

Education and Children's Services Head of Service Business Plans Update 2024/25 Appendix 1

Working together for fairer and better lives

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Directors Introduction

I am once again delighted to introduce the ECS Heads of Service Business Plans that are governed by the ECS Committee. These plans will guide the work of the teams within ECS over the year ahead and they capture the key activities that the ECS Directorate will be leading forward along with how we will measure our successes. This year there are fewer Performance Indicators (PIs) per Head of Service, but they are more robust, and values driven.

We have sought to ensure greater consistency across each of the Business Plans in terms of what and how we are reporting, and it is our ambition that these plans are used as a self-evaluation tool to guide future improvements, actions and prioritisation, and for elected members scrutiny. We will be updating our self-evaluation sections bi-annually and this will replace the bi-annual report. As such we will remain focussed on our agreed PIs and will reflect on previous results and actions undertaken. In short, we are keen that our planning and reporting approach adds value, is engaging and provides a backdrop against which we can drive performance forward based on data informed decisions. In terms of our reporting arrangements, our aspiration is to use the Business Plans to enable a culture where we self-evaluate, plan, report and improve on our SMART PIs in a way that is relevant and adding value.

As an ECS Leadership team, we will be undertaking quarterly review meetings where each Head of Service will discuss the performance of their areas of responsibility, supported by our Improvement team, enabling peer support and challenge and a chance to explore future actions and opportunities. The aim of this is to build a stronger performance focussed culture within the ECS Leadership team.

All sections of the ECS Directorate remain fully committed to our service vision of working together for fairer and better lives through enacting our service values of integrity, equity and empowerment. These plans also set out ambitious yet realistic targets which teams will be working towards to demonstrate impact and improvements in outcomes for service users, be they children and young people, families, and others across our diverse communities in Aberdeenshire. Getting it right for our children, young people, families and communities remains our driving focus in everything we do. This includes working hard to ensure the resources we do have are distributed equitably seeking to achieve Best Value for Aberdeenshire and the communities we serve. We cannot and will not take forward in isolation but will seek to work with our valued partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors through our existing strong partnership arrangements such as the Aberdeenshire GIRFEC Strategic Group which oversees our Children's Services Planning arrangements, our work with partner early learning and childcare providers and our important work with employers as we seek to develop our young workforce, preparing them for life beyond school. We will also work in partnership with our Aberdeenshire Council colleagues and fellow directorates adopting the One Aberdeenshire principles and ethos in all we do.

Our services will continue to face challenges over the next few years with reducing resources, rising costs, increasing demand in some areas and significant recruitment challenges in some areas of our business, such as secondary school teacher recruitment. As a directorate team we are fully committed to embracing opportunities for transformation, including the increased use of digital solutions, in line with the Council-wide transformation programme and in addition to this, we have also recently had Committee approval for an ambitious project designed to assist us work towards a more sustainable and green primary learning estate, fit for purpose in the twenty-first century. Our places across Aberdeenshire are unique and our services operate in each and every part of Aberdeenshire. As such, we will ensure our work aligns fully with the ambitions and priorities which emerge from the Council's emerging Place Strategy.

Despite these challenges, our teams across Aberdeenshire ECS, remain committed to providing the best possible standard of service within the constraints we have, remaining ambitious and committed to ongoing improvement and change.

Laurence Findlay, February 2024



Education and Children's Services is the largest Service in Aberdeenshire Council providing education for children and young people 3 – 18 years, children and families social work services, resource and performance support, culture and sport services and area manager support.

The 2024-2025 revenue budget for Education and Children's Services is more than £430m. Education and Children's Services priorities are aligned to the Council Priorities of a Sustainable Economy, Connected Communities, and Living Well Locally.



Vision and Values

Our Vision

Working together for fairer and better lives

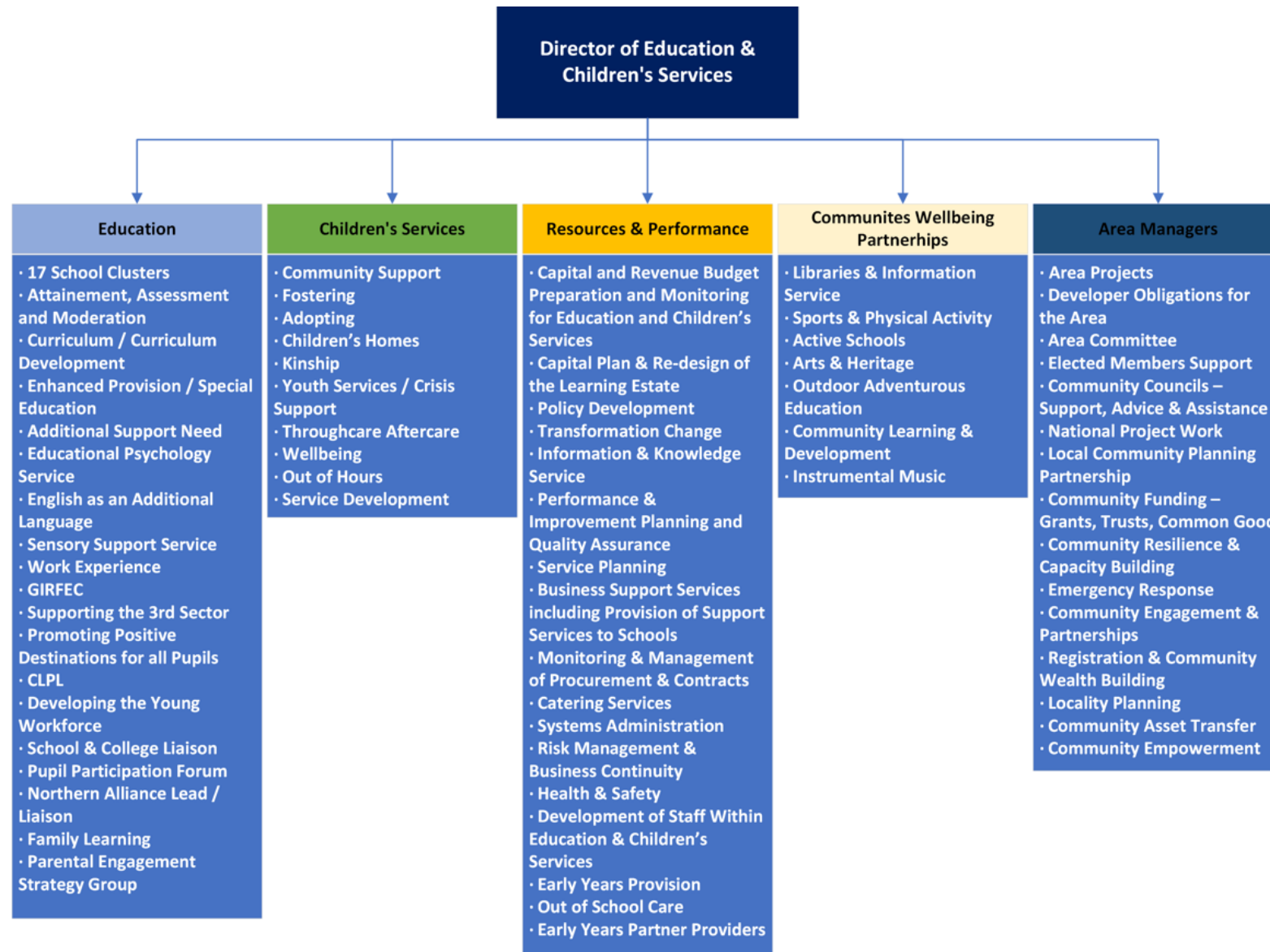
Our Values



Our Service values reflect the One Aberdeenshire Principles that were developed with all Aberdeenshire Services

- Everyone brings their "best self" to work every day
- We are clear about what is expected of us and ask for clarity if unsure
- We take informed decisions as close to the action as possible

Structure and Functions



The Challenges We Face

Finance

Aberdeenshire Council, like many councils across Scotland, is navigating through ongoing financial challenges amidst rising costs and heightened demand for local services. This has had a significant impact on Education and Children’s Services and how we deliver services moving forward. We navigate the current financial environment by employing robust financial management, and exploring options for improvements to systems and processes that achieve best value.

Staffing

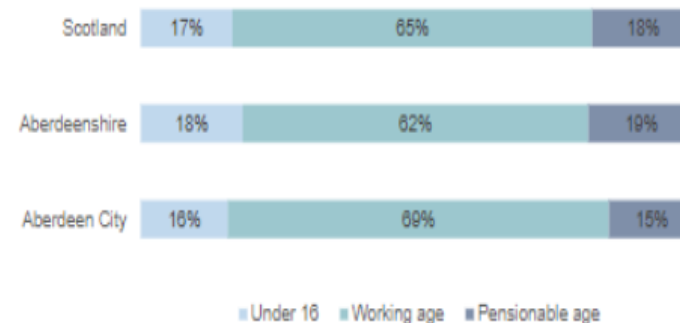
Recruitment and retention difficulties continue to put pressure on service delivery. Staff health and wellbeing has been a major focus since the pandemic, and this will remain as a priority.

Changing Demand for Services

Over the last decade Aberdeenshire’s population aged 0-15 increased by 2% and the population aged 16-64 decreased by 3%.

Aberdeenshire’s age structure in 2021 is compared to Scotland and Aberdeen City on the graph.

Aberdeenshire’s population has risen from approximately 189,000 residents in 1981, to 263,000 in 2021 – an increase of 39%, exceeding the national average increase of 6%. Since 1981 there’s been a noticeable reduction in the percentage of children and young adults in the population, whilst our working age population is in decline. Our ageing population (65 or over) is growing, and this has significant implications for healthcare, social services and the economy.



Strategic and Service Priorities

The service priorities must align with Aberdeenshire Council's strategic priorities which is referred to as the golden thread and means that every task of every employee within the Council contributes to achieving better outcomes for the people of Aberdeenshire.

