



► Heron photographed at  
Findhorn Bay  
by Digital Photo  
Professional

# Public Performance Report 2021-22



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# Our corporate plan

▲ Construction of the new Lossiemouth, East Beach Bridge begins

Our 2019-24 corporate plan sets out our aims for Moray, and our vision, which is ‘a life of opportunity for all where people can thrive in vibrant communities and we work together to enrich our future.’

It details our four priorities: our people, our place, our future, and working towards creating a financially sustainable council. Within this public performance report, these priorities will be broken down into outcomes, actions, measures of success and next steps, to demonstrate progress towards achieving these.

Underpinning all of this are our values, which are the driver of everything we do.

We are:

- **Fair**  
in tackling inequalities and tailoring services
- **Improving**  
driving improvement and investing in the future
- **Ambitious**  
promoting Moray making it better for the most vulnerable
- **Responsive**  
involving and listening to communities





## More about us

Moray is a largely rural area covering a land mass of 2,238km<sup>2</sup>.

It has a long coastline on the Moray Firth with harbours, fishing villages and world-class beaches. The area's population in 2021 was 96,410.

Moray Council was established in 1996 following local government reorganisation and the demise of regional councils. Elections are held every five years to appoint the 26 councillors who form the membership of the Council. During 2021/22 the Council was led by a minority SNP administration. There were four groups of councillors: SNP (eight councillors until 24 November 2021, when Cllr Coy resigned, leaving seven SNP members), Conservative (nine councillors), Moray Open Group (four councillors), Moray Alliance Group (two councillors) and a Labour councillor and two independent councillors not aligned to any group.

In August 2020 the Accounts Commission published the Best Value Assurance Report for Moray Council. This set out serious concerns about a lack of sustained improvement in Moray Council over many years. A follow-up report in March 2022 stated: 'We are encouraged by the steps taken by the council since (August 2020) to put in place elements needed to deliver improvements, against a backdrop of the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, to which the council has responded well. We note in particular the attention being given by the council to its approach to improving educational attainment and housing.'

However, it was also recognised that there were still challenges in delivering some of the council's strategic priorities. Alongside this, disruption to supply chains intensified in 2021/22, resulting in increased tender prices for construction work and lengthy lead-in time for ICT equipment and vehicles.

# Recovery and renewal

Responding to the pandemic and supporting recovery continued to be a major focus for services in 2021/22. Delivery of the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan passed on 18 February 2021 was continued, with work to embed recovery into existing strategies such as Moray Economic Strategy underway.

## Vision for Recovery

A strong, agile and inclusive recovery; flexing and innovating to regenerate the area; a new Moray – more resilient with the council primed to deliver its priorities. Key focus areas are identified as economic, educational, social and health.

### What we did:

#### Economic

- Administered grants totalling £12.7 million to local businesses in 2021/22.
- Implemented the Economic Recovery Plan approved in 2020/21 which provided £3.8 million investment in the local economy with a number of initiatives, such as pop-up shops and start up grants, to encourage economic activity.
- Administered Low Income Pandemic Payments to reduce Council Tax for people on lower tax bands or entitled to Council Tax Reduction.
- Provided 1,985 grants totalling £620,000 through the Flexible Food Fund.
- Grants totalling £810,000 in family pandemic payments supported 3,437 families.
- Administered supplier relief.
- Restart grants totalling around £9.2m were issued under the Strategic Framework Business Fund (SFBF) and Small Accommodation Providers (SAP) scheme in April 2021.
- The Discretionary Business, Restriction and Restart Funds allocated a total of around £1.17m from April 2021 to June 2021 to businesses not eligible to apply for the SFBF.
- As a result of local restrictions in May 2021, due to rising cases in Moray, 646 businesses received a total of £390k in small grants and 218 businesses received a total of £244k for local restrictions during July.

