

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 MARCH 2017**

**RESOURCES DIRECTORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2017/20**

**REPORT BY MARK ARMSTRONG, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – RESOURCES**

**ABSTRACT**

This report presents the Directorate Improvement Plan for the Resources directorate for 2017/20.

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee note the terms of the Resources Directorate Improvement Plan for 2017/20.

**2. CURRENT POSITION**

The Resources Directorate Improvement Plan 2017/20 sets out key priorities for the directorate and the focus for service delivery during the coming year.

**3. RISKS**

Any risk associated with the delivery of a Directorate Improvement Plan has been outlined in the plan itself.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with the terms of this report.

**5. CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, Head of Corporate Improvement & Finance and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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Appendix 1 Resources Directorate Improvement Plan 2017/20

Resources Directorate  
Improvement Plan

2017-2020

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## **FOREWORD**

The period covered by this Improvement Plan is arguably going to be the most challenging for Angus Council since it was established. The ongoing and increasing financial challenges that we face, combined with the need for us to radically change the way that we work and the services that we provide will continue to dominate the agenda to 2020.

The Resources directorate and the essential services and corporate support that we provide will continue to be at the heart of the council's transformation programme, enabling and supporting change and service redesign across all of our services. We will be required to achieve this while simultaneously reducing the scale and budget of the directorate's services and ensuring effective corporate governance and statutory compliance.

To meet this demanding challenge we will target our resources and activity on the following six priorities:

1. Manage the delivery of the Transforming Angus programme.
2. Deliver the key strands of the Transforming Resources Project.
3. Develop our approach to Priority Based Budgeting and Resource Allocation based on outcomes.
4. Ensure the Council has a high performing, confident workforce.
5. Ensure continued effective governance, financial control and statutory compliance.
6. Deliver a resilient IT and communications infrastructure to support the change agenda.

This work will help ensure that the citizens of Angus continue to receive sustainable and high quality public services that make a positive difference to their lives and their communities.

**Mark Armstrong**  
**Strategic Director**

## VISION, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND LOCAL OUTCOMES

The vision of Angus Council is that:

***'Angus is a place where a first class quality of life can be enjoyed by all'***

We will contribute to the achievement of that vision by having a clear focus on outcomes, quality and sustainability, we will:

- do what we say and do it well
- value the contribution of others
- be open to the changes which will lead to improvement
- demonstrate fairness and equality in everything we do

Behind this vision is a set of core values that underpin all of our work:

- ambition and continuous improvement
- honesty and integrity
- trust and respect
- responsibility and accountability

This Resources Directorate Improvement Plan will focus on the Council's priorities to support the achievement of that vision. It will also contribute to the achievement of the Angus Community Planning Partnership priorities that our communities are:

- **Prosperous and Fair**
- **Learning and Supportive**
- **Safe and Strong**
- **Caring and Healthy**
- **Sustainable**

The increase in demand for services and rising customer expectations along with the continued reduction in resources requires us to be even more innovative and creative in our approach and to ensuring our operations are as effective and efficient as possible. The Resources directorate brings essential corporate support services under a single directorate with an emphasis on supporting the Council in the delivery of its outcomes and priorities and a focus on leading and enabling transformational change.

The Resources directorate has and will continue to work hard to provide high quality professional support to the Council and its front-line services while ensuring that our overall corporate governance is effective. However, the operating environment of the Council is continually changing and we need to adapt and respond to this situation. Over the period of this improvement plan the key priorities for the Resources directorate are:

