



PUBLIC SERVICE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK (PSIF) – SELF ASSESSMENT

Report by Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT To update the Comhairle on the progress of the programme of self-assessment and seek approval of the recommendations following the completion of five self-assessments.

COMPETENCE

1.1 There are no legal, financial, equalities or other constraints to the recommendation being implemented.

SUMMARY

2.1 Based on corporate needs going forward and in anticipation of the Comhairle's Audit of Best Value the current programme of self-assessments for 2019/20 was adapted to include Audit Scotland's [Best Value toolkits](#) whilst still following the PSIF ethos. The full programme of 18 themed self-assessments have now been rolled out across the Comhairle, some of which apply to only one service area whilst others are cross cutting.

2.2 The self-assessments relating to Risk Assessment, Customer Focus, Efficiency, Equalities and Challenge and Improvement have now been completed and are summarised in Appendices 1 to 5. On the whole, evidence demonstrates that acceptable standards are being achieved with pockets of good practice.

2.3 A total of 7 self-assessments have now been completed; Appendix 6 provides a full summary of the resulting recommendations. A recurring corporate theme is emerging relating to the Comhairle's ability to demonstrate outcomes and impacts for service users. This area for improvement is linked to several recommendations and should be a corporate priority moving forward.

2.4 The current programme of self-assessments supports organisational wide continuous improvements at a strategical level. Services are encouraged to continue this work by developing an operational and systematic approach to monitoring and evidencing best value out with the corporate programme of self-assessments.

RECOMMENDATION

3.1 It is recommended that the Comhairle note the completion of the five self-assessments and approves the recommendations contained within Appendices 1 to 5.

Contact Officer: Carmen Macdonald, OD Officer

Appendices: (1) Risk Assessment – Summary of Self-Assessment
(2) Customer Focus – Summary of Self-Assessment
(3) Efficiency – Summary of Self-Assessment
(4) Equalities – Summary of Self-Assessment
(5) Challenge and Improvement – Summary of Self-Assessment
(6) BVAR Self-Assessment Recommendation Summary

Background Papers: Nil

1	Is risk management actively supported and promoted by senior officers/elected members?
<p>The Comhairle has an up-to-date Risk Management Strategy in place. A Risk Management Group, inclusive of senior officers meets regularly, in addition the Director of Assets, Finance and Infrastructure is the Comhairle's "Risk Champion".</p> <p>Risk Management falls under the remit of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee who receive quarterly updates.</p>	
2	Is there a systematic approach to help ensure that all key risks are identified, prioritised and matched with appropriate responses?
<p>There is a dedicated Finance and Risk Management Officer in Post. The Risk Management Group feed into and review risks on a regular basis. Training opportunities are available relating to risk and an internal online training course is currently being developed.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans are being up-dated at present.</p>	
3	Are risks and the action taken to mitigate them regularly monitored?
<p>Progress on risk actions are reported quarterly to Committee. At present there is limited evidence of the monitoring of partnership risks.</p>	
4	Does risk management contribute toward the achievement of corporate objectives?
<p>At present there is limited evidence available to demonstrate how Risk Management directly contributions towards the achievement of corporate objectives. At present there is no framework in place to evaluate risk managements contribution to meeting financial targets.</p> <p>Work is underway with Internal Audit to check internal controls that are required to reduce risk, in addition there are plans to work more closely with AFR's insurance team to strengthen the evidence base and evaluate the cost effectiveness of risk management.</p> <p>There is an awareness of areas of weakness and a commitment to advancing practice.</p>	
Areas for Future Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise and roll out Risk Management Training on LearnPro • Strengthen ability to capture Risk Managements contributions towards the achievement of corporate objectives 	
Priority Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete up-to-date Business Continuity Plans 	

