, ensuring people in financial crisis are supported to access all the financial support to which they are entitled	100%	Dundee Advice Strategy in place. Covers food insecurity. Working with food insecurity organisations to embed.
	Maximise take up of school clothing grants, free school meals, Educational Maintenance Allowance and Best Start Grants	100%	Educational benefits awarded in line with council Tax reduction. In the main no separate application required in order to maximise take up.
	Examine repeat Scottish Welfare Fund applicants and identify preventative approaches to achieve longer- term solutions	100%	Applications have been interrogated. Customers are being contacted to sign up for assistance to maximise income and reduce reliance on Scottish Welfare Fund.
	Increase fuel debt write-off cases by 10% through Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project	100%	Schedule of individual customers with fuel debt now prepared from 4088 Fuel Well households surveyed. System of ongoing communication of fuel debt options for households developed and will also be used going forward in 2022/23
	Increase take-up of warm home discounts by 7% through the Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project	100%	Schedule of individual company lists now prepared for 4088 Fuel Well households. Significant increase in warm homes discount has been achieved through Fuel Well 2 process in 2021/22. System of ongoing communication of Warm Homes Discount to households developed and will also be used in 2022/23

Democratic & Legal Services

Action we have taken

Democratic and Legal Services principal focus continues to be:

- Make the case for a more sustainable, public, national laboratory service for Scotland
- Ensure that the democratic institutions continue to operate in as close to normal a fashion as possible, both for the City Council and also for outside bodies including the Dundee City Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board, Tayside Valuation Joint Board, Tayside Contracts Joint Committee, Tay Road Bridge Joint Board and Tay Cities Region Joint Committee and also for individual Elected Members, as they all continue to support the City and the Region in its recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic and as they respond to the new financial challenges facing both the Council and the outside bodies and also the citizens who they serve
- Successfully administer the Council Election which took place on 5 May
- Continue to provide a safe and sensitive registration service for significant life events, including births and deaths and to celebrate weddings and civil partnerships

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
	Develop long term plans for Tayside Scientific Services	30%	It has been agreed that, in light of the forthcoming Council Elections, it would be appropriate for this matter to be progressed over the Summer. There are no further actions required of Tayside Scientific Services at this time.
	Deliver the 2022 Local Government Elections	50%	The period for nomination of candidates has now closed and there will be a Poll in all Council Wards. Preparations for the Poll are in progress. The Elections Team continues to formally meet to oversee these preparations.

People

Action we have taken

Our People and Workforce Strategy

The actions associated with our current People and Workforce Strategy have been largely achieved. Previous actions that were identified have been superseded or improved quickly because our workforce responded so positively to the challenges of the Covid pandemic.

Changing practices rapidly, the emergence of new digital tools, developing creative approaches to the deployment of employees and the development of new workforce skills have meant that we are able to review our strategy in the coming months.

Work has therefore commenced to develop a new People and Workforce Strategy which will reflect the progress we have made and take account of the priorities ahead to continue our journey of supporting and modernising our workforce of the future. The joint Heads of People are reviewing how best to respond to the challenges and opportunities ahead for our workforce. There also continues to be ongoing positive engagement and partnership with our Trade Union colleagues in workforce matters.

Deployment and Recruitment

The remobilisation of Services has required practical support and professional advice from People Services.

The teams continue to respond to deployment requests, this has been revisited following the Ukrainian visitor support in the city. Recruitment and Staffing Teams are ensuring that critical posts have been recruited to. The Payroll team has also supported this high-volume activity ensuring contractual and pay arrangements have been progressed quickly. The additional payroll and HR activity around industrial relations and pay awards is continuing.

Employee Well-being

The teams continue to progress support around employee well-being and resilience. The Health and Safety team has been crucial to the safe working practices, including workplaces across all services. The production and communication of new employee guidance and policy has been achieved. A new sickness absence dashboard is now in place. This will support employees, inform our decision making and ensure proactive approaches to reduce absence.

The new Well-being Support Service continues to develop approaches to ensure the resilience of employees and has invested in methods to mitigate potential trauma in the future.

Workforce Planning

Workforce planning tools have been developed and circulated to services with support given from Learning and Organisational Development and Human Resources. Most workforce plans in services are completed.

Young People Workforce Initiatives – Youth Employability Team

There has been significant effort and investment to support young people into local employment in Dundee and there are currently 28 modern apprentices and 20 graduate apprenticeships in DCC across services and disciplines. There is also a graduate programme in place to support 12 fully funded placement opportunities for 12 months for young unemployed/underemployed graduates, (up to age 24), providing them with relevant work experience, increasing their employability skills to improve future employment

prospects. Further research is also being undertaken by the Youth Employability Team to improve recruitment and engagement of young people.

Modernisation of Workforce Practices

The Council has always had a positive approach to work-life balance and flexible working. A Corporate strategic group is exploring the implementation of new agile approaches to how we work in the future, taking account of the most recent research with a view that key services have the right people at the right time and the best tools to be flexible, effective, and efficient. New Guidance on Hybrid working has been agreed and is now in place, informing workstyles and digital requirements for employees.