PLACE-BASED STRATEGY

Everything we do will consider the impact on our places and will be informed by the voices of our communities.

A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

We will support a strong and diverse economy by attracting people of working age to our region, complementing our highly skilled local workforce.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

We will work with communities and partners to enhance the sense of connection among our places. This includes supporting communities to come up with innovative solutions to ensure our places are resilient and vibrant.

LIVING WELL LOCALLY

We will encourage and support our residents to lead healthy and active lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities. We will make proactive choices that will allow us to cater to the needs of our increasingly ageing population.

SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change and the drive to net zero will be at the heart of how we make decisions and deliver services to support the delivery of our strategic priorities in the long-term.

Education

Children's Services

Resources and
Performance

Communities,
Wellbeing and
Partnerships

Drivers and Enablers

Drivers

Education and Children’s Services work together, and in partnership, through a variety of plans, reports, and strategies, which support us to form and achieve our priorities.

<p>Council</p> <p>Council Plan</p> <p>Best Value Assurance Report</p> <p>Area & Partnerships</p> <p>Local Community Plans</p> <p>Local Outcomes Improvement Plan</p> <p>Connected & Cohesive Communities</p>	<p>Children’s Services</p> <p>Children Service Plan</p> <p>Child Protection Committee Report</p> <p>Corporate Parenting</p> <p>Violence Against Females Strategy</p> <p>Young Carer Strategy</p> <p>Children & Young People Charter</p> <p>Child Poverty Action Plan</p> <p>GIRFEC Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy</p>	<p>Communities Wellbeing Partnerships</p> <p>Sports & Physical Activity Strategy</p> <p>Cultural Strategy</p> <p>Community Learning Development Plan</p> <p>Education Scotland inspection CLD</p>	<p>Education</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p> <p>NIF Reporting Scottish Government</p> <p>Northern Alliance Planning</p> <p>Developing the Young Workforce</p> <p>Parental Involvement & Engagement Strategy</p> <p>Inspection Reports</p> <p>Curriculum for Excellence</p> <p>Supporting Complex Needs</p>
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Enablers

There are a number of enablers which support our reporting and measuring of our priorities.

These include a number of internal and external strategies and reports, as well as a various reporting platforms, such as Pentana.



Head of Service Business Plans 2024 - 2025

Business Plans

The following 2024 - 2025 business plans outline the strategy and goals of each function in Education and Children's Services:

- [Education](#)
- [Children's Services](#)
- [Resources & Performance](#)
- [Communities, Wellbeing & Partnership](#)



Education BUSINESS PLAN 2024 – 2025

Vision Statement

Working for fairer and better lives.

Across our service, we aim to build a learning culture which promotes high expectations and supports raised aspiration for all, leading to sustained positive outcomes for all children and young people.

(to be further developed in 2024)



Education sits within the Education and Children's Service Directorate. Getting it Right for our Children, young people, families and communities remains a driving focus in all areas of our work. Within everything we do, we remain committed to ensuring wellbeing, inclusion and equity. We aim to ensure:

- All young people feel included, supported and successful in their learning
- All young people attain and achieve the best possible outcomes
- All schools feel supported in providing the highest quality service



Service Function and Purpose

Aberdeenshire Council is Scotland’s fourth largest authority in terms of landmass, covering 2,432 square miles or 8% of the country’s landmass. 72.6% of the population of Aberdeenshire live in a “settlement” with 27.4% living in rural and outlying areas. This means that we have a diverse range of schools that serve our local authority.

Across Aberdeenshire we have 17 secondary schools, 4 Special Schools and 144 primary schools. Five primary schools are currently mothballed. Our schools’ range in size from our smallest with around eight pupils to our largest with over 1200 pupils. We have more than 36,000 pupils across our school estate. We employ approximately 2800 FTE of teachers and spend over £430 million per year on Education and Children’s Services.

As shown below, our pupil numbers have been increasing over the last four years, however 2023 census showed a slight decrease as a result of the primary sector pupil numbers declining.

	Census Year	Total No' of Pupils	No' of Primary Pupils	No' Secondary Pupils	No' of Special School Pupils
Aberdeenshire	2020	36317	20969	15132	216
Aberdeenshire	2021	36647	20801	15613	233
Aberdeenshire	2022	36812	20865	15718	229
Aberdeenshire	2023	36629	20551	15852	226

The % age of pupils entitled to Free School Meals, and those who have an identified Additional Support Need are also increasing.

Our SIMD profile has been stable over the last three years. Our local authority has approximately 3% of families living in areas that are classed as having the highest deprivation and 31% of families are classed as living in the most affluent areas.

Across Aberdeenshire we also consider the profile of pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals. Whilst the SIMD profile has remained similar, the %age of pupils who are entitled to FSM has risen significantly from approximately 8% to over 12% over the last three years. In relation to the rural nature of Aberdeenshire, it is estimated that 16% of pupils (under 16) are living in poverty. There is a rural premium to be paid for pupils and their families living in rural and remote area of Aberdeenshire resulting in a higher cost for fuel, food, transport, and housing costs.

Service Function and Purpose

The Education Team consists of the following:

The Schools Team are responsible for offering support and challenge across schools, ensuring there is a culture of continuous improvement. This focus is in line with the national priority of improving standards. All functions are performed in line with the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 where it is stated that council officers have a duty to continuously improve the performance of their services, and effectively manage performance and improvement.

The Inclusion, Equity & Wellbeing Team is focused on strategic review of structures, systems and services that underpin Aberdeenshire's approach to meeting additional support needs. They are responsible for the statutory Additional Support Needs (ASN) requirements of the local authority. This includes policy development and implementation, practice framework development, resourcing, and capacity building in relation to ASN, Inclusion, Equity & Wellbeing.

The provision of specialist education support services, including Educational Psychology, English as an Additional Language, Sensory Support, and School Counselling Services, implementation of Community Mental Health Supports & Services, and Child Protection, fall within this remit.

The Developing the young workforce Team aims to develop the 3-18 DYW Curriculum offer including embedding the Career Education Standard Entitlements and the further development of BGE pathways and Foundation Apprenticeships in the senior phase. They will promote, support and deliver Foundation Apprenticeships to pupils leading to improvement in employability skills, sustained positive school-leaver destinations and raised attainment for all young people, as well as embedding skills for learning, life and work (Metaskills) and skills profiling.

The In-schools Team consists of a range of staff who contribute to providing a quality education for every child and young person across Aberdeenshire. They work to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to become successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals.

Service Priorities

Service Priorities and how they support the Council Plan

The [Council Plan](#) was agreed in June 2024 and sets out the Council Strategic Priorities

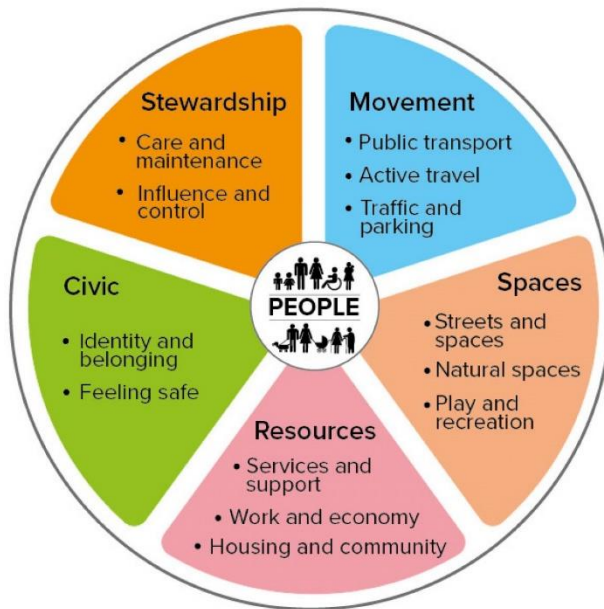
Aberdeenshire Council works with and for our communities. We will provide essential local services and additional help to those who need it most.

Council Priority		Education Priority
A sustainable economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce by developing the skills our children and young people need for learning, life and work now and in the future Equip residents to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives through lifelong learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership working to raise attainment. Improving learning, teaching and assessment. Developing leadership at all levels.
Connected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support communities to articulate the challenges facing them and how we can achieve better outcomes together Improve digital connectivity by securing investment for better infrastructure for homes and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving learning, teaching and assessment. Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion.
Living well locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the life chances of people at risk of falling into poverty, or already living in poverty Ensure children and young people have a greater say in matters that will affect them now and in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement through self- evaluation Improve learning, teaching and assessment. Ensuring wellbeing, equity and Inclusion

Place Priorities

The [place strategy](#) was agreed in June 2024 and sets out our commitment to work more closely with our partners to deliver the services that will have the greatest impact for our communities.

Place and wellbeing outcomes



The principles of equality, net-zero emissions and sustainability underpin all of these themes, and all themes should be embedded in policy and action.

Within Education and Children’s services we have a diverse range of schools that serve our local authority. Approximately 3% of Aberdeenshire live within what is considered a deprived area when considering the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation profiles. 27% of the population of Aberdeenshire also live in rural and outlying areas.

Within our operational framework we provide support and challenge for all our school through a cluster model at locality level as well as working across North, Central and South areas of Aberdeenshire.

All schools develop individual improvement plans directly linking to their local context.

External funding from the Scottish Attainment Challenge is also prioritised on a need’s basis, ensuring improvement priorities and funding are evidence based including consideration of the local community. Within this fund schools receive Pupil Equity funding that directly links to the demographic of young people within their school.