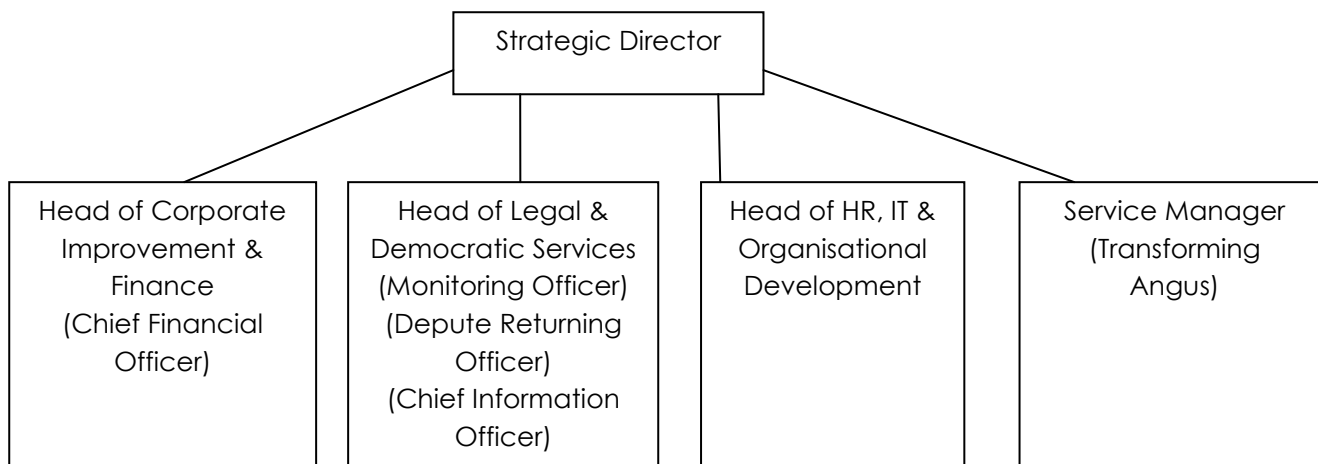
- Supporting the Council to reduce its costs on an unprecedented scale, increase its income and deliver a legal and balanced budget. The Resources directorate has already delivered savings of £2,102,000 over the last five years and has reduced employee numbers by 39.8 FTE.
- Leading and enabling the implementation of the council's change programme, Transforming Angus, in partnership with EY, including providing professional expertise to support service review and redesign in other directorates;
- Delivering further savings of up to 20% by the end of financial year 2018/19 through service review, re-design and investment. Wherever possible we will seek to maximise savings through improved efficiency and digital re-design;
- Continuing to maximise local taxation collection levels against a background of welfare reform and a continuing difficult economic climate;
- Delivering the Scottish Local Government Elections in 2017 in line with the outcome of the Local Government Boundary review which amended ward boundaries and reduced councillor numbers by one;
- Delivering training to all new elected members post 4 May 2017;

- Continuing to embed the Council's Information Governance Strategy across all services;
- Leading organisational and employee development while supporting services in implementing the reduction in staffing levels that will occur across the Council over the next three years without critically affecting service delivery;
- Managing employee relations and engaging with trade unions constructively during on-going change;
- Ensuring our infrastructure and data operations enable the effective delivery of the Council's business;
- Developing greater resource collaboration between the Council and our partners;
- Delivering the actions associated with the agreed Workforce Strategy;
- Delivering the actions associated with the agreed agile and accommodation strategies;
- Maintaining core services and delivering statutory functions alongside the additional demands placed on the directorate to support the Council's change programme with ever reducing resources; and
- Leading the Council's participation in the EU funded Interreg Like! Project.

## SERVICE PROFILE

The Resources directorate comprises three services: Corporate Improvement & Finance; Legal & Democratic Services and Organisational Change (HR, IT, Organisational Development and Safety, Health & Wellbeing). These services provide key professional and support services which substantially contribute to the strategic management and operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. The Transforming Angus Programme Office team which is responsible for supporting the implementation of the Council's change programme is also based within the Resources directorate.

Services to the public are provided by Corporate Improvement & Finance (Revenues & Benefits) and Legal and Democratic Services (Licensing and Registration) in addition to their support service functions.



### Corporate Improvement & Finance

Revenues and Benefits:

- Council Tax
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Reduction
- Scottish Welfare Fund
- Discretionary Housing Payments
- Educational Benefits
- Non-Domestic Rates
- Sales Ledger Administration
- Rent Arrears Collection
- Welfare Rights
- Social Care Financial Assessments

Financial Services:

- Financial Services
- Treasury Management
- Corporate Procurement
- Co-ordination of final accounts, budget preparation and monitoring
- Administration of corporate ledger system

Corporate Improvement:

The Corporate Improvement function has recently transferred to the Quality & Performance service within Children & Learning.

