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| <b>Report To:</b>       | <b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>  | <b>Date:</b>       | <b>20 September 2022</b> |
| <b>Report By:</b>       | <b>Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development</b> | <b>Report No:</b>  | <b>PR/16/22/MR</b>       |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b> | <b>Morna Rae</b>   | <b>Contact No:</b> | <b>01475 712042</b>      |
| <b>Subject:</b>         | <b>Corporate Policy and Performance Update Report</b>                            |                    |                          |

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 This report provides the Committee with an update on a number of performance and policy matters relating to:

- Developments in relation to the Council's Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework (SPPMF);
- National developments relating to Best Value;
- Self-evaluation within Inverclyde Council, and
- The results from the Citizens' Panel Winter 2021/22 Survey.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the latest update in relation to Corporate Policy and Performance.

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development**

## 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

### STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

3.1 Elected Members participated in a workshop on 29<sup>th</sup> June to discuss strategic priorities for Inverclyde. The Inverclyde Strategic Needs Assessment had previously been shared with all Members. There was also discussion on the process for the development of the new Council Plan and Partnership Plans. The related community consultation is scheduled to take place over August and September, led by Community Learning and Development. The results of this will be provided to a future meeting of this Committee. There will be further opportunities for Elected Members to shape the development of these plans, both through workshops and reports to Committees, prior to their finalisation in 2023.

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO BEST VALUE

3.2 Since the last Best Value update report was considered by the Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022, a further three Best Value Assurance Reports (BVAR) have been published by Audit Scotland. These are:

3.3 *Moray Council Progress Report (published March 2022)*

This report set out the progress made by Moray Council since the publication of its BVAR in August 2020, in which the Account's Commission noted its serious concerns about a lack of sustained improvement in the Council over many years. In the latest report, the Council is found to have made progress in some important areas, including:

- Approval of a clearer vision of its Improvement and Modernisation Programme;
- An updated medium and longer term financial strategy in March 2021 and an improvement in its financial position over the past two years';
- Improved performance management arrangements, with a clearer focus on outcomes;
- A comprehensive Elected Member development strategy.

3.4 Whilst acknowledging improvement, the Commission expressed concern over whether this momentum will be maintained. In particular, it found that the strong cohesive leadership required from Elected Members is still not in place and recommended that post-election (May 2022), Members consider how they can best achieve and maintain the changes needed, including decision-making and scrutiny. The Commission states that it expects progress to be demonstrated within a year of the election. A further report has been instructed, to be presented to the Accounts Commission as a priority early in the new approach to auditing and reporting Best Value, in place from mid-2023.

3.5 *Angus Council (published July 2022)*

Angus Council was found to have achieved an impressive pace of improvement since previous Best Value reports and was praised for having a clear vision, strong partnership working and collaboration. The strong leadership of Elected Members was highlighted and the Council was found to have served the people of Angus well in the face of the pandemic. To improve further, the Commission recommends the full implementation of the Council's performance management framework and the introduction of its vitally important long-term financial planning framework.

3.6 *Shetland Islands (published August 2022)*

The Commission found that Shetland Islands Council has not yet demonstrated that it is meeting its Best Value duty in a number of important areas. Whilst there has been some very recent progress, the Council's prospects for making the changes needed are uncertain. The Commission's recommendations included improving performance management by ensuring performance indicators are in place for plans and strategies at the time of their development as

well as setting targets for its KPIs in a timely manner. The other main area of concern was in respect of community engagement. It was recommended that the Council engage communities on key strategic plans and developments, including the Council Plan and annual budget, and demonstrate how the results of community engagement exercises have fed into plans and services and ensure locality plans are in place.