Corporate Business Support has been critical to supporting the Ukrainian effort and continues to support work around the Employee Experience with a view to reviewing and modernise administrative and system improvement.

Skills Development

Priorities around mandatory and essential job requirements have been met. New digital ways of connecting and working together have been accelerated in recent months. The Digital Champion Network has been critical in supporting employees to learn or enhance new skills relating to Office 365, ensure individual and team development and development of working with digital systems. Considerable progress has been made around broader learning approaches such as the use of Office 365 which will be set out in a future People and Workforce Strategy.

People Performance Indicator

Annual

Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	Performance Indicator	Performance Data Current Value	2021/22 Target	Short Term Trend	Comments
	Gender pay gap	1.12%	2%		In 2020/2021, Dundee City Council's gender pay gap was 1.12%, the Mean Gender Pay Gap this year 2021/2022 is still1.12%. This means that for every £1 that a male employee earns, a female employee would earn 98.88 pence. The Scottish average last year was 3.7% and therefore Dundee is likely to continue to be better than the Scottish average this year. Dundee City Council last year were 8th lowest out of 32 Councils across Scotland and are well within the 2% target for this KPI. The Our People & Workforce Strategy sets out our ambition for Equality, Diversity & Fairness as well as enhancing leadership. Dundee City Council will continue to promote flexible working at all levels and ensure our training and recruitment practices provide equality of opportunity for all, at all levels of the organisation to continue to drive down the gender pay gap. The outcomes below outline our ambitions for the Council as an employer, which will be developed and measured on an ongoing basis. • equality and diversity training will be in place for senior leaders.
					 achieve recognition for having a Trauma Informed workforce. revised data definitions for recording equality data for our employees will be implemented having engaged with employees and TUs.

Performance Data Traffic Light Icon	Performance Indicator	Performance Data Current Value	2021/22 Target	Short Term Trend	Comments
					 leadership and development opportunities will be promoted for our workforce. engage with our workforce to develop career progression and promotion in the Council revised recruitment and selection of young people will be in place. attract candidates from protected characteristics through employability opportunities. achieve digital inclusion across the workforce. understand racism and barriers to promotion and development in the Council by engaging with our employees and service users. our recruitment practice will reflect the Scottish Government's toolkit. monitor applicants for job opportunities and take appropriate actions. take action to address any issues identified by the published gender, disability and ethnicity pay gaps.

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
	Review of terms and conditions	3%	Meeting arranged to review changes that are required. Contacting other authorities in respect of craft T&C's for inclusion in DCC T&C's
	Review terms and conditions of service to reflect our 'new normal'	20%	Continuing to gather information to inform terms and conditions work.
	Review Health and Safety Policy corporately and in Services to reflect new ways of working	30%	Continuing engagement with trade unions regarding all proposed changes and updates of h&s policy and guidance, linked to hybrid working.
	Staff Deployment Team consolidated and development of internal jobs market	75%	Deployment now established in Youth Employability Team. Internal jobs market still to be further developed.
	Work with all services to review working practices to increase flexibility and mobility	80%	Guidance is now in place and workstyles exercise is completed. Working group will continue to progress this work with digital and building considerations in place.

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
	Continue to promote learning and development and health and wellbeing strategies	80%	The well-being support continues to be increased for employees. Trauma based approaches are being adopted to our work as well as the national approaches to workforce well-being
	Review all policies and procedures to reflect changes to the way we work including the requirement for an increasingly flexible workforce	80%	Hybrid Working Guidance in place as well as the development of a new portal on One Dundee. The flexible Working Policy review is completed.
	Ensure that our young people are supported with Employability opportunities in Dundee and across the Tay Cities	80%	Work continues to progress outcomes for young people into employment. All programmes working successfully.
	Review Our People and Workforce Strategy to reflect the new normal	100%	The Review of the Workforce Plan has been completed. Next steps implementation and consultation with the trade unions
	Work with Services to review workforce resources and succession plans	100%	Resources have been circulated to management teams.
	Build on the success of the Mass Vaccination Centre deployment models	100%	Staff deployed to support Self Isolation Grant award process. Deployment process in place however minimal requests submitted

Best Value

Action we have taken

Development of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, People Strategy and Digital Strategy are key components of our forward planning to secure Best Value.

Status	Action	% Progress	Notes & History Latest Note
	Corporate Services - Report progress towards Service Plans to Service and Scrutiny twice yearly	50%	Service Plan performance for Q1 and Q2 reported to Committee during December/January and reports being prepared for Q3 and Q4 for June/July Committee
	Corporate Services - Implement 3- year service plans which set out clear prioritisation of key actions and targets for each strategic service area to enable transparency in reporting service performance to service committees	100%	Corporate Services Service Plan for 2021-2024 was approved at Policy & Resources Committee on 21 June 2021. The first performance report in relation to the key priorities in the plan will be presented to Policy & Resources Committee in November 2021.
	Corporate Services - Develop a workforce plan	100%	Work underway to complete Corporate Services Workforce Plan. This will be completed by deadline