![Angus Council logo]

COMMUNITIES

DIRECTORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2016-19

Working together to make our communities great places to live, work and visit

Contents

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Foreword

The Communities Directorate delivers a huge range of services that I know make a real difference to peoples' lives. We do this by delivering good quality frontline services, by listening to service users and partners, and by understanding their priorities.

We have come a long way in the last 3 years, improving the way we do things to ensure we keep pace with a fast changing operating environment. We have achieved successes across the spectrum: introducing a new waste management process so our recycling rates are amongst the best in the country; Our Leisure Services are now operated by a new Trust; Our Building Services continually gain customer satisfaction excellence recognition; the incidence of anti-social behaviour is significantly and steadily reducing; we have agreed a new Local Development Plan which will help grow our economy; Our new-build Council house programme delivers high quality new homes each year; and our green spaces remain of the highest quality.

The Directorate Improvement Plan gives us the opportunity to look again at how we deliver outcomes, and to refresh our ambition and priorities. It sets out challenges and the actions we will take to improve over the next 3 years.

Customer Focus

We already provide our customers with information via our website and public performance reporting about what we do and why we do it, but we are always open to suggestions on how to make things better. We are positive about change, but we want to make sure we take our customers with us. Charette consultation events were held in each Burgh to allow a clear exchange of ideas on how we can make our communities great, and which will underpin our planning.

Partnership

We may have to work more imaginatively with partners, and facilitate communities or individuals to do things themselves if that's what they want and it's the best mechanism for making things happen. The crucial thing is we work together and co-ordinate our pooled resources effectively.

Technology

Technology is impacting on how we interact with our customers, and how our services are provided. It will enable our customers to access services at times and places that suit them and do more things for themselves. We need to ensure we are flexible and responsive to our customer's needs.

Outcomes

What's important for me is that we focus on delivering outcomes that are important for our communities, and at the same time help to close the equalities gap so the opportunity to succeed is fair for everyone. We are proud of what we do, and we want Angus people to be proud of our communities as well.

Alan McKeown
Strategic Director - Communities
September 2016

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Communities Team

The Communities Directorate provides a broad range of services all of which make a difference to our communities and the lives of the people who live, work and visit them.

Communities business areas are:-

- **Business Support and Improvement** – customer services; systems and administration support

- **Planning for Place** – community and spatial planning; housing; youth work, capacity building and adult learning

- **Regulatory and Protective Services** – environmental health, parks, public protection and enforcement, environmental management and consumer protection

- **Technical and Property Services** – transport, roads and property

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Preparing this Plan

In preparing this Directorate Improvement plan (DIP) we have sought to make a logical progression from the Council's vision to setting out a number of actions that we will take to improve our Directorate. This is set within the wider community partners context of the Single Outcome Agreement which in late 2017 will be replaced with a Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

We have articulated a Directorate Ambition, Behaviours and Priorities which everyone in the Directorate can identify with and work to. We have then set out what we think success will look like for each of the priorities and identified goals that we will need to achieve in order to be able to demonstrate that we are delivering.

Finally, we have taken the goals we have set ourselves and identified what actions we need to take as a Directorate in order to achieve them, and how we intend to measure the actions we take.

Council Vision

Ambition

Behaviours

Priorities

What will success look like?

Goals

Actions / KPI's

This DIP will be updated every year, and will be supported by Service Plans and Operational Plans which will translate the Directorate Goals, Actions and KPIs into service specific actions and measures. All the measures set out in the DIP as well as the more operational ones, will help us to know whether we are on target to meet our goals and address our priorities.

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Vision and Ambition

The vision of Angus Council is that:

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

We believe the Communities Team can make a significant contribution to the achievement of our vision through the delivery of services and active collaboration with communities, colleagues and community planning partners.

To help us maximise that contribution, we have developed a statement of ambition for the Directorate with a set of behaviours that will inform and influence our day to day work.