### **Legal & Democratic Services**

Legal Services:

- Legal services, support and guidance
- Advice to council committees
- Strategic legal support to corporate projects including Transforming Angus
- Freedom of Information and Data Protection policy and advice
- Clerk to the Licensing Board
- Civic & Miscellaneous Licensing
- Ombudsman complaints
- Registration Service
- Information Governance

Democratic Services

- Committee Administration
- Charities Administration
- Support to the Council's political decision making structures

Elections & Directorate Business Support

- Election Management
- Boundary Reviews
- Resources Directorate Business Support
- HQ & Facilities Support
- Directorate Performance Management
- Print and MFD copy services
- Mail and courier service
- Committee Support

### **Organisational Change:**

HR

- HR and employee relations
- Staffing and Payroll services

IT

- Education ICT
- Network and Communications
- Infrastructure
- Software Development
- E-mail & Internet
- IT Security
- Service Desk & Support



## Organisational Development

- Leadership and management development
- Employee development
- E-learning
- Elected member development

## Safety, Health & Wellbeing

- Statutory health and safety advice and reporting
- Safety, health and wellbeing advice, guidance and support
- Fire safety management advice, guidance and support

## **Transforming Angus (TA):**

- Implementation of the Council's change programme, Transforming Angus
- Building services capacity to lead future change
- Management of the Council's strategic partnership with EY

## KEY STRENGTHS

The Resources directorate will continue to build on its strengths and use these as the foundations of our improvement.

The key strengths of the directorate are:

- A competent, motivated professional and qualified workforce in place to deliver high quality services and committed to driving and delivering change and improvement;
- A committed and competent leadership team;
- The ability to provide high quality support services which underpins the business of the Council;
- A track record of strong financial leadership, governance and planning;
- A clear understanding of the need to prioritise service delivery;
- A dedicated and resourced programme office to support the delivery of transformational change;
- Promoting and enabling partnership and collaborative working;
- The successful and effective management of elections and the democratic work of the Council;
- Leading the provision of a high quality and effective leadership and management development programme;

Evidence to support these key strengths:

- Refining the Priority Based Budgeting approach for the Council first introduced in the 2016/17 Budget Setting process;
- Helping the Council deliver balanced budgets and achieve unqualified audit certificates on its Accounting Statements;
- Achieving collection rates for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates which are among the best in Scotland;
- The Revenues & Benefits service being awarded the “best in Scotland” by their professional institute, the Institute of Revenues Rating & Valuation (IRRV) 2015;
- Implementation of new arrangements for customers for paying the Council including a large increase in direct debit payers;
- Complying with Public Sector Network (PSN) requirements to achieve PSN accreditation;
- Maintaining the liP standard;
- The effective co-ordination and management of the recent Scottish Parliament election and EU Referendum;
- The development of Agile Angus and the model for roll-out across the organisation. Resources directorate staff have continued to contribute to the legal, financial, HR and IT work for Angus Alive during its first year of operation;
- Resources Directorate staff have spent a significant amount of resource reducing the amount of paper filing which was stored within its offices with a view to moving to agile;
- The Resources directorate contributed significantly to the delivery of the new Forfar Community Campus which is due to be opened in Spring 2017.
- The provision of legal advice in respect of the delivery of two new primary schools in Arbroath through East Central Territory Hub, both of which are now open.
- The provision of legal advice to Angus Council and Dundee City Council in respect of the Dundee and Angus Residual Waste project. The project team are in the process of completing dialogue with the final bidder.
- The provision of legal advice to the Brechin Flood Prevention scheme which is now completed;

- The provision of legal advice in respect of the Montrose South Regeneration Project for which the compulsory purchase order has been approved by the Scottish Ministers.
- The Resources directorate continues to contribute significantly to the operation of the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board.
- Development of a strategic plan to facilitate the provision of technological solutions to support a digital by design approach to service design;
- Significant improvements in the first stage resolution of IT Helpdesk support requirements;
- Working with partners to develop and share coaching resources and to adopt an integrated approach to providing coaching;
- Continuously updating and delivering the leadership development programme;
- Developing agreed Workforce Strategy;
- Developing an effective employee relations model;
- Developing the Transforming Angus programme governance arrangements.