## **Health**

- Administered £419,000 in grants to individuals who had to self-isolate.
- Introduced a digital platform to offer physical activities to reduce social isolation.
- Created green space walks to support mobility and mindfulness.
- Worked with community partners to offer a summer programme of events accessible for older people, supporting participants to try activities for the first time and renew confidence as part of a self-management focus.
- Distributed over 1,000 information and activity booklets with a reach of over 2,500 community members.
- Launched the Escape Pain programme of group rehabilitation in rural areas.
- Moray Council responded to the need to provide short-term support to the health and social care team by asking for volunteers to redeploy temporarily. Twelve volunteers from within Moray Council were identified for possible redeployment: 4 for administration roles; 2 for care only roles (1 for all care tasks; 1 for meal preparation and medication tasks, weekends only; and 6 for Care) and Administration roles (1 for light personal care, meal preparation and medication tasks, the other 5 for meal preparation and medication tasks).
- In response to the challenges with recruitment for care at home services, staff resources have been identified to form a recruitment cell working closely with Moray Council Human Resources Team. There is an open advert with interviews being held weekly and necessary training schedules being aligned to streamline the process as much as possible.

## **Educational**

- Supported learners and families through another disrupted exam diet and further lockdowns.
- Supported and safeguarded children's health and wellbeing through further lockdowns.

## **Social**

- Re-started locality planning and wellbeing activities.
- Re-started community events in libraries and community centres.





# Our people

Provide opportunities for people to be the best they can be throughout their lives with a strong and sustained focus on those individuals and groups in our society who experience the most disadvantage and discrimination.

## Corporate Plan Priority

1. Children and families: Provide opportunities where young people can achieve their potential and be the best they can be

### What we want to see:

The attainment gap between most and least disadvantaged children will reduce

To achieve this, we've worked to reduce the impact of poverty:

- Funding targeted in support of identified children and families
- 1,200 devices rolled out to school pupils to reduce digital exclusion
- Expanded Free School Meals to P5.
- Pursued wider understanding on the impact of the cost of the school day on families.

### How can we tell it's working?

Education performance data over the last couple of years has been impacted by covid however, in spite of the pandemic, there has continued to be a focus on education attainment. Some metrics were not gathered during 2020 so comparisons should be made with caution.

Figures using the latest reported data demonstrates that the gap between the most and least disadvantaged in the percentage of P1, P4 and P7 (combined) pupils in literacy and numeracy has increased since 2018/19 (the last time this was measured) to 19.75% and 17.55% respectively.

The attainment gap in literacy and numeracy between least and most deprived remains in and around the top quartile nationally (2nd and 9th respectively). We'll know renewed frameworks are working when the gap between the most and least disadvantaged in the percentage of P1, P4 and P7 (combined) pupils in literacy and numeracy decreases.

The percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or higher has increased over the last four years (to 2020/21), going from 57% to 63%. Moray is closing the gap on the national figure (67%) and is 24 out of 32 Local Authorities.

In 2020/21, 75% of looked after leavers of education achieved 1+ award at Level 4, an increase on the previous year (68.4%). Nationally, 77% attained – up on 75% in the previous year. 96.8% of all Moray leavers attained 1+ award at Level 4, up on 95.2% in the previous year - nationally 96% attained, in line with the previous year.

### What's next?

Schools continue to develop approaches to wellbeing and family engagement, strengthening knowledge and developing interventions.



## What we want to see:

Improved literacy and numeracy attainment at both the Broad General Education and Senior Phase

To achieve this, we've taken action to improve attainment including:

- Growth in collaborative working across the Northern Alliance Partnership.
- Supported pupils to prepare for exams through Universal Pupil Support.

## How can we tell it's working?

The aim for P1, 4 and 7 achieving their expected level in literacy is 67% with 2021/22 seeing a result of 65.1%, an increase from 63.9% the previous year. The same cohort for numeracy achieved 71.8% with a target of 73%, up from 67.8% in 2020.