Our ambition:

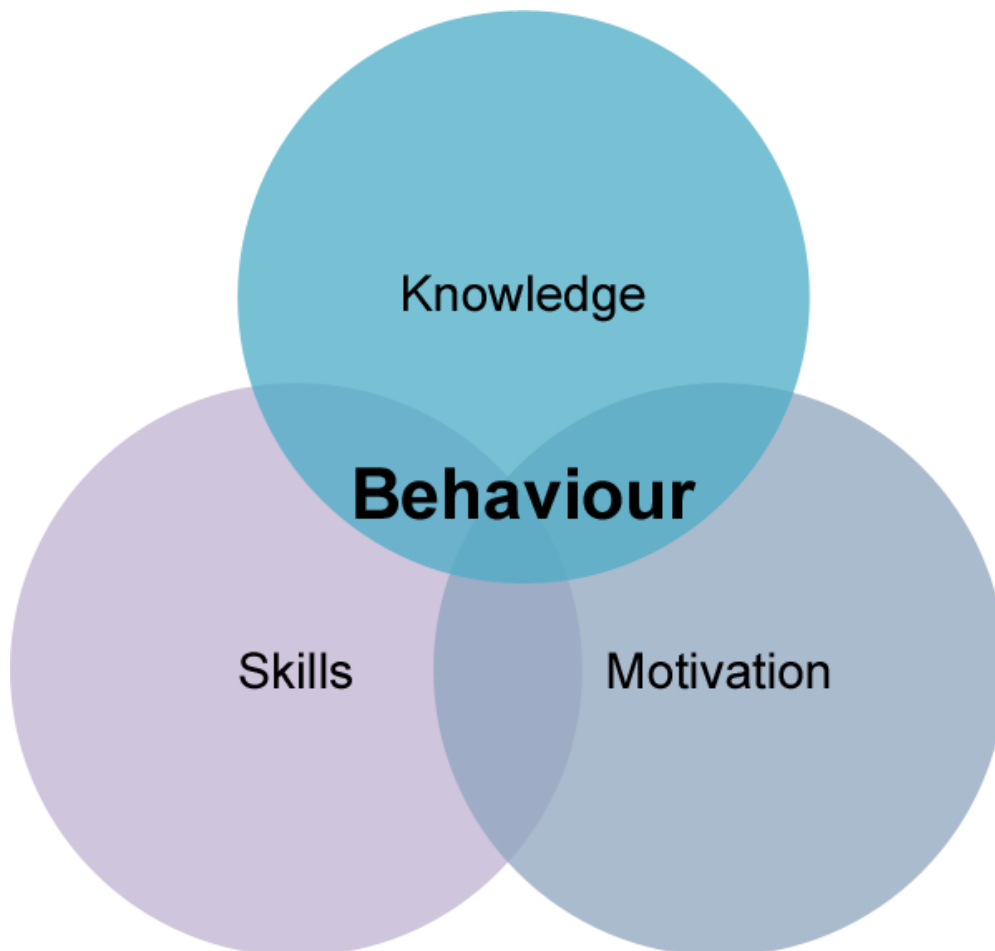**"working together to make our communities great places to live, work and visit"**
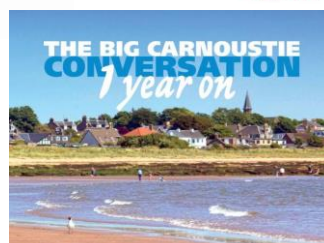
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Behaviours

Our commitment is to work towards our ambition by demonstrating the following behaviours:

Team Behaviours	*Leadership Behaviours*	*Learning Behaviours*
Leading by example	*Working together and collaboratively across boundaries*	*Innovating and learning*
Respecting, trusting and supporting each other	*Rewarding staff achievement and endeavour*	*Seeking excellence and improvement in performance*
Communicating openly and transparently	*Building team morale*	*Having freedom to succeed*
Making affordable and sustainable decisions	*Sharing stories of success and courage*	*Being proud of what we do*

We expect these behaviours to be evident in the way we work. We will hold each other accountable for our behaviours and provide support if we fall short of our commitment.