## **TRANSFORMING OUR SERVICES**

We will seek to transform our services by:

- Embedding a culture of good information and records management across the organisation to support informed decision and policy making;
- Implementing the Agile strategy to deliver a sustainable property estate, agile working practices and improved service delivery;
- Implementing the Workforce Strategy and associated action plans;
- Ensuring adequate resources are in place to drive technological improvement which supports the Council's transformational change programme/digital by design approach to service delivery;
- Assisting to embed the Council's performance management framework to support decision- making and to demonstrate progress against planned outcomes;
- Continually identifying ways in which to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all our services;
- Delivering further change in how we charge for services and facilitate customer payments.

## OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES

The Resources directorate seeks to support the Council delivery of all local outcomes.

There are currently no outcomes within the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) for which the directorate is directly responsible for delivering. However, the directorate will lead on aspects of the Community Planning Partnership Improvement Action Plan and it contributes to the achievement of SOA targets and the Council's corporate plan in an indirect way through our support to other services.

The key priorities for the Resources directorate over the next three years are:

Partnership Priorities and Local Outcomes	Council Priorities	Resources Directorate Priorities
<p><b>Managing Our Business:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Transformational Change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Manage the delivery of the Transforming Angus programme</li> <li>➤ Delivery of the Transforming Resources Project</li> <li>➤ Develop our approach to Priority Based Budgeting and Resource Allocation based on outcomes</li> <li>➤ Ensure the Council has a high performing, confident workforce</li> <li>➤ Ensure continued effective governance, financial control and statutory compliance</li> <li>➤ Deliver a resilient IT and communications infrastructure to support the transformational change agenda</li> </ul>

It should be acknowledged that with ever decreasing resources available, the Directorate will need to review any additional requests for support based on the Council's key priorities and how these can be accommodated alongside existing commitments. This may mean that some requests for support may not be fulfilled as per customer expectations. The Resources Leadership team will seek to prioritise requests of a significant nature on a case by case basis.

**Priority:            Manage the delivery of the Transforming Angus programme**

**What the service will do:**

- Manage the activity of the Transforming Angus Programme Office and ensure its effective contribution to the successful implementation of the TA change programme;
- Lead on the implementation of specific areas of the change programme;
- Assure the implementation of the Transforming Angus programme governance arrangements.

**How we will do this:**

- We will support and assure the implementation of the governance arrangements for the Transforming Angus programme;
- We will lead and support the implementation of specific areas of the Transforming Angus programme;
- We will develop and manage the Transforming Angus programme office to support the Council's change programme;
- We will manage the Council's relationship with and performance of our strategic partner, EY.

**We will measure this by monitoring the:**

- Progress achieved against the Transforming Angus delivery plans;
- Benefits realised from the entire Transforming Angus change programme (i.e. significant financial savings and improved outcomes across full programme).

**Priority:            Deliver the key strands of the Transforming Resources Project**

**What the service will do:**

- Review, redesign and implement a new sustainable service model for the Resources directorate as a whole;
- Reduce the Resources directorate budget by 20% i.e. £2M.
- Work with our employees to deliver a more flexible workforce who are engaged in the transformation process.

**How we will do this:**

- We will deliver a number of key change projects across the directorate;
- We will improve our efficiency and effectiveness by making use of digital service delivery methods wherever possible;
- We will deliver a new records management system to replace outdated paper and digital filing systems currently in use across the Council;
- We will implement the outcome of the corporate/management grading structure review;
- We will implement the outcome of the clerical/admin review;
- We will link this into the other key elements of the Transforming Angus programme to provide effective and efficient business support functions;

**We will measure this by monitoring the:**

- Delivery of key benefits outlined in the Transforming Resources Business Case (e.g. the required reduction in employee numbers and savings over the next 3 years);

**Priority:**            **Develop our approach to Priority Based Budgeting and Resource Allocation based on outcomes**

**What the service will do:**

- Support the Council and its Community Planning Partners to embed a priority based approach to resource allocation which focuses on outcomes to be achieved.