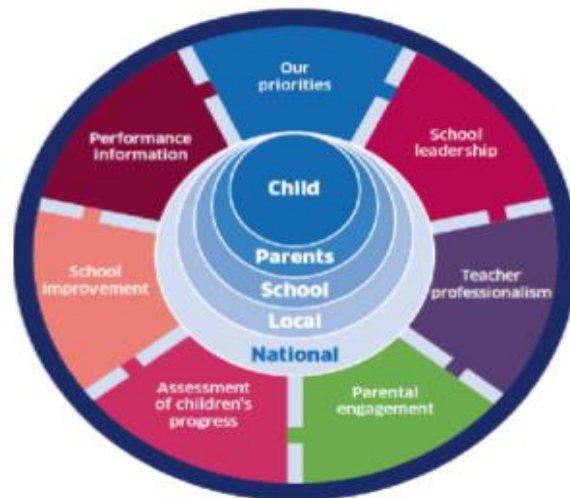
Our Developing the Young workforce team uses local area intelligence to support and develop their work in ensuring young people achieve a positive destination.

Education also contributes to Place Plans through their involvement in the local GiRFEC groups.

Service Priorities

The key priorities that sit within NIF are:

1. Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
2. Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
3. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
4. Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
5. Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy



Aberdeenshire Local Priorities:

1. Ensuring wellbeing, inclusion and equity
2. Improving learning, teaching and assessment
3. Partnership working to raise attainment and achievement
4. Developing leadership at all levels
5. Improvement through self-evaluation



Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Key performance indicators for Education are set out below:

Council priority	Service priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale – include key milestones where appropriate
<p>Living well locally</p> <p>A sustainable economy</p>	<p>Ensuring wellbeing, inclusion and equity</p>	<p>% of school inspections with Quality Indicator ‘3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion’ recorded as positive (good or better). All schools evaluate 3.1 as “Good” or above.</p>	<p>Roll-out of CIRCLE resources across all schools. CLPL to support implementation of Circle Resource. Launch of Play Hub. Focus on improving inclusive practice. Support for UNCRC to strengthen children’s voice & promote rights-based education.</p>	<p>All young people feel included, supported and successful in their learning.</p>	<p>Service Manager for IEW. ESO lead for UNCRC</p>	<p>Throughout 24/25</p>
<p>A sustainable economy</p>	<p>Improving learning, teaching and assessment</p>	<p>School’s self-evaluation validated by Education Scotland inspections. Increase in % of schools with ‘Good’ or above grading. Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) reports from Self Improving Schools Partnerships. Central Team school visit feedback. SQUIP evaluations.</p>	<p>Develop LTA Toolkit with NA & promote use across schools. Focus for QI visits, VSE, priority in all SQUIPs. Offer CLPL to support improved pedagogy.</p>	<p>All learners engage fully in high quality learning experiences that support them to attain and achieve.</p>	<p>HoE/QIMs</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Council priority	Service priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale – include key milestones where appropriate
A sustainable economy	Partnership working to raise attainment	<p>Number of young people successfully involved in Foundation Apprenticeships. (630 with a 70% success rate/700 with a 75% success rate)</p> <p>Closing the Gap in Literacy & Numeracy.</p> <p>ACEL return & SQA results data.</p> <p>Closing the Gap in school leavers achieving 1+ awards at SCQF level 5 or better.</p>	<p>Continue to promote FAs & consider sustainability.</p> <p>Promote DYW from 3-18</p> <p>Lead Teachers for Literacy & Numeracy promoting effective pedagogies & practice.</p> <p>CYPIC Writing Prog – targeted.</p> <p>Work with Attainment Advisor to explore strategies to support schools based on all relevant data.</p>	All children and young people secure the best possible outcomes in terms of attainment and achievement	NIF-SEF Lead (QIM)/ DYW Lead	Ongoing
A sustainable economy	Developing leadership at all levels	<p>Staff at all levels engaging with local & national leadership courses & programmes.</p> <p>SQUIP evaluations.</p> <p>Education Scotland inspection gradings.</p> <p>Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) Trios reports.</p>	<p>CLPL to support leadership development.</p> <p>Improve networks for aspiring leaders.</p> <p>Begin to develop progressive PL pathway.</p> <p>All schools in an improvement partnership.</p>	Increased number of staff at all levels demonstrate collective responsibility for leading improvement. Improvement in the quality of provision in all establishments	HoE/QIMs	Ongoing
A sustainable economy	Improvement through self-evaluation	<p>Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE).</p> <p>Trios' reports.</p> <p>SQUIP evaluations will be in line with Education Scotland inspection gradings.</p>	<p>Develop a framework for 'Trios' work.</p> <p>Offer CLPL on effective self-eval (working with partners).</p> <p>Support for effective improvement planning.</p> <p>Using HGIOS4 and HGIOURS.</p>	Senior leaders and staff have an increasingly accurate understanding of national standards and where their practice sits against these benchmarks. Approaches to self-evaluation will be robust and used effectively to inform further improvement.	HoE/QIMs	Ongoing

Benchmarking

The Education service uses a selection of data and sources to review their performance, including:

- Local Government Benchmarking Framework – Education and Children’s Services contribute to the LGBF annual statutory performance indicators, including:
- Aberdeenshire Average Quality Improvement (QI) Grading for Education Scotland Quality Indicator 2.3 ‘Learning, teaching and assessment’ in schools.
- Average QI Grading for Education Scotland Quality Indicator 3.2 ‘Raising attainment and achievement’ in schools.
- % of school leavers securing a positive post-school destination.
- Number of young people currently involved in Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) programmes in Aberdeenshire schools as part of the Aberdeenshire managed FA programme.
- Percentage of young people successfully completing a Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) programme in Aberdeenshire schools as part of the Aberdeenshire managed FA programme.
- Attainment and Achievement of Young People from Aberdeenshire Secondary Schools in Accredited Awards through the Scottish Government’s benchmarking system “Insight”.

A report presenting an analysis of secondary school attainment during each school session is taken to the ECS Committee for consideration. The content of the report informs the Services’ plans to improve attainment across all levels and focuses discussions with secondary schools. The attainment report also presents four measures with Insight data that feature within the Local Government Benchmark Framework (LGBF).

The Northern Alliance is a Regional Improvement Collaborative between eight local authorities across the North and West of Scotland. They are committed to improving outcomes, closing the gap which exists across communities, championing a child and family-centred approach to address achievement, and to drive improvement. Benchmarking is undertaken across a wide range of indicators including % pupils achieving early level literacy (based on reading, writing, talking and listening), % of pupils achieving first level numeracy, % of leavers attaining literacy by Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level, % of establishments evaluated as good or better for learning teaching and assessment as well as ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion.

Self-Evaluation

We have undertaken a review of our Education Scotland inspections during school session 2022-2023 to provide a baseline of performance in terms of the four Quality Indicators from How good is our School 4. Our review of school inspection performance can be seen on the visuals below. It is important to note in terms of percentages shared this is based on 18 schools inspected during session 2022-2023. Annually we will review our inspection outcomes to note improvements in performance and also identify appropriate next steps.



We also review our Achievement of Curricular Levels data and SQA data annually to identify improvement priorities and also create Stretch aims in line with the Scottish Attainment Challenge. From our analysis of data from session 2022-2023 we note the following performance:

- The majority of children in Primary One, Four and Seven achieve in line with national expectations in literacy.
- Most children in Primary One, Four and Seven achieve in line with national expectations in numeracy.
- Most young people in S3 achieve third level or better in literacy.
- Almost all young people in S3 achieve third level or better in numeracy.

(Education Scotland Terminology being used – **Majority** equates to 50% to 74%, **Most** equates to 75% to 90% of pupils, **Almost all** – above 90%)

From the analysis of data literacy and more specifically the writing component of literacy will continue to be an area for improvement for education.

Self-Evaluation

From the analysis of 2023 SQA data we note the following:

- The percentage of S4 pupils achieving literacy and numeracy at Level 4 or better in S4 was 85.4%, a slight decrease on the previous year.
- The percentage of S4 pupils achieving literacy and numeracy at Level 5 or better in S4 was 64.8%, a significant increase on the previous year.
- Our learning pathways for young people across Aberdeenshire has been changing significantly over the last five years. For example, the number of pupils taking at least one Foundation Apprenticeship at SCQF Level 6 has increased from 7 in 2019 to 439 in 2023. Also, Skills for Work awards, National Progression Awards and Foundation Apprenticeships make up an increasing proportion of the total number of awards taken by young people.
- Aberdeenshire has a higher percentage of young people who leave in S4 or S5 than nationally.
- Aberdeenshire has consistently had a high percentage of school leavers going on to secure a positive destination.
- There have been improvements in the percentage of school leavers gaining one or more award at SCQF level 5 and 6.
- The percentage of leavers achieving 5+ awards at SCQF Level 5 or better has been consistently higher than our authority virtual comparator.
- The percentage of leavers achieving 3+ and 5+ awards at SCQF Level 6 was also above the national virtual comparator in 2023.

This information alongside other measures is used to evaluate our strengths and areas for improvement within our schools as well as supporting the development of Stretch aims for the next school session.

The education service has plans to undertake a robust self-evaluation for improvement process using a collaborative framework developed for use by ADES in June 2024. The service will develop a self-evaluation summary paper that will be used to engage in a peer review with other local authorities in 2025.

On the finalisation of performance data relating to attainment, we will add updated results that will be used to lead self-evaluation and improvement discussions at individual school and local authority level.

We will also add to this data, evidence gathered from individual school self-evaluation for their annual Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Plan.

Self-Evaluation

Head of Service performance self-evaluation reflections

Since taking up post, I have taken the opportunity to meet with teams and gather a range of feedback and evidence to help me understand where we are in terms of the focus of our business plan and improvement priorities. I am working with headteachers and the central team to ensure clarity of expectations and a better shared understanding of national standards in order to support and challenge our schools to strive for improved outcomes for children and young people. In response to feedback, we have begun to reinstate professional learning for HTs and opportunities to discuss strategic leadership for improvement. This includes re-establishing the school improvement partnerships (Trios) with a view to strengthening self-evaluation processes, leadership at all levels and effective improvement planning. We will also explore the establishment of a network and program for aspiring leaders.