While figures for S3 achievement levels weren't collated in 2020, due to the pandemic, in 2021/22 literacy levels were at 72%, just below the aim of 75% and numeracy reached 86%, slightly below the aim of 89%.

In 2021/22, S4 pupils attaining Level 4 literacy and numeracy increased to 88%, which measures two points higher than the national indicator of 86%. Over a five year period this has been a 15% increase in attainment in Moray, closing the national gap.

In 2021/22, S4 pupils attaining Level 5 literacy and numeracy sits at 54%, just below the national indicator of 57%, which also sees a national rise of 5%, but signals an increase of 13% over five years and closes the national gap considerably.

## What's next?

Schools continue to be supported to improve attainment through a strategic approach utilising: Raising Attainment Strategy and Toolkit; Supporting All Learners Strategy; Quality Improvement team support and challenge regarding data analysis, tracking and monitoring and attainment discussions with all schools.





### What we want to see:

Young people are better prepared for life beyond school and for the workplace

To achieve this, we've targeted action to improve employability skills and sustain positive school leaver destinations for all people:

- Sustained improvement in initial positive school leaver destinations
- Moray Pathways Employability and Training Hub at the Inkwel launched in July 2021

### How can we tell it's working?

The impact of this can be seen in 94.1% of 16-19 year olds participating in education, training and employment, albeit slightly below the national average of 95% and approaching the target of 96% and an increase on the previous year total of 93.1%.

The Employability and Training at the Inkwel celebrated its first year, initially set up to target young people, the Hub now supports all ages; just short of 500 residents have used the Hub support provisions and partners have delivered over 200 sessions in the Inkwel extending the Hubs reach.

### What we want to see:

A plan for an affordable, sustainable Learning Estate

To achieve this, we've progressed our review and transformation of the learning estate:

- Design brief for Findrassie Primary School approved
- An outline business case and action plan were approved in August 2021 to take forward a review of additional support needs.
- Completion and move in to the new Lossiemouth High School building, including community leisure and library services.
- Supported community consultation on the future of Inveravon Primary School.

### How can we tell it's working?

A reviewed Learning Estate Strategy was approved in collaboration with parents and school communities. An options appraisal on major learning estate investment priorities was completed.

In 2021/22, a programme of local condition surveys found that 46.3% of schools were rated B or better for condition. The national measurement is based on surveys which are up to 8 years old therefore reports Moray as 56.8%.

### What's next?

Submit for Scottish Government Learning Estate Improvement Plan (LEIP) funding for new Forres Academy and Buckie High School.



**What we want to see:**

More children live with their families and are cared for in strong, safe communities in Moray

To achieve this, we've worked with families as partners to give their children the kind of lives they want them to lead so that their children grow up to be strong and resilient:

- Refreshed branding and increased presence on social media in Foster and Kinship Care
- Placement Services inspection was completed

**How can we tell it's working?**

The percentage of children in community-based care decreased from 82.5% in 2020/21 to 81.5% in 2021/22. The number of looked after children in Moray as at March 2022 was 178.

Latest LGBF data available for this indicator (2020/21) is based on the annual social work return as of 31 July 2021. While showing an improving trend from 81.28% (2019/20) to 82.18% Moray is placed 29 out of Scotland's 32 Local Authority areas and second bottom of our comparator authority group. The number of looked after children in Moray in 2021 was 174, a decrease of 7.4% in 2020. Our comparator authorities show the same decrease, while nationally it was 8.3%.

**What we want to see:**

Improved life chances and outcomes for care experienced children and young people

To achieve this, we've improved identification and monitoring in the youth and criminal justice systems and worked to reduce over representation of care leavers and care experienced young people:

- Decrease in the percentage of care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems

**How can we tell it's working?**

As at March 2022, 9.9% of care experienced young people were in the youth and criminal justice systems.

National evidence shows in 2021/22 there is a higher proportion of care experienced young people, per capita, in the Criminal and Youth Justice systems in comparison with mainstream young people, and the aim is to reduce this.