**How we will do this:**

- We will refine our approach to Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) in setting the 2017/18 budget.

**We will measure this by monitoring the:**

- The level of savings and investment made in priority budget areas;

**Priority:**            **Ensure the Council has a high performing, confident workforce**

**What the service will do:**

- Lead and support workforce and organisational change and development across the Council;
- Build workforce capacity, flexibility adaptability and resilience;
- Develop a culture of high performance and improvement;
- Improve health, safety and well-being management arrangements across the Council.

**How we will do this:**

- We will implement our workforce strategy;
- We will implement people management policies;
- We will provide learning and development opportunities that support and build the sustainable capacity of our employees and teams;
- We will lead the implementation of the revised safety management framework;
- We will implement an electronic employee performance management system;
- We will roll out our new employee competency framework.

**We will measure this by monitoring the:**

- Qualitative methods including implementation of employee surveys and exit interviews to assess our performance and will develop further robust tools for this purpose;
- Results of the Employee Attitude Survey;
- Sickness absence (Resources)% (KPI);
- Sickness absence days lost per employee (Resources)(KPI);
- Employee Turnover Rate (Resources) (KPI);
- Sickness absence days lost per employee (all non teaching employees)(KPI);
- Average number of working days per employee lost through sickness absence for all other local government employees (SPI);

- % of the highest paid 5% of earners among council employees that are women (SPI) (LGBF);

**Identified Risk:                    Sound Resource Management**

**Risk Description:**            There is a risk, with the proposed reductions in the staffing resources available and the increase in demand to support major Transforming Angus programme projects that resources may be used ineffectively or individual workloads become too great leading to a greater risk of services being unable to maintain the current pace of change.

**Likelihood:**                                **3 Low to High**

**Potential Impact:**                        **4 Major**

**Overall Risk Score:**                        **12**

**Risk Appetite Score:**                        **10**

**Risk Actions in place to mitigate risk:**

- We will identify areas of business as usual work which can be temporarily ceased or curtailed to create capacity among our staff to support change including the redesign of services.
- We will develop and diversify the skills of existing staff and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills when key employees are leaving the Council.
- We will monitor staff workloads and sickness absence levels through analysis of flexi-time and sickness absence records.
- We will improve dialogue and engagement with trade unions.
- We will ensure that managers at all levels monitor staff for signs of work related stress and where necessary discuss concerns with staff.
- We will encourage staff to share best practice, suggestions and ideas to improve efficiency to assist managers in ensuring that workloads for all staff are maintained at a manageable level.
- We will ensure that the Executive Leadership Team is more robust with colleagues and other directorates in dealing with new/additional requests for support particularly for new projects and initiatives prior to existing priorities being met.

**Identified Risk:                    Staff Recruitment & Retention**

**Risk Description:**            There is a risk as a directorate we will be unable to recruit, retain and motivate staff to deliver our services effectively in the current economic climate with local authorities required to continue to deliver high quality services despite significant reductions to their budgets.

**Likelihood:**                                **4 High**

**Potential Impact:**                        **4 Major**

**Overall Risk Score:**                        **12**

**Risk Appetite Score:**                        **10**

**Risk Actions in place to mitigate risk:**

- We will ensure that staff are aware of; and where appropriate make use of employee benefits such as flexible working policies, PAM assist etc. to improve work/life balance.
- We will consider modern apprenticeships and graduate/trainee recruitment as a means of "growing our own" and supporting our Youth Employment objectives.

**Priority: Ensure continued effective governance, financial control and statutory compliance**

**What the service will do:**

- Ensure good systems of governance are in place and being adhered to;
- Ensure statutory compliance with any new/amended legislation;
- Support all services of the Council to deliver existing agreed budget savings to ensure that a balanced budget can be set for each financial year and identify further savings into future years;
- Deliver accurate election results in which all stakeholders have confidence.