We continue to focus on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. Recently appointed lead teachers highlighted and supported effective pedagogy and practice. Officers also have plans to support greater moderation within and across schools to support a shared understanding of CfE levels and progression pathways within and between these. Our work on Foundation Apprenticeships continues to be recognised as sector leading, with Aberdeenshire featuring in national reports and on a range of strategic groups. Our young people continue to benefit from the skills and experience gained from undertaking FAs, earning tariff points equivalent to SQA higher awards. This helps them to go on to positive destinations and it is heartening to see higher education establishments such as Aberdeen University recognising FAs and promoting parity of esteem with tariff points from SQA examinations.

In terms of ensuring our service is inclusive, recently published inspections indicate that almost all schools where QI3.1 is under scrutiny perform at a standard of satisfactory or above. We will continue to improve this through professional support in GIRFEC, inclusive practice and promoting equitable outcomes for all learners. Many schools are undertaking training in the 'Circle' resource to support improved universal provision to meeting learners' needs. By the end of session 2024/25, all schools will have opted into this program. The Inclusion, Wellbeing and Equity team provided input at the HT conference in September, highlighting the need to reduce exclusions and exploring approaches to achieving this. The IWE manager and team continue to develop and implement recommendations as a result of their extensive ASN review. The changes made should support schools to provide appropriate and effective approaches to learning, teaching and assessment for all children and young people which meets their individual and collective needs.

Over the coming months, we will continue to work closely with our schools to ensure we have accurate data which helps us to make the necessary changes required to secure improvements from the ECS Business Plan.

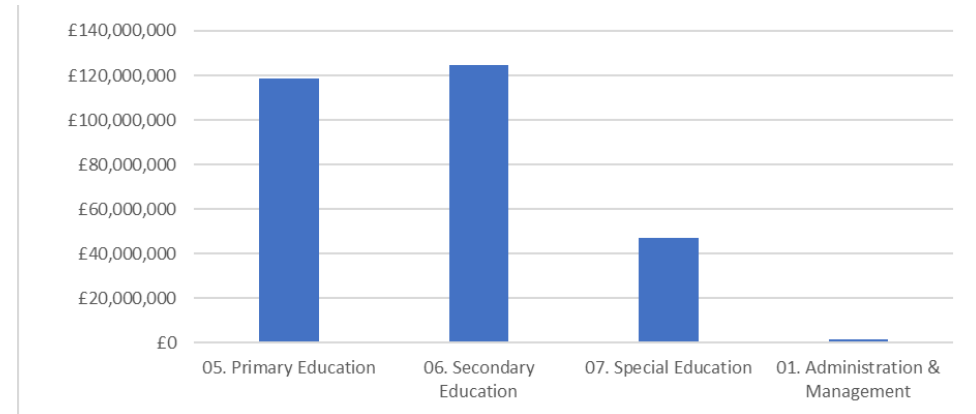
Susan Smith, Head of Education

Financial Profile

Education Budget for 2024/25

The budget is agreed annually by Full Council in February.

Head of Education Budgets 2024-2025	Base budget £
05. Primary Education	£118,659,131
06. Secondary Education	£124,602,440
07. Special Education	£47,042,685
01. Administration and Management	£1,752,720
Total	£292,056,976

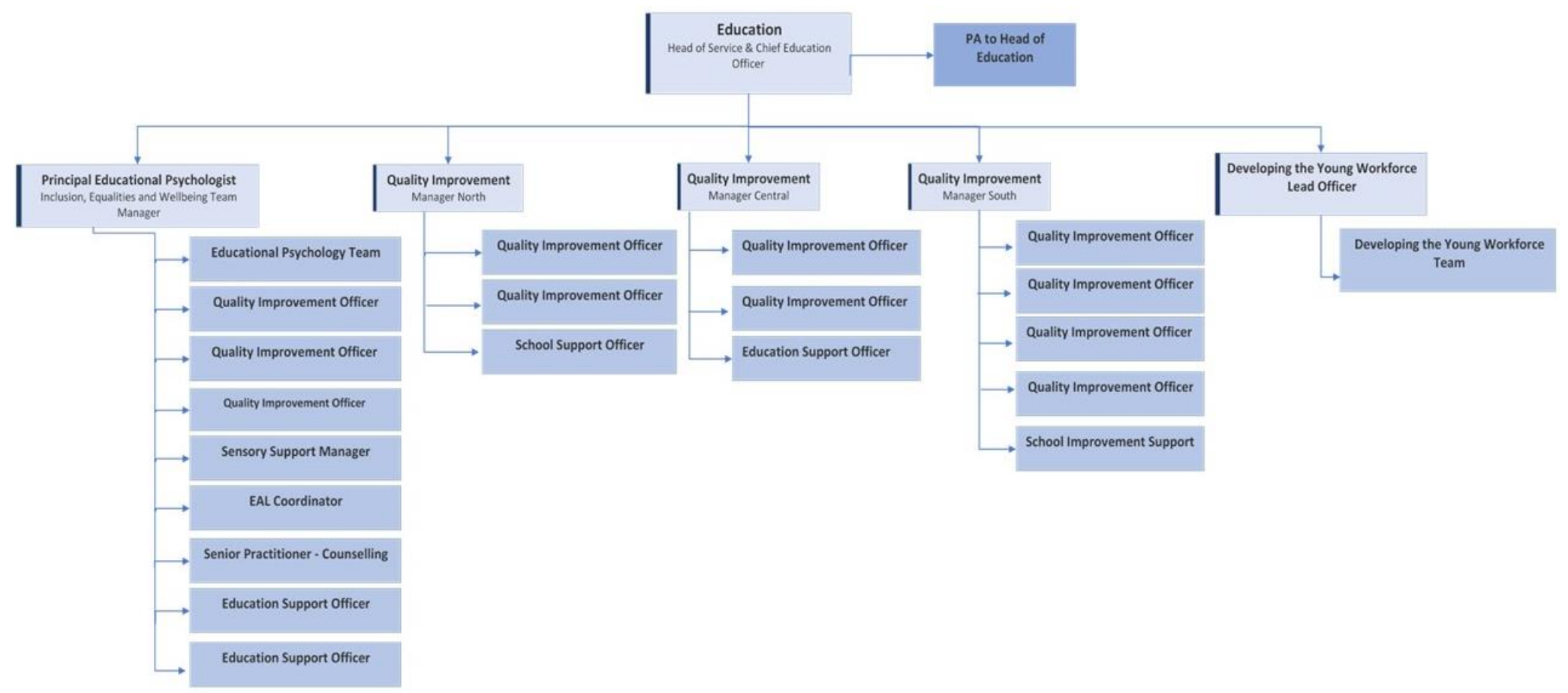


	Devolved Budgets excluding Energy	Non-Controllable Costs	Non- Devolved Central Budgets	Total Budget 2023/24
Primary Education	£82,048,743	£24,570,500	£12,039,888	£118,659,131
Secondary Education	£85,805,775	£36,056,500	£2,740,165	£124,602,440

- Devolved budgets are budgets that are managed by Head Teachers for costs relating to their school including staffing costs.
- Non controllable costs are statutory costs or costs that are within a contract and therefore fixed such as rates and school transport.
- Non devolved central budgets are costs that are managed centrally across the whole school estate including ground maintenance, waste collection and provision of drinking water.

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Service Staffing Profile Organisational Chart



Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Additional Staffing Information

We restructured our Central Team in 2021. This was with the intention of creating a North, Central and South Team of officers to take forward support and challenge with all our schools. There is a Quality Improvement Manager responsible for each of the three areas, supported by a small team of officers. We also have an Inclusion, Wellbeing and Equity Team and a Developing the Young Workforce Team.

Across our schools in line with our pupil numbers there has not been a significant change in the number of teachers employed:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
No. of teachers in Aberdeenshire schools (FTE)	2,720	2,731	2,724	2,717

	Job Holders	Headcount	Total Position FTE
Classroom (non-promoted) Teachers	2,719	2,573	2,055.6
Promoted Teachers	717	693	620.3
Total	3,436	3,266	2,676

Teachers by employment type (2023):

Position	Permanent	Temporary	No of temp in probation induction scheme
No. of primary teachers	1,153	224	92
No. of secondary teachers	1,149	109	16
No. of special school teachers	43	6	0

Our staff are largely made up of permanent employees.

Our pupil ratios have remained largely unchanged since 2020 to now.

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
Primary pupil: teacher ratio	14.9	15.1	15.2	15.5
Secondary pupil: teacher ratio	12.3	12.3	12.5	12.2
Special pupil: teacher ratio	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.9

*there are differences in the teacher numbers across the tables above due to the timing and nature of the data extracted.

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Our staff in schools are predominantly female. In 2022, there were 1,566 (primary) and 927 (secondary) female teachers compared to 143 (primary) and 464 (secondary) male teachers. The average teacher age is 48.

Working in schools there are a range of support staff, totalling 5,280 job holders with an FTE of 2,406.