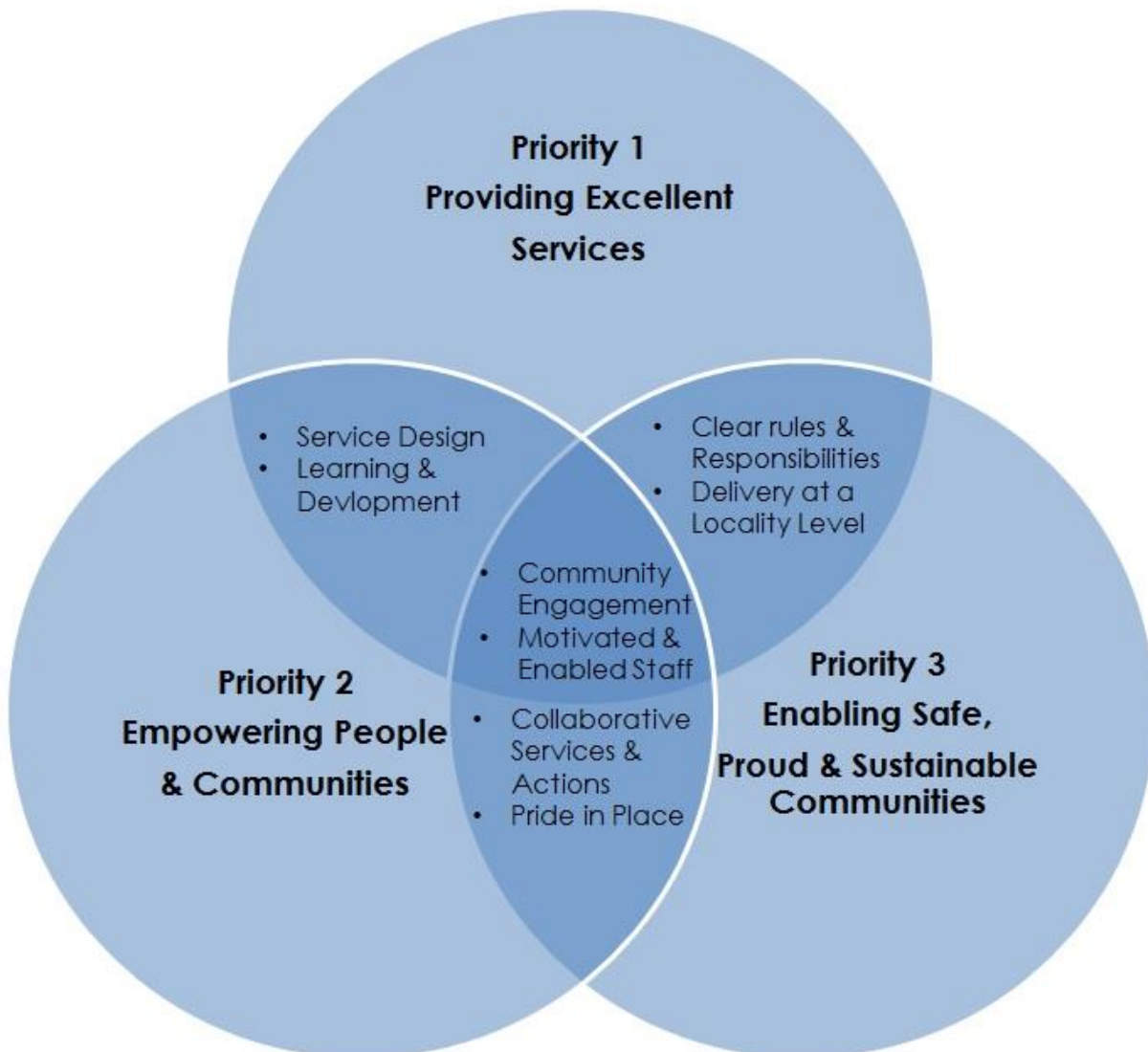**Working together to make our communities great places to live, work and visit**

Priorities

Through a series of dialogues within our team we have identified three priorities to enable us to achieve our ambition.