- 3.7 All BVAR reports are available to read in full here: <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/our-work/best-value>

## **SELF-EVALUATION**

- 3.8 All services of the Council that are not governed by a formal self-evaluation or inspection (e.g. Care Inspectorate, How Good is our Public Library Service, Validated Self-Evaluation etc.) carry out a self-assessment using the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) model. This is currently a three yearly cycle.
- 3.9 The current schedule of service self-assessment has now been completed and a new assessment cycle is due to begin in 2023. A further update will be provided to the Committee in the next Corporate Policy, Performance and Partnership update report.
- 3.10 In addition to this, a Council wide self-assessment exercise on the theme of workforce will be carried out. This will draw from the results of the Employee Survey. It will also involve Managers and Heads of Service considering the relevant sections of the Best Value and PSIF frameworks in a workshop format. A report on the outcomes of these exercises and areas for development or change will be brought to the Committee.

## **RESULTS FROM THE CITIZENS' PANEL WINTER 2021/22 SURVEY**

- 3.11 The Citizens' Panel Winter 2021/22 Survey focused on three topics: Inverclyde Council hybrid meetings and events; participatory budgeting - road and footpaths repairs; and satisfaction with Council services. The response rate to the Survey was approximately 63%.
- 3.12 In light of the initial restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council moved the majority of its meetings and some of its events on-line. Respondents were asked if they had ever participated in a number of examples of Council meetings or events, with fairly low numbers indicating that they had done so. Encouragingly, 37% of Panel members expressed an interest in participating in on-line Council meetings and events in future, even if they simply mean to attend/observe them.
- 3.13 In terms of potential barriers to local residents' participation in Council hybrid meetings and events – including, for example, knowledge of how the on-line meeting or event process works (as indicated by 26% of respondents) - the Community Learning and Development Team provides training on the upskilling of digital skills. Officers in the Council's libraries also provide help with digital access. To enhance public awareness of the streaming of Committee meetings, the Council will take steps to further promote the fact that the meetings are live-streamed/recordings are available on the Council's website.
- 3.14 In terms of participatory budgeting we advised Panel members that this is a democratic process in which residents decide how part of the Council's budget should be spent. Information was given on the Roads Asset Management Plan and participants provided feedback on areas for improvement. This was considered alongside wider public engagement and will influence the projects programmed for repair during this financial year.

- 3.15 Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with a range of Council services. Panel members were asked to respond to this question only if they had used the service(s) in the last year.
- 3.16 With the exception of the McLean Museum and Art Gallery, satisfaction with the Council services asked about fell between 2019 and 2021/22. Historically, we have compared Panel members' responses to this question with the results of the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). However, the SHS data set relating to the relevant reporting period is not available, therefore, no meaningful comparisons can be made on this occasion. During the development of the Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans 2023/26, Officers will review the results of this part of the Citizens' Panel Winter 2021/22 Survey and consider what action should be taken in response to feedback, as appropriate.

#### 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Committee note the latest updates relating to the area of Corporate Policy and Performance, as provided in section 3.0.

#### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

| SUBJECT                                      | YES | NO | N/A |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| Financial                                    |     | X  |     |
| Legal/Risk                                   |     | X  |     |
| Human Resources                              |     | X  |     |
| Strategic (LOIP/Corporate Plan)              |     | X  |     |
| Equalities & Fairer Scotland Duty            |     |    | X   |
| Children & Young People's Rights & Wellbeing |     |    | X   |
| Environmental & Sustainability               |     |    | X   |
| Data Protection                              |     |    | X   |

#### 5.2 Finance

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

One off Costs

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | Budget Years | Proposed Spend this Report | Virement From | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| N/A         |                |              |                            |               |                |

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | With Effect from | Annual Net Impact | Virement From (If Applicable) | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| N/A         |                |                  |                   |                               |                |

### **5.3 Legal/Risk**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **5.4 Human Resources**

There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

### **5.5 Strategic**

The issues covered in this report are of direct relevance to the following Corporate Plan priorities:

Organisational Priority 2: To work collaboratively to enable strong, connected and empowered communities, particularly in areas of deprivation, so that residents have influence and control over the things that matter to them.

Organisational Priority 9: To deliver services that are responsive to community needs and underpinned by a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and effective management of resources

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 None.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.