The following table show the support staff categories where the number of job holders exceeds 100:

Post Category	Job Holders
Pupil Support Assistant	1124
Early Years Practitioner	570
Cleaner	508
Catering Assistant	480
Invigilator	387
Admin Support Assistant	282
School Caretaker	183
Administrator	169
Early Years Lead Practitioner	147
Unit Cook / Supervisor	119
Children's Escort	118

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Workforce Plan

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Wellbeing	Issue/ Risk	<p>Across Education, sickness absence attributed to stress continues to be a live concern with 1640 days lost for this reason during 2023. Feedback from both teaching and support staff describes 'burn out' being a driving factor.</p> <p>There is also a lack of engagement from staff with regards to things like Employee Wellbeing Survey, therefore not giving enough qualitative data to allow a deep dive into root causes or qualitative statistics/analysis. Common themes from those that did engage with the survey detailed pressured relationships with line managers due to unrealistic expectations, and that with the growing trend of ASN and English as an additional language saw staff under increasing pressure as they did not feel they had adequate training or skills.</p> <p>Of the Teachers that responded to the 87% Wellbeing Assessment, 48% did not feel they got constructive feedback from their line manager and 39% did not feel their line manager showed appreciation for the work they do. The picture is similar for school support staff with 44% feeling they get no constructive feedback on their work and 32% feeling their line manager lacked appreciation.</p> <p>Violent incidents continue to be an issue across schools with employees feeling impacted both physically and mentally by this.</p>
	Action(s)	<p>A clear focus on wellbeing will be promoted across all teams. Monitor and discuss output from 87% Wellbeing Platform and Wellbeing Survey.</p> <p>Suitable and sufficient Stress Risk assessments to be carried out where an employee report feeling stressed.</p>

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date	
Wellbeing <i>(continued)</i>	Action <i>(continued)</i>	<p>Stress Reduction Workshops (a minimum of 3 per year) specifically for Education through the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team to improve individual's personal skills in coping with increased levels of pressure in their lives.</p> <p>All line managers to have undertaken the Mental Health at Work training as well as being able to demonstrate focused ongoing training on management skills, building relationships and supporting employees as individuals.</p> <p>Violent incident data is currently reviewed by Education Management Team on a quarterly basis to gain a data-based insight and analysis. A short life working group will consider strategies and actions we can take to address concerns over violent incidents, promote positive relationships. The group will explore how we report and record violent incidents and can use the data more effectively to inform appropriate actions at both a school and service level, with staff wellbeing as a key focus.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2024</p>
	Progress/ Measure	<p>Increased engagement with the Wellbeing Survey and 87% Wellbeing Assessment allowing there to be quantitative and qualitative data to analyse and be used for decision making / future planning. Target of 50% engagement on a regular basis by 2027.</p> <p>Steady decrease in days lost due to stress sick absence, seeing an overall decrease of 5% to be seen by 2026 (compared to 2022).</p> <p>A reduction in violent incidents to be seen over the period of 2024-27.</p> <p>Up to date staff training records.</p>	Data reviewed bi-annually
Skills	Issue/ Risk	Education staff may not have the required skills to implement developing pedagogies and approaches, including the effective use of technology solutions to support learning, teaching, and assessment.	

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Skills <i>(continued)</i>	Action (s) Use feedback from staff to identify gaps in professional learning opportunities and develop a comprehensive catalogue of CLPL available. Encourage and support professional enquiry and develop mechanisms to share effective practice across the service. Love Learning Team will continue with dedicated programmes of Career Long Professional Learning. Digital skills to be included in 121 discussions and in team meetings. Managers to identify appropriate training and learning opportunities.	Throughout 24/25
	Progress/ Measure	Feedback during cluster meetings/performance reviews and Education Scotland inspection reports.
Diversity	Issue/ Risk The Education workforce may not reflect the wider community that they serve. The Education team is predominantly made up of female employees, and in schools, the female to male ratio is 76% to 24%. The age profile of workforce presents a potential area for concern, with the average teacher age being 48.	
	Action(s) Develop the younger workforce through identifying potential opportunities to include Apprenticeship and entry level roles to teams. Regularly review data to make informed decisions and strategic plans.	Ongoing
	Progress/ Measures	Senior roles to monitor the diversity profile of the workforce through the Workforce Profile Dashboard and use to inform strategic planning.

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Diversity (Continued)	Issue/ Risk Insufficient teacher numbers to deliver the current curriculum. Reduction in professional learning opportunities for middle leaders as a result of changes to the CLPL programme run in partnership with Aberdeen University. Lack of interest in future leadership positions. Difficulty in recruiting sufficiently skilled and experienced candidates to headteacher and other senior leadership posts.	
Succession Planning	Action (s) Continue to provide high quality professional leadership development. Increase opportunities for aspiring leaders at all levels by building networks through the school improvement partnerships (Trios). Work with Scottish Government, The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and local Universities to increase teacher recruitment in all sectors.	Ongoing
	Progress/ Measure Number of vacancies in schools will reduce and be carefully monitored. Increased interest and applications for leadership vacancies in schools.	
Establishment Control (FTE, Agency, Overtime use)	Issue/ Risk Some areas of the curriculum may have to be delivered in different ways to maintain opportunity and continuity for pupils.	
	Action(s) There is already an acute issue in access to supply cover.	Ongoing
	Progress/ Measures Work with staffing team and colleagues in HR to provide optimal efficiency across all sectors. Staffing rolls in schools will confirm success or otherwise.	



In working to deliver the priorities within this Education Business Plan, we aim to build a learning culture across all our schools which promotes high expectations and supports raised aspiration for all of our children and young people. We will build the capacity and confidence of our staff through the school improvement partnerships (Trios) to ensure that we engage in effective self-evaluation to improve the quality of our work. As a result, all our schools will offer high quality, inclusive learning environments which engage all learners, helping them achieve well and develop the skills and attributes required to secure sustained positive outcomes for their future.



Children's Services Social Work HEAD OF SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN 2024 – 2025



Vision Statement

Our commitment to Aberdeenshire's children and young people, is to provide them with the right support, in the right place, at the right time and in helping them reach their individual potential and goals, we will work together to make Aberdeenshire the best place in Scotland to grow up.

Children's Services Social Work, which sits within the Education & Children's Service Directorate, is a continually evolving and improving service designed to deliver high-quality assistance and support to children and families in need and/or at risk of harm. As reflected in Aberdeenshire's multi agency Children's Services Plan -

'Our commitment to Aberdeenshire's children and young people, is to provide them with the right support, in the right place, at the right time and in helping them reach their individual potential and goals, we will work together to make Aberdeenshire the best place in Scotland to grow up.'

Our values reflect the way the service operates as well as articulating aspirations for the future. We are a trauma informed service and committed to delivering the service with kindness, dignity, and compassion.



Service Function and Purpose

At any one time, the service works with around 3000 children and the service is delivered by:

- 12 local Children & Families Teams: one in each major settlement in Aberdeenshire.
- Families for Children Teams consisting of Adoption, Kinship and Fostering Services.
- Residential Children's Homes in Inverurie, Peterhead & Fraserburgh offering accommodation up to 17 young people.
- Throughcare Aftercare Service supporting young people leaving care.
- Crisis, Youth Services, Sexual Behaviour Service and Libra Teams.
- Out of Hours – providing emergency support evenings and weekends.
- Children's Wellbeing Team.
- Children's Rights Service.
- Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children & Young Person's Team.

Of those 3000, the service supports approximately 410 looked after children and young people, 520 children and young people with self-directed support package to support defined outcomes and 100 children on the child protection register.

The remaining children and young people are supported because they are in need and/or at risk of harm. A child is in need* if the child is in need of care and attention because:

- a) *the child or young person is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development unless the local authority provides services*
- b) *the child or young person's health or development is likely significantly to be impaired, unless such services are so provided*
- c) *the child or young person is disabled; or*
- d) *the child or young person is affected adversely by the disability of any other person in his or her family*

*(Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Section 22)

Service Function and Purpose

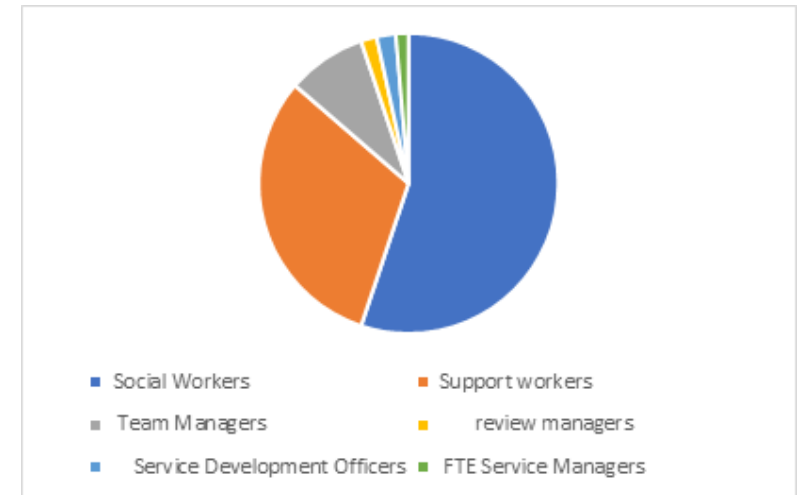
Children and young people’s health and development can be impaired for a number of reasons. This can include neglect, abuse including physical, emotional, and sexual, impact of parental poor mental health, substance abuse and domestic abuse or contextual risks including criminal exploitation, substance misuse and offending behaviour.

In total the service employs around 330 staff, and a breakdown of staff is provided in the chart opposite. Along with other local authorities, recruitment and retention of staff is a critical factor in continued service delivery.

The Head of Service also holds the role of Chief Social Work officer supporting close partnership working with the delivery of Adult Social Work Services through Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership.

Partnership Working

Children’s Services Social Work are committed to working collaboratively with children, young people, parents, carers and partners to ensure that together we deliver ‘Getting it Right for Every Child’. This is also clearly defined in our [Children and Young People Service Plan 2023-2026](#), which includes our commitment to upholding The Promise with our fellow corporate parents. It also references the approach to whole family wellbeing and development of services in communities to provide early help and support.



Service Priorities

Service Priorities and how they support the Council Plan

The [Council Plan](#) was agreed in June 2024 and sets out the Council Strategic Priorities

Aberdeenshire Council works with and for our communities. We will provide essential local services and additional help to those who need it most.

Council Priority		Children’s Service Priority
A sustainable economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce by developing the skills our children and young people need for learning, life and work now and in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a competent and confident, trauma informed Children’s Services workforce
Connected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support communities to articulate the challenges facing them and how we can achieve better outcomes together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving and modernising service design and delivery that delivers on the outcome of the Care Review – The Promise..
Living well locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help people to lead independent lives through prevention and early intervention, providing care and support to those most in need Ensure children and young people have a greater say in matters that will affect them now and, in the future, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children, young people and their families by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing risk and providing protection from harm. Assessing need and working in partnership with families and other services to help children have the best start in life, recover from adversity and realise their potential.