## Corporate Plan priority

### 2. Improve health and wellbeing for the people of Moray

#### **What we want to see:**

Improved outcomes for our more vulnerable young people and families

To achieve this, we've made improvements in children and young people's health and wellbeing with continued engagement around this.

- NSPCC Graded Care Profile purchased and roll out planned for 2022/23
- Safe and Together Model training delivered
- Draft business case, in line with 'The Promise' developed

#### **How do we know if it's working?**

The number of children on the child protection register has increased to 2.3 per 1,000 of the 0-15 population.

The rate of registration has been on a decreasing trend since 2017/18. At the end of Q2 2020/21 the rate was 1.6 per 1,000 of 0-15 population, by the end of Q4 2021/22 the rate had increased to 2.3 per 1,000 population. Latest national data 2020/21 shows that Moray is in line with the national position.

#### **What's next?**

Continue the integration of Children and Families and Justice Social Work Services with the MIJB.

## Corporate Plan priority

### 3. Optimise outcomes for adults and older people by enhancing choice in the context of a home first approach delivered through the IJB

#### **What we want to see:**

People will be able to look after and improve their own health and well-being and live in good health for longer in home environments that support independent living

To achieve this, we've enabled people to have greater opportunity to remain independent within their communities by working with partners to deliver appropriate housing, adaptations and technology enabled care options.

#### **How can we tell it's working?**

93% of adults are able to look after their health very well or quite well; this is higher than the national figure at 91%. (Scottish Health and Care Experience survey).

#### **What's next?**

Introduce NearMe appointments in council facilities to allow easier access to services, including health and social care appointments.



### **What we want to see:**

People are able to live independently at home or in a homely setting in their community

To achieve this, we've ensured that people are supported at home or in a homely setting as far as possible.

- Discharge to Assess (D2A) Initiative aimed at securing early discharge of clinically stable hospital in-patients who require short-term support has achieved improved patient outcomes and overall cost savings in first eight months of operation.

### **How can we tell it's working?**

79% of adults are able to live as independently as possible; this is aligned with the national figure.

73% of adults agreed that the care they received has had an impact on improving or maintaining their quality of life; albeit below the national average of 78%.

- ▼ Andrew Simpson, Lord-Lieutenant of Baniffshire, Major General Seymour Monro Lord-Lieutenant of Moray, who coordinated the Moray Emergency Relief Fund response to Covid-19.

### **What we want to see:**

People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected

To achieve this, we've provided choices and control for service users over decisions affecting their care and support and have assessed and responded to housing needs of older people in partnership with the IJB.

### **How can we tell it's working?**

68% of adults rated services in Moray as good or very good.

60% of adults had positive experiences at the GP in Moray.

Adults are 70% positive that they have a say in how help, care or support is provided to them in Moray. This is similar to the national figure of 71%.

### **What's next?**

The draft Workforce Plan 2022-2025 will be implemented, taking account of the requirements set out in the National Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care in Scotland.

Reducing the number and length of time people are delayed in hospital remains a priority. Moray continues to progress the Home First approach (Hospital Without Walls) to supporting people to avoid unnecessary hospital admission and to return home, wherever possible, without delay.