1. **Providing excellent services**
2. **Empowering people and communities to succeed**
3. **Enabling safe, proud and sustainable communities**

We recognise our priorities are interlinked and interdependent in the following way.

Priority 1
Providing Excellent Services

- Service Design
- Learning & Devlopment

- Clear rules & Responsibilities
- Delivery at a Locality Level

- Community Engagement
- Motivated & Enabled Staff
- Collaborative Services & Actions
- Pride in Place

Priority 2
Empowering People & Communities

Priority 3
Enabling Safe, Proud & Sustainable Communities

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Creating places people are proud to call home

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Priority 1 – Providing Excellent Services

Our ambition is working together to make our communities great places to live, work and visit.

We are committed to developing and delivering excellent services across our portfolio in a way that best meets the needs of our customers and communities.

We know we are more likely to achieve excellent services if we fully understand how people would like to use them. We want to make the best use of technology to meet our customers' needs and find innovative solutions to deliver excellent services within our budgets.

What will success look like?

Customer Focus

Customers are satisfied with the service we provide and this is confirmed by regular customer surveys, positive feedback, compliments and fewer complaints. Where complaints are received, they are resolved quickly and result in positive improvements to service delivery.

Standards

We are clear on our customer service standards and these are communicated and monitored. We are honest when we have not met our standards, and we demonstrate good practice, benchmarking with other authorities and publicising achievements and awards.

Engagement

Knowledge of our customers and customer engagement are used to design and deliver services, making services more appropriate and responsive. Services are provided at the right time, in the right place and in the right way. We deliver and demonstrate value for money.

Confident and Competent

All staff are confident and competent in their customer service roles and are committed to continual improvement in the services we provide and the processes we undertake.

Staff, customers and communities are aware of the duties and responsibilities of the Council.

How will we know?

Goals

- We use technology to deliver services and solutions

- We meet our customer service standards which are understood by all and our customers are satisfied

- Communities are better engaged and more influential in decisions and in designing our services

- Our services are value for money

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Public Protection and Enforcement

Environmental Management – Parks

Roads and Transport

Environmental Management - Waste

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Priority 2 – Empowering People and Communities to Succeed

Empowering

We know that the greatest resource we have to help making Angus communities better places to live work and visit is our people. If we are to achieve our ambition, we know we will have to invest in our people and have confidence in their ability to deliver the services and create the places we are proud of.

Rich in Talent and Skills

The breadth of services provided by our team means we are rich in skills and talents. Equally our communities have diverse and wide ranging knowledge, which we can build on, to help us create safe, proud and sustainable places. Our challenge is to harness these resources, playing to strengths and utilising assets in complementary ways.

We recognise that the environment we work in is changing all the time and this creates new demands on our people. We all need to feel confident in our roles and be equipped to deliver and thrive. Consequently, we are committed to doing everything possible to ensure our people – staff and communities – have the skills, understanding and capabilities to deliver excellent services today and in the future.

What will success look like?

Staff and communities are motivated, equipped and able to deliver excellent services and places. All parties have the confidence and feel supported to be proactive, to try to do things differently and to innovate.

Services engage with communities, and can genuinely influence what and how the Directorate delivers. There is clarity over the roles and responsibilities of all parties, and mutual accountability for commitments and actions.

There is continual improvement, training and capacity building for both officers and communities. We are confident in the skills our people have, and there is clear information on where expertise and capacity lies. There is a culture in which we ensure learning opportunities are available with individuals taking responsibility for their own development.