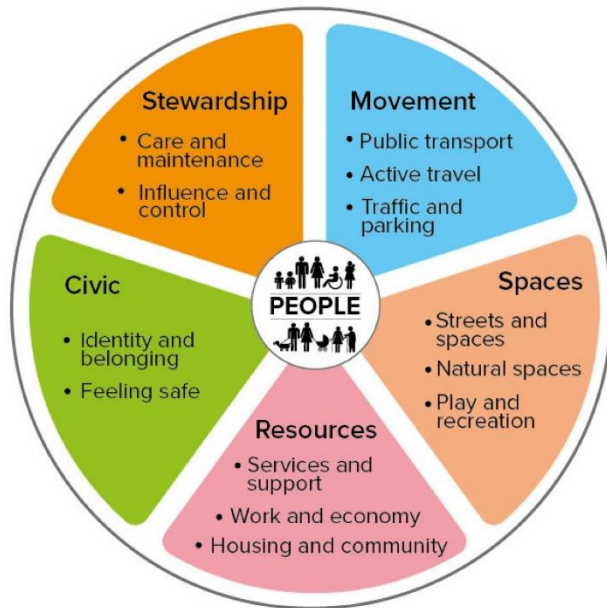
More specifically we aim to:

- Get it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) through developing meaningful relationships with young people and families to support and enable those young people and families to lead their own change, in their communities.

Service Priorities

- Reduce bureaucracy to enable workers to be able to spend less time 'feeding the system' and more time building relationships that change lives and transform practice.
- Act early to protect and care for children and young people who are at risk of harm or neglect.
- Enhance opportunities for children and young people who are vulnerable, including those with a disability, to optimise their life chances.
- Provide quality services that secure children permanently with their families and through alternative permanence arrangements where required.
- Provide high quality, nurturing and trauma informed care through the provision of modernised residential, kinship and fostering services.
- Further develop and embed a ['whole systems approach' to youth justice.](#)
- Demonstrate best value and continuous improvement in the way we plan and deliver and procure services.
- Enhance the voice of children, young people and their families in the design and delivery of services.
- Continue to promote and enable the development of partnership working with the third sector and where appropriate, commissioning of services for children in need.
- Provide high quality therapeutic interventions to care experienced young people struggling with their mental health and wellbeing.
- Complete the delivery of children's services social work through a Family Centre model across all major settlements by prioritising Central Buchan as the final settlement requiring modernisation.
- Work with partners to develop the [Barnahus](#) (Bairn's Hoose) model in Aberdeenshire.
- Developing support to Aberdeenshire's Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Young People recognising the particular challenges they face through an evolving service provision.

Place and wellbeing outcomes



The [place strategy](#) was agreed in June 2024 and sets out our commitment to work more closely with our partners to deliver the services that will have the greatest impact for our communities.

As part of our civic priorities in Children’s Services, these reflect the importance of **identify and belonging** for our families in their communities, specifically including care experienced and asylum-seeking children and young people. The importance of **feeling safe** also reflects the core element of our work in children and their families feeling safe at home and in their communities.

Supporting our 17 Local Girfec Groups (who align with the 17 Place Plans) is one of the ways we also contribute to the Place Plans, working in partnership to ensure children, young people and their families are supported at the right time, in the right place, by the right people.

The principles of equality, net-zero emissions and sustainability underpin all of these themes, and all themes should be embedded in policy and action.

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Key priorities for the Children’s Social Work Service are set out below:

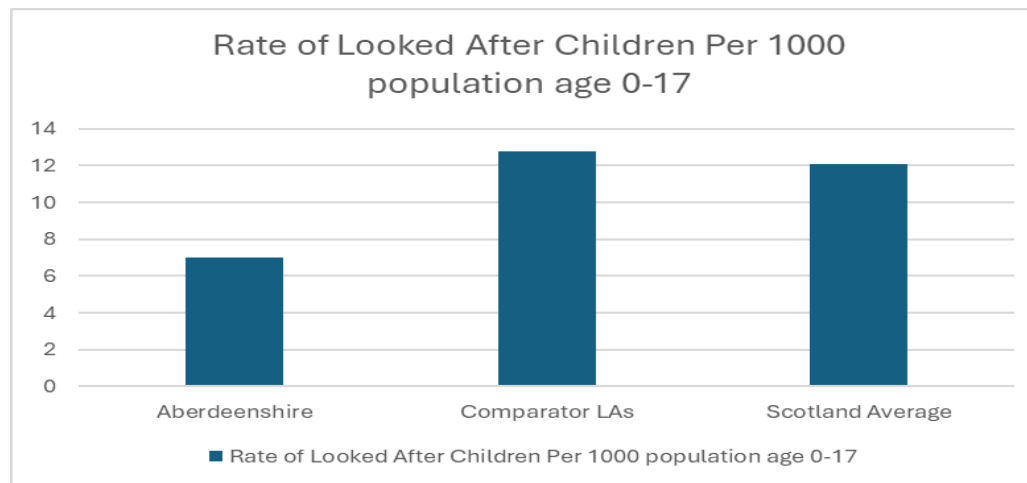
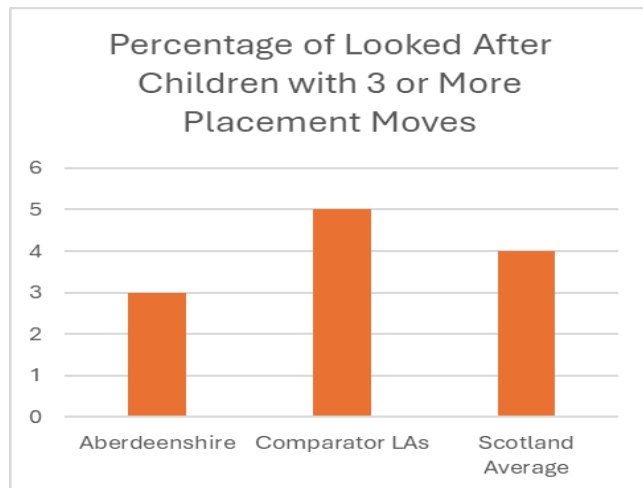
Council priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Living well locally	Regulated services (fostering, adoption, supported lodgings & Children’s Homes) will be graded at good or above.	Regular inspection reports and external scrutiny provided by the Care Inspectorate.	Children and young people will experience high quality, nurturing and trauma informed care.	Service Manager, Corporate Parenting	Annually
Living well locally	Placements for looked after children will be meeting child’s needs.	Regular reviews undertaken as per Looked After Regulations.	Care experienced children and young people will be valued, listened to and feel loved.	Service Managers, Community Care/ Corporate Parenting	6-monthly
Living well locally	Looked after child reviews will have information presented pertaining to child’s achievements/ successes	Regular reviews undertaken as per Looked After Regulations.	Looked after children will be valued, listened to and feel loved.	Service Managers, Community Care/ Corporate Parenting	6-monthly
Living well locally	Reviewed protection plans will evidence improved child’s safety	Review process defined in National Guidance and undertaken by our Independent Review Managers.	Children will be safer as a direct result of multiagency intervention	Service Managers, Community Care/ Corporate Parenting	6-monthly
Living well locally	Staff will report they have the right skills and knowledge to fulfil their role	Staff survey sent out across the service every 2 years and actions identified driven by our Workforce Development Group.	Children and young people will experience high quality, nurturing and trauma informed care.	Project Officer/Performance team, Children’s Services	2 yearly

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

The services use a selection of Local Government Benchmarking Frameworks to understand performance in relation to comparator local authorities.

Examples include:

[Looked after children statistics 2023: local authority benchmarking tool - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)



Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

Percentage of Looked After Children per Type of Care

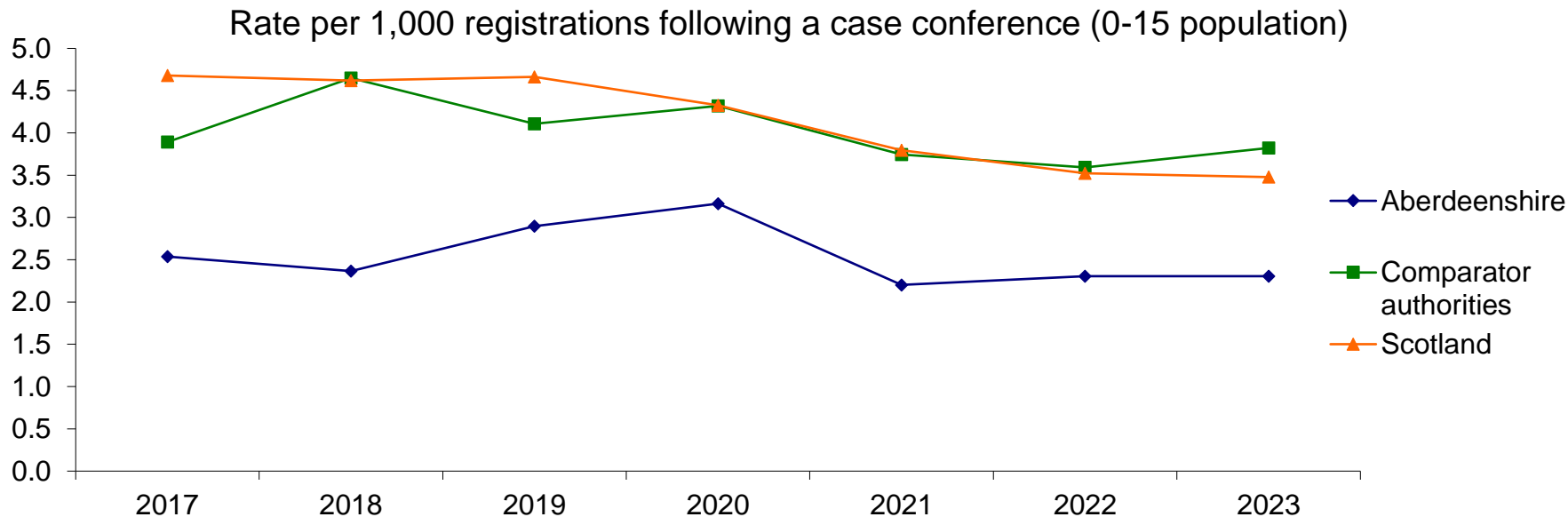
	In the community				In residential accommodation		
	At home with parents	With friends / relatives	With foster carers provided by LA	With foster carers purchased by LA	In other community	In local authority home/ Voluntary Home	In other residential care
Aberdeenshire	12%	18%	28%	12%	10%	10%	9%
Comparator LAs	17%	38%	24%	6%	5%	4%	7%
Scotland Average	20%	34%	22%	10%	3%	5%	5%

[Figures as at end March 2023]

Whilst we have less looked after children per 1000 population than our comparator authorities and Scotland as a whole, we also have less children in kinship care arrangements and more children in foster care/residential care than our comparator authorities. This is something we need to change in line with ambitions of The Promise and our work around piloting a Family Group Decision Making Coordinator is already making strides in the right direction.