# Highlights of the year

14 April 2021

Our people



**Pupils move into £42m new Lossiemouth High School. Phase 3 was still underway at 31st March 2022**

22 April 2021

Our place



**Cooper Park design competition for Moray's young people launched**

11 June 2021

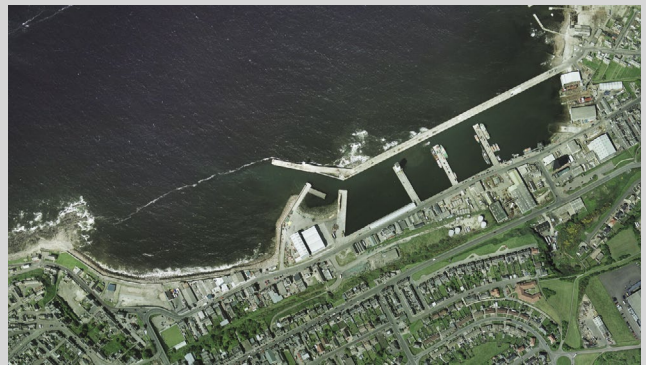
Our people



**Re:connect partnership launched**

30 June 2021

Our future



**Buckie Harbour gets £770,000 regeneration boost**

9 July 2021

Our future



**Celebrating the Speyside Low Carbon Hub**

19 July 2021

Our place



**Buckie's Darling unveiled as the new gateway feature for the town**



16 November 2021

Our people



### Over 80 new homes for Hopeman and Lhanbryde

1 March 2022

Our place



### Moray communities to create vision for their locality

20 December 2021

Our future



### £100 million investment in Moray endorsed as Moray Growth Deal signed

16 March 2022

Our people



### Dedicated team being recruited to offer intensive housing support to vulnerable residents

10 February 2022

Our place



### Public invited to discuss Moray's £300m Learning Estate Strategy

31 May 2022

Our place



### £1.8m Lossiemouth East Beach Bridge officially open





▲ Moray Council marks Emergency Services Day 2021

# Our place

## Corporate Plan Priority

1. Empower and support communities to build capacity by becoming more informed, involved and influential in service design and delivery

### What we want to see:

Our communities' ability to address their own needs and aspirations is improved

To achieve this, we've enhanced community participation in service delivery:

- Completion of the Community Asset Transfer of Cullen Community and Residential Centre and Findochty Town Hall.
- Supported The Fishermen's Hall Trust in Buckie in the Community Asset Transfer of the hall.

- Worked with the Findhorn Village Conservation Company in the successful Community Asset Transfer of the Findhorn Public Toilets.
- Collaboratively developed new Community Action Plan in Buckie.
- Supported community resilience during Storm Arwen response.
- Revised Allotments Policy approved.
- 17 Community Councils reformed following elections in September 2021.

### How can we tell it's working?

Three out of eight community asset transfers have been completed, an increase of one from 2020/21.

### What's next?

Continue to support the Community Asset Transfer of Garmouth Water Tower and land at Bogton Road in Forres.

Progress further Community Action Plans.



### **What we want to see:**

1% of council budget allocated through Participatory Budgeting by April 2021

To achieve this, we've completed our first mainstream PB exercise which attracted £70,000 additional investment from the community to add to the Council's budget of £50,000 and provide a playpark to the design the community chose with the additional facilities they wanted.

### **How can we tell it's working?**

As at March 2022, a £50,000 spend on Rothes Play Park had been confirmed, against a target of £1.975m (1% equivalent).

### **What's next?**

So far we have achieved 2.8% of the PB target, with progress delayed by the pandemic. However, we have plans to expand upon that in 2022/23 with further play park support and also a number of schools have used PB for some of their Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), with pupils voting on the allocation.

## **Corporate Plan priority**

2. Improve our understanding of the issues in our communities based on the experience of local people

### **What we want to see:**

More of our activities, services and plans are influenced by the communities they serve.

To achieve this, we've developed engagement with the public on the future of council services:

- Consulted parents and carers on the Early Learning and Childcare values and aims.
- In April 2021, the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) board approved delivery frameworks (action plans) for each of the four Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities providing a better focus on outcomes and measures to monitor these.

### **How can we tell it's working?**

ELC values and aims, influenced by parents and carers, adopted by the service.

Local action plans in development following community consultation.

### **What we want to see:**

We are more successful in developing a shared understanding between the council and communities that helps us to design the future together

To achieve this, we've developed locality engagement to ensure solutions are influenced by the experience of local people:

- Undertaken significant consultation events in the reporting year:
  - Cluny Hill Woodland Management Plan
  - Elgin City Centre Masterplan
  - Six town centre improvement plans: Aberlour; Buckie; Dufftown; Forres Keith; Lossiemouth
  - Buckie South Masterplan
  - Local Place Plans
- Ran a design competition for young people to redesign Cooper Park in Elgin.