Our services are open to challenge, our decisions are transparent and our communities are confident in our delivery.

Relationships are positive, constructive and built on both shared goals and mutual understanding.

How will we know?

Goals

- People are learning and developing their skills and knowledge

- People are confident and competent in their jobs and ability to contribute

- People are working better together

- We have high quality community engagement

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Colourful Carnoustie

Clean up Angus Volunteers

Forfar Action Group opening their new playpark at Lordburn

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Priority 3 – Enabling Safe, Proud and Sustainable Communities

Pride

We are confident that empowering our people to deliver excellent services will help make our communities safer and sustainable places. As our places develop and improve, people will have a greater sense of pride in their neighbourhood, village or town, and in Angus as a whole.

Partnership

We know we can work more effectively with each other and with our community planning partners to make sure our services and our resources are better aligned. We are driven by what is important for Angus and each of its localities, recognising that our work has a direct bearing on outcomes for people.

Growing

We are aware that growth and change can be difficult for communities and we will work with them to develop an understanding of the benefits and importance of new development to economic wellbeing and the long term sustainability of communities.

Identity

We know each of our communities has its own identity and we want to encourage and support people to have a sense of pride. We also want to connect communities, achieving a sense of responsibility in which "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". If we all take pride in in our places, there is a far greater likelihood that our people and communities will thrive and enjoy a sense of wellbeing.

What will success look like?

All parties are working towards agreed outcomes, which reflect the priorities of the different localities.

We use our resources in a coordinated way aligned with those of our internal and external partners.

Angus is a network of sustainable and viable communities that are supportive of sustainable growth because the benefits are clearly understood. The qualities of the natural and built environment in Angus are maintained and enhanced.

Our communities are distinctive, with their own histories and traditions, but recognise their inter-dependence and work together for mutual benefit.

The perception of safety in all of our communities is good and this is backed up by statistics and people's experiences.

All parts of Angus benefit from increasing economic vibrancy, improved life chances and a sense of wellbeing.

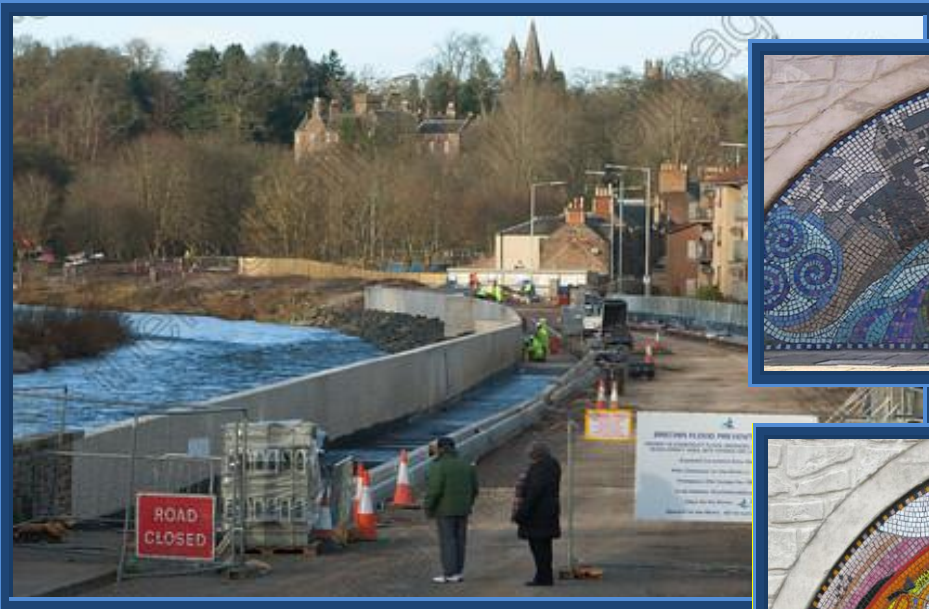**Working together to make our communities great places to live, work and visit**

We are all proud of what we do and how we contribute to achieving outcomes. We are proud of Angus as a place to live, work and visit which is demonstrated through our behaviours.