**How we will do this:**

- We will carry out an evaluation of all activities undertaken at previous elections and implement improvements for forthcoming elections, where appropriate;
- We will engage with people who want to stand for election to ensure they can have confidence in the management of the process and result.
- We will oversee the implementation of the Council's Information Governance Strategy and Action Plan and ensure the Council complies with the Records Management (Scotland) Act 2011;
- We will support the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland in their Fifth Statutory Review of Local Government Electoral Arrangements and the Boundary Commission for Scotland in the forthcoming review of Westminster Parliamentary Boundaries.

**We will measure this by monitoring the:**

- % of actions completed in the Annual Corporate Governance Assurance Statement Improvement Plan;
- % of agreed budget savings for the People and Communities Directorates and Chief Executive's unit in 2016/17 delivered;
- [Electoral Commission's Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer Key Performance Indicators](#);
- Post-election evaluation exercises;

**Identified Risk: Delivery of future budget savings**

**Risk Description:** There is a risk that the directorate will require to significantly reduce the services provided as the requirement to find additional future savings leads to further reductions in staff resources.

**Likelihood: 4 High**  
**Potential Impact: 3 Significant**  
**Overall Risk Score: 12**  
**Risk Appetite Score: 10**

**Risk Actions in place to mitigate risk:**

- We will identify more efficient ways of working to deliver transformational change across the directorate via the Transforming Resources project.
- We will prioritise workloads applying resources accordingly and where necessary reduce our delivery of non-priority services.



**Priority:** Deliver a resilient IT and communications infrastructure to support the change agenda

**What the service will do:**

- Drive technological improvement to support the agile and digital agendas.

**How we will do this:**

- We will support and enable the implementation of the Council's Angus Digital strategy;
- We will maintain the Council's accreditation to the Public Sector Network (PSN);
- We will implement Scotland Wide Area Network (SWAN).
- We will continue to develop and deliver effective collaborative solutions with public sector and other partners.

**We will measure this by monitoring the:**

- Delivery of the agreed Angus Digital priorities;
- The receipt of PSN accreditation for the organisation;
- SOCITM Indicators
- Implementation of collaborative solutions

**Identified Risk:** Major disruption in continuity of IT operations

**Risk Description:** There is a risk with an increased dependency on IT systems that in the event of a major IT infrastructure failure the Council will be unable to deliver critical services.

**Likelihood:** 4 - High

**Potential Impact:** 4 – Major

**Overall Risk Score:** 16

**Risk Appetite Score:** 10

**Risk Actions in place to mitigate risk:**

- We will ensure that Recovery plans are in place for all core IT systems and are regularly tested to ensure that recovery to Business as Usual (BAU) can be delivered within agreed recovery time objectives.
- We will ensure that we have a resilient IT infrastructure in place and that IT resources are aligned, as far as possible, with the Council's digital priorities in light of the increase in pace of delivery of the change agenda.

**Other Performance Measures**

In addition to the specific monitoring for priorities listed above the Resources Directorate will also monitor performance against the following corporate performance measures as a means of assessing how well it is doing to deliver its core day to day services:

- The cost of collecting council tax per dwelling (SPI) (LGBF);
- The % of income due from council tax for the year excluding relief's and rebates that was received by the end of the year (SPI) (LGBF);
- Average number of days to decide new claims for council tax and housing benefits from the date of receipt of the claim (KPI);
- Average number of days to process changes of circumstances for council tax and housing benefits from the date of receipt of the notification of the change (KPI)

- Gross benefit administration cost per case (KPI)
- Proportion of outstanding sundry debt that is more than 90 days old from date of invoice as at 31 March (KPI);
- Total procurement savings achieved year on year, including both cash and non-cash (KPI);
- Total transactions that are e-transactions(through an e-procurement system) (KPI);
- Central support services (external to services) as a proportion of Council running costs (LGBF);
- Cost of Democratic Core per 1,000 population (LGBF);
- The % of invoices sampled and paid within 30 days (SPI)(LGBF);