

## BEST VALUE ASSURANCE REPORT - IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Ref.	Recommendation/Improvement Action	Source: Corporate Plan (CP) Service Plan (SP)	Timescale(s)	Lead Officer
1.	<b>The council needs to seek to ensure that all staff are fully engaged in the transformation programme and that budget holders are clear on expectations to deliver the planned savings set out in ongoing transformation work. The council should continue to develop and implement a longer-term delivery model which is affordable and achievable.</b>			
1.1	The Council will approve a medium-term financial plan for 2020/21 – 2022/23, to ensure effective evidence based decision making.	SP	June 2020	Head of Corporate Finance & Commercialism
1.2	Deliver the Council's Change and Improvement Strategy 2020-2023. (subject to Council approval on 5 March 2020).	SP	February 2023	All ECOs
1.3	Review the financial arrangements at committee and sub-committee levels including remits, responsibilities and improving procedures for Members and staff.	SP	March 2020	ECO Resources & Finance
1.4	Review the Council's HR and payroll database Resource Link and prepare an options appraisal to ensure full integration between HR and Payroll.	SP	May 2020	ECO Resources & Finance
1.5	Review the approach to financial and performance monitoring reports to Strategic and Area Committees and develop an integrated approach to effective performance monitoring and continuous improvement activity.	SP	September 2020	ECO Resources & Finance/Corporate Audit & Performance Manager
1.6	Review finance training modules and establish mandatory training in financial management to ensure competency and governance over expenditure are achieved for all budget holders and Members.	SP	December 2020	ECO Resources & Finance

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1.7	Implementation of the Communications and Engagement Strategy ensuring that all staff are fully engaged in the transformation programme 2019-22.	SP	March 2022	Communications and Resilience Manager/All ECOs
<b>2.</b>	<b>The council should increase the use of family grouping data, benchmarking and targets to enhance performance reporting.</b>			
2.1	Annual performance report for the Corporate Plan to include analysis against targets, benchmarks, family group and national averages following approval of the Council's new Corporate Plan in October 2019.	SP	September 2020	Corporate Audit & Performance Manager
2.2	Implement a new Service Planning process based on data analysis to inform improvement activity and enable Strategic Committees to monitor progress in delivering Best Value.	SP	June 2020	Corporate Audit & Performance Manager
2.3	All ECOs will review their performance data to ensure it is fit for purpose and where necessary identify additional indicators and business intelligence to enable robust regular monitoring of service performance.	SP	Service Plans June 2020 & annually with quarterly monitoring	All ECOs
2.4	Performance review meetings with Primary and Secondary Head Teachers including review of key performance indicators as outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan and school improvement plans 3 times a year.	CP/SP	From February 2020 and ongoing	Head of Education
2.5	Focus improvement activity on young people from deprived backgrounds to close the attainment gap across Highland schools including numeracy, literacy and positive and sustained destinations.	CP/SP	Ongoing to February 2021 and review	Head of Education

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3.	<b>The council's approach to performance management can be further improved through sharing of practices between services and council teams in order to fully embrace and support effective self-assessment and a culture of continuous improvement.</b>			
3.1	Review the Council's approach to self-assessment and implement a new corporate approach to support the Council's continuous improvement and efficiencies agendas.	SP	September 2020	Corporate Audit & Performance Manager
3.2	All ECOs and senior managers will develop a programme of external learning visits to support understanding of best practice and continuous improvement in their service.	SP	March 2021	All ECOs
3.3	ECOs will work collaboratively to share best practice across the organisation, within the Area remit and with partners to develop a culture continuous improvement.	SP	March 2021	All ECOs
4.	<b>Once the council has implemented the revised governance arrangements, it should seek to monitor the effectiveness of these changes to ensure they deliver the improvements anticipated, including the intended enhanced scrutiny and decision-making.</b>			
4.1	Working with Members review the Council's new governance arrangements through Council and through the established Members Governance Working Group	SP	Interim Review March 2020 & June 2020; Members Seminar September 2020; Report to HC October 2020	ECO Performance & Governance

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4.2	Review the operation and output of the Council's sub-committees and working groups to ensure their continued effectiveness	SP	December 2020 & annually	ECO Performance & Governance
<b>5.</b>	<b>Once the new leadership team is in place, it will be key that they look to successfully manage the need for increased pace of change alongside continued engagement across officers to achieve the strategic objectives and this should be reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis.</b>			
5.1	Deliver an Improvement Programme to support the organisation restructure and achieve Phase 1 – New organisational structures designed, budgets and saving targets re-aligned and corporate systems revised to support. Phase 2 a) – New structures implemented and new committee reporting embedded Phase 2b) – Review structure implementation, create Service Work Force Plans and Service Learning Plans	SP	Phase 1 – March 2020  Phase 2a – June 2020  Phase 2b – September 2020	Chief Executive ECO Performance & Governance
5.2	Evaluate the effectiveness of the new management structure to ensure if can deliver the pace of change required for transformation and long-term sustainability.	SP	September 2020	Chief Executive/ ECO Performance & Governance
5.3	Establish a new programme of development for the Council's senior leadership team engendering a culture change and improvement.	SP	March 2021	Interim Head of HR
<b>6.</b>	<b>The CPP should increase the pace in developing the remaining locality action plans in line with the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act.</b>			
6.1	Learn from the two completed locality plans and through the Inverness Community Partnership develop with communities the following outstanding locality plans led by the Highland Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raigmore</li> <li>• Dalneigh</li> <li>• Inverness Central</li> <li>• Ardersier</li> </ul>	SP	March 2022	ECO Communities and Place

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6.2	The Council will lead a discussion early in 2020 with the CPP to identify how to support and resource this work better, improve the pace of locality planning and set timescales for the 10 outstanding locality plans being led by other partners.	SP	December 2020	ECO Communities and Place
6.3	The Council and its partners will put in place reviewed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Community Planning Partnership to strengthen governance, accountability and delivery of outcomes.	SP	April 2020	ECO Communities and Place
<b>7.</b>	<b>The council should continue to work with elected members to understand reasons for variable uptake of training and agree how this can be improved alongside a programme of ongoing elected member development. In particular, elected members' knowledge of and involvement in the performance management process needs to be improved to enhance scrutiny and help drive improvement.</b>			
7.1	Develop a Members training and development programme which supports their important role in scrutiny and improvement following their election including by-elections.	SP	August 2020	ECO Performance & Governance
7.2	Report annually to Council on the uptake of Members training and development.	SP	June 2021	ECO Performance & Governance
7.3	Evaluate feedback from Members training to ensure its fit for purpose and identify improvement opportunities.	SP	September 2021	Interim Head of HR
7.4	Review and prepare a new induction programme for new Member for 2022.	SP	December 2021	ECO Performance & Governance