How will we know?

Goals

- Communities are more sustainable

- We have better quality places

- Our communities are safer and feel safer

- People are prouder of our communities

- There are positive outcomes in environmental sustainability, economic growth and wellbeing

Construction of Brechin Flood Defence

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Actions

Priority 1 – Providing Excellent Services

Goal	Action	Measure	Target
We use technology to deliver services and solutions	1. We will implement a new customer services platform for the council	• Implementation date • Identification of work streams suitable for implementation via platform • Full review of legacy systems • Savings from removal of legacy systems	• Platform to be live by 30 September 2017 • 30 September 2017 • March 2018 • To form part of the 2018-19 budget process
	2. We will maximise the use of technology to make service delivery more efficient	• Unit cost per transaction	• Reduction in unit cost by 10% by March 2018
	3. We will review processes to make them more efficient	• Number of services where customers pay in advance of delivery • Consider business change processes ie robotics/automation/back office rationalisation	• All services by March 2017 • All processes by December 2019
We meet our customer service standards which are understood by all and our customers are satisfied	4. We will review and publish customer service standards for communities	• % of standards reviewed • % of standards published on line	• 100% by March 2019 • 100% by March 2019
Communities are better engaged and more influential in decisions and in	5. We will analyse customer feedback to help shape our services	• % increase of customer focus groups	• 20% increase by March 2018

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designing our services	6. We will implement a customer feedback option with every on-line request	• % of on-line requests with feedback functionality	• 20% increase by March 2018
Our services are value for money	7. We will consider value for money in all revenue generating activities	• Business costing evaluation linking to each activity undertaken	• Reduction in unit costs by December 2017
	8. We will explore opportunities for shared services with other local authorities and organisations	• Number of shared arrangements with partners	• Increase in identified projects March 2018
	9. We will use our assets and resources more efficiently	• Number of digitalised/on-line service provision • Rationalisation of corporate buildings • reduction in electricity usage in corporate buildings	• Meet digital by March 2020 • Disposal of 23 buildings by 2018/19 (report 481/15 – Angus Agile and Estate Review) • 5% improvement by September 2017
	10. We will maximise resources by securing external funding and investment	• £ of external funding secured	• £1M per annum

Priority 2 – Empowering People and Communities to Succeed

GOAL	ACTION	MEASURE	TARGET
People are learning and developing their skills and knowledge	11. We will undertake a staff skills audit	• Skills audit completed	• March 2019
	12. We will provide comprehensive training plans for all business units	• Plans produced	• March 2017
People are confident and competent in their jobs and ability to contribute	13. We will deliver capacity building programmes and support for people in our communities	• Programme in place	• March 2018
People are working better together	14. We will encourage volunteering	• Increase in the number of volunteering groups	• 5% increase by March 2018
	15. We will use procurement opportunities to maximise social and economic benefits for people in the community	• Number of apprentices in shared apprenticeship programme • Number of Angus Small and Medium Enterprises awarded council construction contracts	• Increase by March 2017 • Increase by March 2018
We have high quality community engagement	16. We will increase the influence of citizens in our service planning through better consultation	• Number of community consultations • Number of positive impacts through consultation	• 5% increase by March 2018 • 5% increase by March 2018

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Priority 3 – Enabling Safe, Proud and Sustainable Communities