1	Leadership -To what extent is corporate and strategic leadership of customer focus and responsiveness evident?
<p>The Customer Service Strategy is being integrated into a new Digital Strategy. At present the Customer Service strategy aims and the customer care standards are in place pending the completion of the new strategy,</p> <p>Corporately examples have been provided of how services engage with customers. Examples include the Faire, planning portal, Tell Us Once partnership with DWP, eSgire, sport and health online booking system and the HR national recruitment portal.</p> <p>Services have different approaches to engagement, some remain face to face, others are more telephone or online based. Services also have various approached to gathering information, some record information at first point of contact whilst others undertake regular electronic surveys or request feedback periodically from service users or customers.</p>	
2	Improving customer services – How well has the organisation developed a coordinated approach to improving and developing customer service?
<p>Services have different approaches to gathering information, some record information at first point of contact whilst others undertake regular electronic surveys or request feedback periodically from service users or customers.</p> <p>There are evidenced pockets of good practice across organisation. Information is more readily available across service areas which have statutory reporting requirements. A range of information was readily available on the internet and intranet and evidences methods used to review how customers access services.</p>	
3	To what extent does the organisation use customer standards to improve services?
<p>The organisation has generic customer service standards in place but evidence has not been provided relating to its application or relating outcomes. Individual Services also have service specific charters and policies in place, some of which request and report on customer feedback and satisfaction levels.</p>	
4	Accessibility – To what extent are the organisation’s customer services accessible and effective?
<p>The Comhairle provides services through a range of channels including face to face, telephone and online. There is a commitment to providing accessible service; there is a web accessibility statement, bilingual policy, language plan and BSL plan in place. Information is available in a range of formats upon request.</p>	
Areas for Future Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review taking a streamlined and corporate approach to engaging with external customer to improve levels of consistence. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase level of information relating to accessing services to promote assistance available for example Language Line and Contact Scotland 	
Priority Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the Digital Strategy 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amending our council signature to include directing BSL users to ContactSCOTLAND 	

1	Culture – How well does the organisational culture support improved efficiency?
<p>The Comhairle has made significant progress in embedding efficiency as part of the normal organisations culture through the programme of service redesign, the programme of transformational change and on-going work of the budget board and performance management frameworks.</p>	
2	Vision – To what extent is improved efficiency incorporated into the organisation’s vision?
<p>The Transformational Change programmes strategic lead is a Director and engagement has and continues to take place with internally with employees and externally the wider community. Efficiency’s continues to form a part of the budget setting process. Efficiency and progress toward achieving efficiencies are monitored and reported regularly.</p>	
3	Plans - Are the organisation’s plans for measuring the scale of efficiencies achieved realistic?
<p>Plans are monitored by the budget board and service Committees. The efficiency programme is overseen by the Transformational Change Team. A “Lessons Learned” report was commissioned following the first completed service redesign.</p>	
4	Monitoring information – How does the organisation gather the right information about efficiency plans to monitor progress?
<p>Internally service accountants and service managers monitor progress; in addition there is a level of scrutiny through the Budget Board and service Committees.</p> <p>Service users have been engaged through online consultations and community engagement events.</p>	
5	Managing efficiencies – How does the organisation use information on progress to ensure planned efficiencies are attained or adjusted appropriately?
<p>Progress is formally tracked and reported on a regular basis, this is the responsibility of individual managers supported by Heads of Service and Directors. The Budget Board and the Policy and resources Committee are presented with progress reports relating to efficiencies and would require to give approval to any proposed adjustments.</p>	
Areas for Future Development	
<p>Continued monitoring of the pace of change and resulting improvements in relation to the current programme of Transformational Change</p>	
Priority Recommendation	
<p>Review options to enhance the measurement of outcomes corporately</p>	

1	How well does the organisation know the profile and needs of its diverse communities?
<p>A quarterly Outer Hebrides fact file is produced which includes a range of socio economic information. Consultation exercises are on-going and include an equalities monitoring questionnaire to ensure that data is captured on an ongoing basis.</p>	
2	Do the organisation and its partners lead improvements in equality effectively?
<p>All reports presented to Committee state whether that are equality constraints to the recommendation being implemented. Impact assessments are undertaken when required. Equality outcomes were developed in line with the corporate strategy. Equality reports are reported in accordance with the Comhairle's statutory duty.</p>	
3	Does the organisation provide equality of opportunity within a diverse workforce?
<p>Equality and diversity is included within the employee induction process. There is an Equal Opportunities Statement and Policy contained within the Employee Handbook and equality and diversity training is available for all employees.</p> <p>Equality monitoring information is collect from staff on a voluntary basis and reported annually.</p>	
4	Does the organisation deliver positive outcomes for its diverse communities?
<p>The undertaking of impact assessments provides an opportunity to actively consider wider impacts, reduce inequality of outcomes and deliver positive outcomes.</p>	
Areas for Future Development	
<p>Improve ability to demonstrate outcomes</p>	
Priority Recommendation	
<p>Ensure the Equalities Mainstream Report, due to be up-dated in 2021, is outcomes focused</p>	