### **How can we tell it's working?**

Elgin City Centre Masterplan virtual town hall exhibition received 3,514 views, 100 attendees to in-person events and 917 comments and responses to the proposals. Responses used to inform funding and grant applications.

Consultation issues have informed Moray Growth Deal aims and projects, giving people in Moray a direct influence over strategic priorities.



# Our future

## Corporate Plan priority:

1. Create a step change in the regional economy to enable inclusive economic growth

### What we want to see:

Increased economic impact of tourism in Moray, and an increase in the level of 16-29 years living and working in Moray

To achieve this, we've:

- Invested £850,000 in staycation facilities throughout Moray with waste disposal, car parking enhancements and improved signage.
- Launched the re:connect programme with a partnership approach from Police Scotland, NHS Grampian, and outdoor learning and arts organisations to support the development of activities and opportunities for young people.
- Granted planning permission and agreed to take ownership of the new Lossiemouth East Beach Bridge.
- Upgraded the Lossiemouth West Beach footpath.

- In April 2021, launched the Moray Employer Recruitment Incentive (MERI) scheme supporting 12 month job placements for 16-24 year olds offering £8k for employers who provide a supported job placements - 106 individuals were employed.

### How can we tell it's working?

The economic impact of tourism in Moray had grown steadily over the 10 years to March 2020, when it reached £134m.

A sharp decline to £58m in 2020 was a direct result of the pandemic restricting social movement and limiting tourist numbers, which fell from 804,000 annually to 281,000. The sector has since begun to rebound, with visitor numbers back up to 480,000 in 2021 generating an economic impact worth £96m. Though still below pre-pandemic levels, this offers optimism the sector can return to its upwards trajectory of the previous decade.

Moray's 19-29 year old population figure showed a slight increase in 2021/22, up to 15.3% from 15.1%.

## What we want to see:

Better employment, skills and earnings, increase in higher-skilled jobs and wage levels through a reduction in the gender pay gap, and increasing apprenticeships in key sectors

To achieve this, we've:

- Signed £100m Moray Growth Deal.
- Invested £770,000 in Buckie Harbour regeneration ahead of the Ocean Winds offshore renewables investment.
- Delivered small business start-up grants.
- Dispersed up to £800,000 in European Social Fund with the Local Employability Partnership.

## How can we tell it's working?

There has been a decrease in the percentage of people earning less than the living wage, now sitting at 19.4%, down from 21.5% in the previous year – ranking Moray 18 out of 32 Local Authorities in Scotland.

There were 366 Modern Apprenticeships started in 2021/22 - up from 341 in 2020/21. The Modern Apprenticeship achievement rate (percentage of apprentices who complete their training) is 70.7% for Moray, a decrease of 8% from the previous year. This is reflected in the national achievement rate, which fell to 72% from 76% in 2020/21.

The gender pay gap, which was showing signs of improvement, increased, most likely due to the continued impact of the pandemic. This is due to women being predominant in roles most affected by pandemic related changes to working patterns, hours and ways of working.

The gender pay gap has continued to narrow at a national level, from 14.7% in 2019 to 11.5% in 2021. In Moray, the gap has widened from 19.3% to 22.6% in 2021. We'll know action is working when we see this gap reduce as economic recovery progresses.



## Corporate plan priority:

### 2. Work to protect and enhance our environment, creating a more resilient and sustainable future

#### What we want to see:

Achievement of targets, indicators and outcomes identified in climate change action plan

To achieve this, we've:

- Supported the planting of living lawns and wildflower areas to improve biodiversity.
- Accepted more types of plastic in our recycling facilities.
- Signed the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration ahead of COP26.
- Utilised over £100,000 from the Nature Restoration Fund.
- Retained a top 5 in Scotland position for recycling rates.
- Partnered with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to introduce a new Energy from Waste plant.