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

a. Child protection statistics 2023: local authority benchmarking tool



The number of children and young people whose name feature on the Child Protection Register has risen with increases and decreases throughout the year. The highest figure of 112 in February 2024 and the lowest of 71 in May 2023. Aberdeenshire continues to have a lower number of children on the Child Protection Register than the national average of 2.3 ([Children's Social Work Statistics 2022-2023 – Child Protection](#)). At the highest level of registration Aberdeenshire was at 2.2. There continues to be an appropriate correlation between the conversion rate from Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) to Initial Child Protection planning Meetings then to Registration. This strongly indicates that professionals share a collective understanding about the threshold of significant harm

Data shows that the primary categories of registration in Aberdeenshire were child affected by parental mental ill-health, neglect, and emotional abuse. All three categories were within the top five nationally ([Children's Social Work Statistics 2022-2023 – Child Protection](#)).

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

How Data informs Improvement Activity

The above benching marking data alongside a suite of data collected by Children's Services Social Work, the GIRFEC Strategic Group and the Child Protection Committee all contribute towards improvement activity both across the service and through active participation in multi agency forums.

At the request of Scottish Ministers, the Care Inspectorate leads joint inspections of services for children and young people at risk of harm. The remit of these joint inspections is to consider the effectiveness of services for children and young people up to the age of 18 at risk of harm. The inspections look at the differences community planning partnerships are making to the lives of children and young people at risk of harm and their families.

The Aberdeenshire inspection took place between 11 July and 30 November 2022 with the final report being published on 23 January 2023.

The key messages highlighted in the Joint Inspection report include:

- Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified early and responded to effectively.
- Children and young people's lives improve with high quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from harm.
- Children, young people, and their families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery, and improvement.
- Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery.

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

Examples of good practice included recognition of:

- Effective joint working between services/agencies that directly influenced improvement in a child or young person's safety.
- Well embedded Getting it Right for Every Child 'GIRFEC' processes.
- Strong investment in effective staff training and the GIRFEC website.
- Staff skills, knowledge, and confidence.
- Almost all children experienced trusting and respectful relationships.
- Use of strength-based approaches and creative support to enable families to make and maintain changes.
- Children and families felt listened to and heard.
- Strong leadership with effective governance structures and clear vision.
- Robust multi agency self-evaluation activities that highlighted how well we know ourselves in terms of what works well and areas for ongoing improvement.

Overall grade - Evaluation of quality indicator 2.1: Very good

Areas for Improvement

Whilst the Joint Inspection identified areas for improvement, they recognised that through the use of self-evaluation cycles, that the partnership knew themselves well and had already incorporated the areas into current improvement work plans held by the Child Protection Committee and GIRFEC Strategic Group. These include:

- Continued embedding of the new national guidance for child protection including our Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) work.
- Continued improvement work on supporting young people at risk in our communities including our Care and Risk Management processes (CARM).

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

- Development of child-friendly advice across social media platforms and websites.
- Continued development of our trauma-informed approaches.
- Develop consistency in our key processes (assessment, chronologies and plans).
- Develop our use of outcome data to evidence impact on children and their families.

The Service is committed to supporting children and young people in need at home with family and within their local communities. Unfortunately, for some children and young people is not safe to remain in their families despite support being provided and alternative care is required. The service is also committed to providing family-based care, our priority being kinship followed by fostering families. Residential care is also a positive choice for some young people for whom a family environment is not the right arrangement to provide support.

Financial Profile

Children's Services Social Work Budget for 2024/25

Children's Services Social Work Committee Budget Page 22-23	Base budget £
16. Children – Community Care	15,520,400
17. Children – Self Directed Support	1,929,200
18. Children – Family Placement	10,656,300
19. Children – Residential Care	2,988,600
20. Children out of Authority Care	15,547,400
Total	46,641,900

Type of Spend	Base Budget
01. Staff costs	16,839,300
02. Premises	527,500
03 Transport	346,000
04. Supplies & Services	319,400
05. Third Parties	28,712,100
09. Grants	(33,100)
10 Income	(69,300)
Total	46,641,900

Financial Profile

The Children's Services Social Work budget consists of the 5 budget lines which can be understood as follows:

Community Care

Pertains to activity related to the delivery of children's services social work across 12 Children & Families Teams, Youth Services and Wellbeing Team.

Self-Directed Support

Self-directed support (SDS) is a way of providing support that means people are given choice and control over what kind of support they get. It means that people can choose and arrange some or all of their own support instead of having it chosen and arranged by other people.

Family Placement

Pertains to the delivery of services across Fostering, Adoption, Kinship and Through Care & After Care services for care experienced children and young people.

Residential Care

Pertains to the delivery of children's services social work across three children's homes and supported accommodation for young people leaving care:

- Children's Homes - Scalloway Park (Fraserburgh), Taizali (Fraserburgh), Fernbank (Peterhead), Coblehaugh (Inverurie)

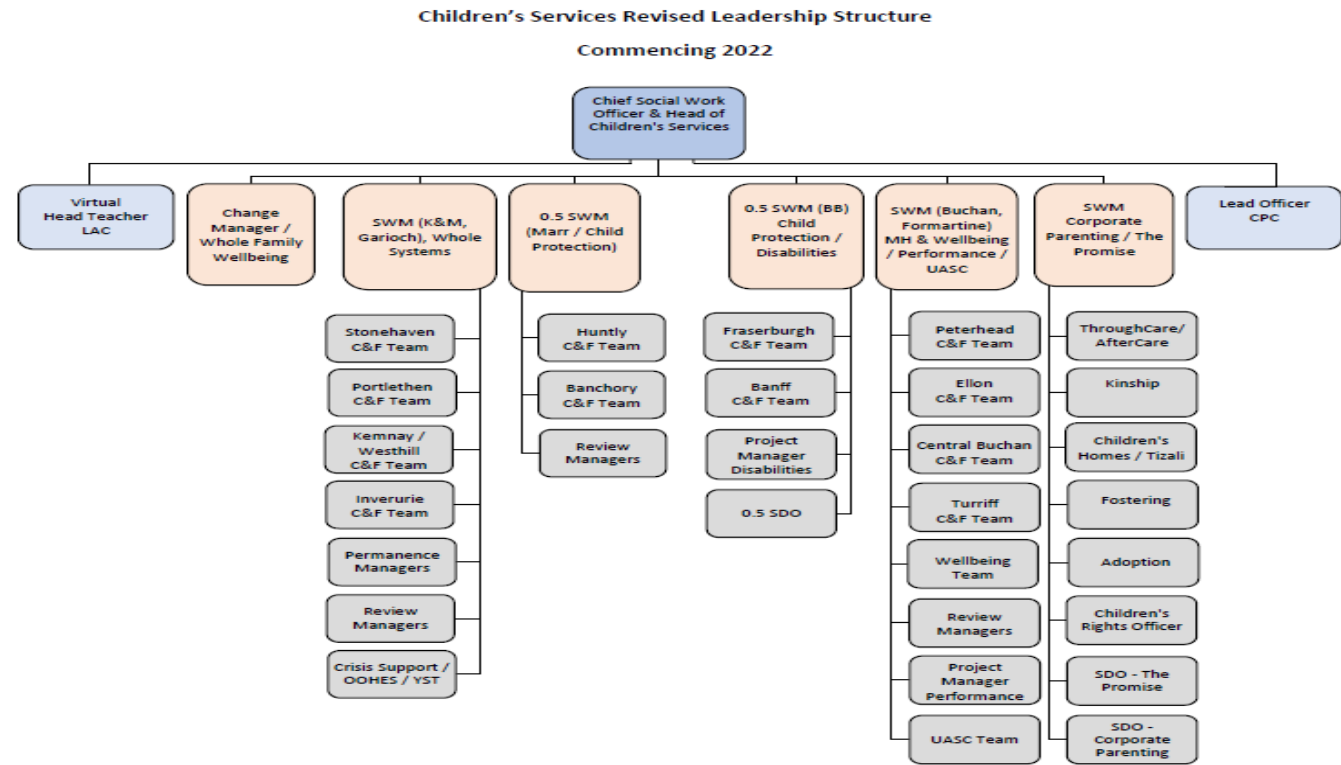
Out of Authority Care

Pertains to the procurement of residential care only, residential school and fostering from the third sector for children and young people who require to be looked after but cannot be provided for through inhouse provision.