1	A culture of challenge – To what extent is challenge evident in the organisation’s culture
<p>Senior level employees champion a culture of challenge through the Programme of Transformational change. The formal Committee Structure also evidences a level of independent challenge.</p>	
2	Effective processes to ensure challenge and improvement – How well have processes to ensure challenge and improvement been developed?
<p>Historically there has been an annual programme of best value reviews and self-assessments undertaken. In addition the Programme of Transformational Change has been developed to ensure an increased level of challenge and improvements across the Comhairle at a strategic level. This programme is linked to the budgets strategy and the corporate workforce plan.</p>	
3	Effectiveness of challenge and options appraisal – How well is challenge and option appraisal used?
<p>Frequent consultation with employees and recognised trade unions, in addition to the formal committee structure ensures a level of continuous challenge across the organisation. Internal and external benchmarking and audit work contribute to the effectiveness of challenge. Integrated Impact Assessments have been developed to ensure a full range of equality and social impacts are considered in key decision making processes. Service redesign guidance includes the use of option appraisals.</p>	
4	Impact from challenge and improvement – What is challenge and improvement achieving?
<p>The Performance Management System, Interplan, routinely tracks progress against service business plans, aims and objectives. The Programme of Transformational Change includes a savings clock which tracks savings and is reported to the Budget Board on a regular basis.</p> <p>It is recognised that this is an area in which improvements could be realised at an operational, as well as strategic level.</p>	
Areas for Future Development	
<p>Encourage services to compile case studies following improvement initiatives</p>	
Priority Recommendation	
<p>Develop ways to better demonstrate resulting impacts, both positive and negative, on service users</p>	

	Audit Scotland Toolkits	CPT	A&S	Areas for Future Development	Priority Recommendations
10	Asset management				
11	Customer-focus and responsiveness	20/02/20	23/06/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review taking a streamlined and corporate approach to engaging with external customer to improve levels of consistence 2. Increase level of information relating to accessing services to promote assistance available for example Language Line and Contact Scotland 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of the Digital Strategy 2. Amending our council signature to include directing BSL users to ContactSCOTLAND
12	Procurement				
13	Equalities	19/03/20	23/06/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve ability to demonstrate outcomes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Move to a more outcomes focused reporting method within the Equalities Mainstream Report
14	Governance and accountability				
15	Information management				
16	People management	23/01/20	03/03/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased use of external benchmarking 2. Continue to develop ways to build stronger evidence bases in relation to demonstrating outcomes 3. Review options to corporately record and training, professional registrations and CPD activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create corporate or departmental Policy Registers including responsible persons and review dates 2. Increase the pace of change relating to a final solution for web based employee information
17	Risk management	20/02/20	23/06/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalise and roll out Risk Management Training on LearnPro 2. Strengthen ability to capture Risk Managements contributions towards the achievement of corporate objectives 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete up-to-date Business Continuity Plans
18	Challenge and improvement	19/03/20	23/06/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage services to compile case studies following improvement initiatives 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop ways to better demonstrate resulting impacts, both positive and negative, on service users

19	Efficiency	19/03/20	23/06/20	1. Continued monitoring of the pace of change and resulting improvements in relation to the current programme of Transformational Change	1. Review options to enhance the measurement of outcomes corporately
20	FMnancial management				
21	Partnership working and community leadership (Organisational level)				
22	Planning and resource alignment	23/01/20	03/03/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to build on levels of citizen and customer engagement 2. Review developing consultations to reflect government consultation principles 3. Increased focus on measurable outcomes 	1. Finalise Business Continuity Plans
23	Sustainability				
24	Community engagement				
25	Vision and strategic direction				
25	Performance management				
26	Public performance reporting				