#### How can we tell it's working?

Council agreed the climate change strategy and action plan in March 2021, setting a goal of being carbon neutral by 2030. While in 2021/22 the council's carbon emissions increased by 8.97%, compared to reporting year 2020/21, it should be noted that the previous year was impacted by the covid-19 pandemic, potentially impacting emissions figures. For a more beneficial comparison with 2019/20, the reduction in 2021/22 is 9.56%.

#### What we want to see:

Increased provision and use of electric vehicles and plant, with supporting infrastructure

To achieve this, we've promoted and developed active and green travel:

- 16 additional electric vehicle charging points commissioned taking the total in Moray to 41.
- Introduced a folding bike hire pilot.
- Completed the Speyside Low Carbon Hub.
- Draft Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan published and consulted on.

#### How can we tell it's working?

While in 2021/22 the council's carbon emissions increased by 8.97%, compared to reporting year 2020/21, it should be noted that the previous year was impacted by the covid-19 pandemic, potentially impacting emissions figures. For a more beneficial comparison with 2019/20, the reduction in 2021/22 is 9.56%.

36 out of 45 primary schools have delivered the Bikeability programme, resulting in the highest recorded sustainable journeys by the Travel Tracker Programme since its introduction in primary schools.

Across Moray 2021/22 showed as trend of increased levels of walking and cycling.

A £82,169.60 grant resulted in the procurement of 33 fleet chargers over three depots with 12 electric vehicles purchased.

#### What's next?

Electric vehicle strategy to be brought to council.



## **What we want to see:**

Implement surface water infrastructure improvements in vulnerable flood risk areas

To achieve this, we've developed Surface Water Management Plans:

- Identified risk of surface water flooding through surface water management plans alongside Scottish Water.
- Invested in £56,000 of drainage improvements in Clovenside Cemetery in Forres to reduce impacts of flooding.
- Approved funding to support residents to purchase flood protection measures at cost price.

## **How can we tell it's working?**

Offered flood protection products to residents.

## **What's next?**

Publish Local Flood Risk Management Plans in collaboration with Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council.



# Sustainability

Create a sustainable council that provides valued services to our communities

## Corporate Plan priority:

### 1. Council's Financial strategy

#### What we want to see:

Financial planning set in longer-term context, and a longer agreed lead-in time for capital projects.

To achieve this, we've reviewed and developed the council's financial strategy:

- A medium to long-term financial strategy setting out how we will realign finances to fit with corporate plan priorities.

#### How can we tell it's working?

We set aside reserves to fund transformation of services and other council priorities, planning to use our reserves strategically to develop financially sustainable services.

Despite delays, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and global supply-chain issues, we invested £38m in our assets.

When the council set its budget for 2021/22 it included savings of £1.333 million – the bulk of the savings were achieved and further savings taken during the year, including energy efficiency measures.







**START ▶**

## Corporate Plan priority:

### 2. Transformation to achieve through our modernisation and improvement programme

#### What we want to see:

Our modernisation and improvement transformation delivering an ICT strategy taking account of council priorities and requirements; implementation of online services for staff and services users for improved outcomes; a single service point of contact; and cultural change in customer service which delivers an enabling approach for most, with support for those who need it.

To achieve this, in May 2021, the council approved a revised and re-prioritised improvement and modernisation programme (IMP). This more clearly aligned the IMP to council priorities, and set short and medium to long-term targets. The council also approved a preliminary project team to support delivery of the IMP and allocated £6.4 million for transformation projects.

#### How can we tell it's working:

- Increase of 181,264 online sessions on moray.gov.uk in 2021/22 to complete actions compared to 2020/21.
- Remodelling of access points to information hubs continues.
- Corporate asset management plan approved in April 2021.

