

Agenda Item	3
Report No	RES 01/20

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Corporate Resources Committee

Date: 30 January 2020

Report Title: Role and Remit of the Corporate Resources Committee

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 In December 2019 the Council approved the establishment of a new strategic committee structure and associated changes to the Scheme of Delegation. This is the first meeting of the newly established Corporate Resources Committee and the following report details the role and remit of the committee for Members' consideration.
- 1.2 Whilst this report sets out what each committee will consider as standard, the first meetings of the new committees will be slightly different and are primarily establishing meetings: considering and agreeing the membership, roles and remit of each Committee and its sub-committee structure. In addition, each committee will consider items that require Member decisions that cannot wait until the next cycle of meetings including policy development and organisational development. The full remit of the committees, including scrutiny of budgets, service plans and performance will come forward once the new organisational structure has come fully into effect from April 2020.
- 1.3 Corporate Resources Committee is the only Strategic Committee that will be considering revenue and capital budget monitoring as part of this round of meetings. This is because the new Strategic Committee structure reflects the re-organisation of functions under the 8 Executive Chief Officers. They are consequently not established in such a way to report monitoring under the previous Service budgets. As a result, Quarters 3 & 4 of the Council's 2019/20 revenue budget will be reported to this Corporate Resources Committee – as agreed at Council in October 2019.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the following report.

3. Implications

- 3.1 There are no resource, legal, community, climate, risk or Gaelic implications arising from this report.

4. Summary

4.1 The following list summarises the areas that every Strategic Committee will consider as a matter of course at each committee cycle:

- Budget monitoring and scrutiny
- Service performance/quarterly reporting and statutory reporting requirements
- Review of external audits and inspections
- Policy Development and Service Planning
- Specific committee functions as set out in the Scheme of Delegation
- Responses to external consultations
- Responses to Legislative/Regulatory changes

5. Budget Monitoring and Scrutiny

5.1 As was the case previously, one of the critical roles of the Strategic Committees will be to monitor the budgets for the Council services that fall under their remit. In the case of this committee, it will consider the revenue budgets for the Corporate Resources Service and also the Governance and Performance Service. In addition, as was the case previously, the Committee will also report the corporate revenue and capital monitoring position for the Council as a whole.

5.2 The revenue budgets for the new Services are in the process of being established under the 8 Executive Chief Officers and will come into effect at the beginning of the 2020/21 financial year. Quarter 1 reporting will come to Corporate Resources Committee for consideration in August 2020.

6. Scrutiny of Performance

6.1 Another critical role of Strategic Committees is to scrutinise performance. Every Committee will have a number of common measures of performance that will come to each committee cycle. These are: staff absence; payment of invoices; complaints handling and Freedom of Information Requests (FOI). In addition, each Service will report their Service Plan performance which will include Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs); national benchmarking data; Corporate Plan measures and service-specific performance measures relevant to their functional remits. The Corporate Resources and the Governance and Performance Service Plans will come to Committee for approval in May 2020.

6.2 The Committee will also have the opportunity to consider on an ad hoc basis all external audits and inspections relevant to its remit and to monitor progress against the implementation of any recommendations arising.

7. Specific committee functions as set out in the Scheme of Delegation

7.1 The Scheme of Delegation was approved by the Council in December 2019. This set out the specific remit for the Corporate Resources Committee as follows:

- All financial affairs of the Council including corporate monitoring of the Revenue and Capital Budgets.
- Treasury management (including the scrutiny of policy and strategy statements,

outturn and performance monitoring reports and practices).

- Charges, rebates and allowances not linked to the functions of any other Committee.
- Applications for loans and grants, not linked to the functions of any other committee and which are included in the budget.
- Local Government Pension Scheme discretionary policies in respect of the Council's role as an employer within the Pension Fund.
- All matters relating to the administration of local taxation, including Council tax and non-domestic rates, and council tax reduction and benefits, including benefits promotion and anti-fraud activities.
- Collection and recovery of debts owed to the Council.
- Determination of appeals against non-domestic rates assessments and the disposal under any enactment of all other claims or applications for relief.
- Procurement and the review and monitoring of compliance with Contract Standing Orders.
- The review and monitoring of the superannuation of employees under the Local Government Superannuation (Scotland) Acts but excluding the management and investment of the superannuation and other funds.
- Matters relating to the workforce including equal opportunities in employment, employee learning and development, human resource management and the health, safety and well-being of employees.
- Improving employee engagement and partnership working, ensuring good industrial relations through effective consultation and communication in partnership with the trade unions.
- Digital Services and other channels being developed to support efficient and effective access to the Council and services.
- ICT Services (corporate and curriculum) including services delivered in-house and those delivered in partnership and through contractual arrangements with external organisations.
- A financial strategy which focuses on service outcomes and performance standards which are linked to the Council's strategic priorities and target operating models.
- Budget governance and accountability to further improve annual performance and to support earlier identification of budget opportunities.
- Investment including a robust commercial investment strategy enabling self-funding projects to be fast tracked for approval.
- Funding/Funds Governance to maximise the reach and spread of funding.
- Effective administration of, and to ensure appropriate resources for, the licensing function including the Highland Licensing Committee and Board.
- Responsibility for consumer protection, including Trading Standards, Consumer Advice and the enforcement of Civic Government Licensing.
- Functions of the Council, as the statutory authority, in relation to Weights and Measures and Consumer Safety, storage of petrol and explosives and all year round supply of fireworks

8. Sub Committees and Working Groups

8.1 The Committee's powers are fully delegated to the following -

- Appeals and Disputes Committee: To conduct formal Appeals Hearings in accordance with Council policy relating to dismissals, disciplinary sanctions taken by an Executive Chief Officer or his/her nominated representative, grievances and claims of harassment or discrimination. To conduct formal hearings in accordance with procedures laid down by the Council to enable the settlement of differences and disputes between the Council and its employees.
- Employment Release Sub-Committee: To agree early retirement or redundancy for any post which is considered to be out-with the authority delegated to the Chief Executive and relevant Executive Chief Officer. To consider exceptional circumstances applying to transfers into the Local Government Pensions Scheme from occupational pension schemes or personal pension schemes.
- Non Domestic Rates Appeal Committee: To consider and determine appeals by ratepayers on non-Valuation aspects of rates administration.

8.2 In addition, the following Member/Officer Groups submit their minutes to the Committee for Member public oversight:

- Staff Partnership Forum held on 1 November 2019;
- Central Safety Committee held on 1 November 2019; and

8.2 As agreed at Council in December 2019, any formal working groups or boards that report to Strategic Committees or to the Council must be established on the basis of political balance and have an agreed purpose, remit, and terms of reference as well as a proposed duration. In addition to submitting minutes to the parent committee, all formal groups must submit an annual report to Council.

9. Amendments to the role and remit of Strategic Committees

9.1 As the Strategic Committees are newly established, there will be an opportunity to submit changes to Council's Scheme of Delegation to Council in March 2020 and also in June 2020, to provide Members and officers time to reflect on the operation of the new Committees and make any adjustments deemed appropriate.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance

Date: 17 January 2020

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