GOAL	ACTION	MEASURE	TARGET
Communities are more sustainable	17. We will assist people to access high quality housing and services	• Number of new homes built • Number of applicants given housing options advice within 28 days	• 310 by January 2018 • 80% by March 2017
	18. We will maximise the use of vacant sites with communities	• Amount of employment land developed • Number of construction developments on brown field sites	• 5 ha by January 2018 • 5 by January 2018
There are positive outcomes in environmental sustainability, economic growth and wellbeing	19. We will reduce our council carbon footprint	• Amount of Co2 produced in corporate buildings • % increase in the use of public transport	• Reduction by 2% by March 2018 • 2% increase by March 2018
	20. We will deliver and enable projects in the community with recognised health benefits	• Number of service projects	• 5% increase by March 2018
We have better quality places	21. We will build high quality buildings to excellent safety and energy standards.	• % of buildings with an energy performance certificate rating of A • % of new homes with sprinklers • % of council house tenants satisfied with new build homes	• 80% by March 2019 • 10% by March 2019 • 80% by March 2018
	22. We will maintain buildings to ensure they are safe and provide a healthy environment	• Number of dangerous buildings • £ of unplanned repair expenditure on council buildings • Construction compliance and notification plans	• 1% decrease by March 2018 • 1% decrease by March 2018 • 75% of Construction compliance and notification plans fully achieved

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	23. We will provide safe and accessible parks, recreational and play areas	• Number of parks maintained • Number of new parks provided under the new build housing policy	• March 2018 • Increase by March 2018
	24. We will identify external environment projects with communities using the place standard tool	• Number of projects identified	• March 2019
Our communities and safer and feel safer	25. We will help to maintain a safe environment	• Number of faulty street lights fixed within 7 days • Number of road defects fixed within target times • Winter maintenance carried out within target time • Number of properties at flood risk • Air quality • % of customers satisfied with public transport	• 100% achieved • 80% achieved • 80% achieved • Reduction by March 2019 • To maintain air quality within Scottish Government Parameters • 90% achieved
	26. We will help ensure the safety of food consumed in Angus	• Number of food businesses assessed as being higher risk	• 5% reduction by March 2018
	27. We will help to ensure consumer rights are protected	• Number of scams reported • Number of businesses registered by Angus Reputable Traders	• March 2018 • increase by March 2018
	28. We will work with communities to reduce the number of antisocial behaviour cases	• Number of cases reported • Number of cases dealt with within locally set targets	• reduction by March 2018 • 80% by March 2018
People are prouder of our communities	29. We will encourage and promote pride in place	• Number of community clean ups • Number of schools undertaking pride in place projects	• March 2018 • March 2018

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Risks

Our statement of ambition sets out what we want to achieve as a Directorate. If we are to succeed, we need to not only perform as a team, but also work well with colleagues across other Council services, with our partners, and crucially with communities and individuals. There are inherent risks in this, in that we are dependent on others being positively engaged and sharing in our ambition. We also need to ensure our staff have the right tools and access to the right resources.

Although the risks are not easily quantifiable we do think that there is a low risk of us not achieving a level of success: It is more a question of what level of success that is. Therefore, we don't think it is helpful to try to score risks for individual aspects, as each is inter-dependent on a range of influencing factors. However, what we can do (and have described in our proposed actions in the plan) is put in place measures to ensure there is every opportunity for us to succeed. We will do this by:

- Leadership: motivating colleagues, partners and individuals to share responsibility for actions we have identified
- Demonstrating our behaviours and values
- Prioritising resources
- Communicating clearly and transparently
- Investing in our staff

Notwithstanding this positive intent, there is clearly one over-riding risk which will materially affect the level of success we achieve in most, if not all areas of our business, and that is availability of resources. The public finance environment looks increasingly fragile, with the certainty of tightening budgets extending from the short to the long term, and this is likely to constrain the pace at which we can achieve our proposed actions. To mitigate against this, It means that we will increasingly have an enabling role which relies on other partners to deliver improvements on the ground.

It's therefore important that this Directorate Improvement Plan is used as a working document, which can be adaptive to the fast changing environment, in which it is incumbent on us to be agile in our thinking, and in our actions. Over the course of the next three years we will be self-critical, and will continuously monitor the level of our achievements. We will not be afraid to change our approach if we (or our customers) are not satisfied with the way things are going.

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