#### What's Next?

Customer service redesign.

#### What we want to see:

Development of our workforce, including workforce planning taking account of council priorities and requirements, and effective and timely employee relations associated with change management at service and corporate level

To achieve this, we've reviewed and developed the workforce strategy and managed workforce changes:

- Regular workforce pulse and mental health surveys
- Planning for updates to the flexible working policy

#### How can we tell it's working:

Employee mental health survey June-July 2021 results show a high percentage (82.44%) of employees who have not suffered a mental health issue that led to health professional intervention. 71.43% Employees said they felt able to maintain their mental health and wellbeing during the last year.

Work will continue to support employees through future changes to ways of working following the Covid-19 pandemic.



# Risks and opportunities

## Future risks

We maintain and keep under review a Corporate Risk Register, with risks grouped under nine themes. This section of the management commentary identifies the Council's main concerns for financial risk and also areas of planned development.

We expect to need to make further savings over the next two years in order to balance our budget without relying on reserves. However, there are a number of dynamic factors which will may have a significant impact on our future financial position.

- Risks arising from increased inflation and interest rates, with likely impact on pay claims and general increases in prices across the board;
- Future funding, with Scottish Government finances under pressure and being targeted to specific priorities;
- Significant funding at UK and Scottish Government level coming from bid funds, requiring expertise and effort to access and with considerable monitoring requirements;
- Demographic pressures and emerging social needs post pandemic;
- Significant difficulties in recruiting staff ;





- Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) is overcommitted against its budget and we will have to fund our share of any overspend. The long-term impact of the pandemic on MIJB services is as yet unknown;
- Our school estate requires significant investment to bring facilities up to the Scottish Government's recommended 'B-B' standard;
- Meeting our target of carbon neutral by 2030 will be a financial and technical challenge.

## **How we are managing these risks**

- Financial monitoring and review;
- Working within Moray Economic Partnership to support the local economy;
- Developing Community Wealth Building;
- Creating cross service teams with expertise in bidding for funds;
- Workforce planning;
- Reviewing our capital programme for areas of increased risk of slippage and / or costs increase and developing a mechanism to further prioritise our capital spend;
- Engaging with local communities on council services and locality planning;
- Joint monitoring reviews with MIJB officers and officers and Board members from NHS Grampian;
- We have commenced a comprehensive Learning Estate Review;
- We have mapped out a high-level route map to net zero.

## **Opportunities... and potential opportunities**

- The Moray Growth Deal, which will see significant investment in Moray's economy;
- Learning lessons from the pandemic about new ways of working and opportunities which arise from this;
- Our Improvement and Modernisation Programme, redesigning how we deliver services in today's world to deliver efficiencies, building on our investment in ICT for flexible working and investing in Council priorities;
- Our Learning Estate Review, looking at how we can improve the learning experience by enhancing the environment in which it takes place;
- Our Climate Change Strategy, looking to become carbon neutral by 2030.

### **What's next?**

The Council is preparing its budget for 2023/24 and indicative budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26. Given the level of spending from the Scottish Government we will need to make savings to continue.



**What we invested in:**

**£31.0m**

Invested in Moray during the year –  
main items summarised below



**£9.9m**

New schools, improvements to existing schools and facilities for early learning and childcare



**£7.1m**

Waste management facilities, including a joint project with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils to build an energy from waste plant (£6.3m) and completion of works at Moycroft depot



**£4.9m**

Road improvements, road safety measures and sustainable travel



**£2.6m**

Bridge funded by Scottish Government, ownership and future maintenance accepted by Moray Council



**£2.0m**

Vehicles and electric car chargers



**£1.3m**

Other land and buildings



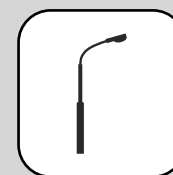
**£1.0m**

Various works at harbours, including pontoons at Findochty



**£0.9m**

ICT and other equipment



**£0.4m**

Street lighting