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Service Staffing Profile

Organisational Chart



Key:

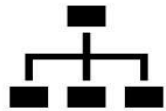
- SWM – Social Work Manager
- MH – Mental Health
- C&F – Children & Families
- OOHES – Out of Hours Emergency Service
- YST – Youth Services Team
- SDO – Strategic Development Officer
- UASC – Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
- LAC – Looked After Children
- CPC – Child Protection Committee

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Measures of Success/ Progress Update

The model for Strategic Workforce Planning:

To deliver against the workforce strategic outcomes outlined in the Target Operating Model 1.2, the following section breaks down our planned activities into five key areas of work, along with specific objectives and projected timeline. These are:



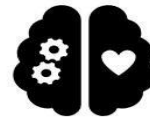
Right Structures

Setting up our council in a way that supports our cultural aspirations



Right People

Building our capacity through attracting, recruiting, moving talent



Right Skills

Building capability through awareness, desire, knowledge and ability



Right Place

Working where and when is best for the work and the customer



Right Support

Supporting employees to thrive, personally and professionally

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Workforce Plan

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Right Support/ Wellbeing	Issue/ Risk	<p>62% of CSSW workforce who responded to the survey in Sept 2022 self- identify workload pressures and conflicting demands as causing the most pressure. Reasons included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being understaffed • Working from home / isolation <p>CSSW identified key areas that could improve wellbeing and resilience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular one to one support • Training • Reduce isolation. • Recruitment & retention work
	Action(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor supervision trends. 2. Review supervision template to ensure learning, development & wellbeing considered. 3. Stipulate 60% of the week worked from offices. 4. Close working with RGU to increase placement and recruitment opportunities. 5. Review administration support to ensure it meets the needs of the service reducing completing demands
	Progress/ Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of vacancies • Qtr monitoring of survey results on staff wellbeing.
		<p>Accurate as of 09/2022</p> <p>In place</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>Review quarterly</p>

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Right Skills	Issue/ Risk	CSSW workforce are not equipped with the right digital skills to meet service requirements.
	Action(s)	1. Training needs to be identified and reviewed via supervision. 2. Liaison with Robert Gordon University/FE Establishments re expectations of newly qualified social workers
	Progress/ Measures	% of staff reporting they have the right skills and knowledge to fulfil their role.
Right People	Issue/ Risk	Lack of diversity can lead to isolation, discrimination and lack of support if harassment or discrimination takes place in the workplace.
	Action(s)	1. Actively support recruitment of individuals with lived experience 2. Actively support inclusive, equitable and fair recruitment practice
	Progress/ Measures	Track composition of workforce

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions		Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>			
Right People/Right Structures	Issue/ Risk	Lack of career progression impacts staff recruitment and retention. Inability to recruit to senior roles places services delivery and staff wellbeing at risk.	
	Action(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continued development of Team Manager Seminars 2. Promote Practice Teaching/link supervisor roles 3. Promote leadership and management corporate training 4. Development of mentoring/coaching opportunities 5. Development of the Senior Practitioner role 6. Review of staffing structure, roles and responsibilities 	
	Progress/ Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % Of unfilled senior posts • % of staff reporting opportunities to develop and progress career 	
			Bi-annual data collection

Priority	Key Actions		Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>			
Right People	Issue/Risk	Recruitment and retention of staff impact ability to deliver service and increase risk for children & young people in need	
	Action(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce and monitor service exit survey to inform improvements. 2. Increase service profile with RGU students and on social media. 	
	Progress/ Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs advertised per qtr • Average length of employment • Turn over trend 	
			Ongoing
			Bi-annual data collection

Concluding Summary

Children's social work services Business Plan reflects our continuous improvement approach to delivering the highest quality service to Aberdeenshire's children in need and their families. Our 3 service priorities, reflecting national and local policy and legislation drives our ambitions to promote and safeguard children and young people in need of protection; it focuses the development and improvement of our service with a competent and confident workforce at its heart.



ECS Resource and Performance BUSINESS PLAN 2024 – 2025



Vision Statement

Shaping, strengthening, and delivering key services, support and strategy within and across a sustainable, resilient and empowered system that delivers positive outcomes for residents and communities in Aberdeenshire

Service Function and Purpose

Learning Estates: to ensure Learning Estates are well managed and maintained, making best use of existing resources, maximising occupancy, and representing and delivering best value.

Business Support and Performance: to enable the services we support to improve outcomes for children, young people and communities by providing flexible business support within an empowered system.

Early Years: to deliver high quality Early Learning and Childcare that is flexible, affordable, and accessible to improve outcomes for children and their families.

Catering Services: to work collaboratively to achieve best value by providing high-quality, healthy, nutritious, and well-balanced meals for young people, and diversifying the service with other business.

Strategic Objectives

Best Value / Efficiency: Manage and prioritise capital and revenue expenditure to achieve the greatest outcomes, ensuring all decisions are data driven, transparent and equitable.

Improvement, Performance and Accountability: Develop and strengthen our systems, structures, and processes to provide support and challenge in a system that is accountable to our stakeholders and holds them accountable to each other and our customers.

Creativity, Innovation, Change, and Transformation: Challenge and review existing services and provision with service users to promote innovative ways of delivering services and develop opportunities for modernisation, diversification, income generation and partnership working.

Quality and Excellence: Through robust data management, drive the development and delivery of the highest quality standards in both frontline and business support services and operations with a clear customer focus and commitment to collaboration and co-production.

Equality and Equity: Collaborate with stakeholders and partners to co-produce strategies and solutions to ensure accessible and inclusive service offers and to promote equality of outcomes in attainment, employability and health and wellbeing.

Sustainability and Resilience: Design and build sustainable and resilient services, assets and systems that can withstand change and shock and that can contribute to reducing the Council's carbon footprint through improved efficiency and utilisation of resources.

Service Priorities

Service Priorities and how they support the Council Plan

Aberdeenshire Council works with and for our communities. We will provide essential local services and additional help to those who need it most. The [Council Plan](#) was agreed in June 2024 and sets out the Council Strategic Priorities.

Sustainable Economy	We will support a strong and diverse economy by attracting people of working age to our region, complementing our highly skilled local workforce	1
Connected Communities	We will work with communities and partners to enhance the sense of connection among our places. This includes supporting communities to come up with innovative solutions to ensure our places are resilient and vibrant.	2
Living Well Locally	We will encourage and support our residents to lead healthy and active lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities. We will make proactive choices that will allow us to cater to the needs of our increasingly ageing population.	3

ECS Resource and Performance have generated service priorities to deliver:

- Council Plan and priorities
- Place strategy and Place plans
- Service vision and strategic objectives



Service Priorities

Sustainable Economy

In contributing to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce and promoting lifelong learning, ECS Resources and Performance provide both frontline early learning and childcare (ELC) services to children, young people and parents/carers and provide support services to an empowered system, including soft facilities management, business support, catering services and estate and asset management.

Ensuring that there is high quality ELC (Early Learning & Childcare) provision, supports children to achieve their full potential and to develop the skills and aptitudes to cope well as adults and be valuable members of their communities. Service activity will contribute to supporting a sustainable economy through its support to the private voluntary and independent (PVI) early learning and childcare (ELC) sector. This support involves both business support and support for securing improvement and maintaining standards in ELC settings thus ensuring the financial and operational sustainability of the PVI sector by supporting new and existing businesses to thrive. Commissioning PVI providers to deliver funded hours to eligible 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds supports organisations to remain financially sustainable and offering a funded rate enables settings to pay the real living wage, there by promoting fair work opportunities in local communities. Catering service continues to support the PVI sector through the provision of a cost-effective and efficient catering offer.

Providing advice and guidance for parent led and PVI (Private, Voluntary, and Independent) Out of School Care promotes the development and maintenance services which meet the needs of communities. Early Years are further collaborating with other Council services/teams and external partners to develop a childminder recruitment strategy to promote both sectoral development and to ensure opportunities for employability and economic growth. Services have invested significant resource into the development of the workforce. Early Years have collaborated with other Council services/teams and external partners to develop a training and qualifications framework for both the Council and the PVI workforce, providing significant levels of funded training and development for the Aberdeenshire Council workforce, including those new to the service and already employed within it. Early Years and Catering services are developing employability pipelines and progress pathways through Foundation Apprenticeship and Modern Apprenticeships, contributing to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce. Business Support and Performance are collaborating with other Council services/teams and stakeholder groups to develop a teacher recruitment strategy to attract and retain people of working age to Aberdeenshire.

Learning Estates continue to invest in improving the school estate. In proposing any changes to the school estate, the impact on the wider place and economy is considered, including studies and assessment on the town centre and local businesses. Use of local contractors to carry out construction works in schools helps to keep local businesses thriving. It is also recognised that investing in the estate can attract staff and help retention of staff.

Service Priorities

Catering Services contribute to a sustainable economy through the use of local suppliers wherever possible. The catering supply chain when using local suppliers to promote resilience, agility, quality control and environment and sustainability. Local supply chains promote the local economy by job creation, supporting local businesses, helping community development and putting back into the community through Community Benefits from our suppliers.

Connected Communities

The Early Years service is collaborating with other Council services/teams and external partners to develop a childcare strategic framework, supporting communities to identify their local needs, priorities and solutions for childcare and strengthening the PVI sector to offer a mixed model market for access to quality childcare services for residents and communities. The strategic framework will emphasise collaboration and co-production to ensure sectoral sustainability and resilience, and to overcome rural barriers to services.

The Early Years service further contribute through: delivering a curriculum that is based on place, promoting the uniqueness of the community and area, and reflecting this in provision; listening to children as part of practice to understand what they like and dislike about their surroundings, relative to their setting and their community; providing opportunities for parents to share their concerns about issues that affect them and signposting and informing other agencies and services to support need and providing spaces where parent groups can meet and engage.

Through the *Movement towards a Sustainable Estate* strategy, the Learning Estate team are working with stakeholders and communities to generate shared understanding and shared ownership of school estate solutions for the future through cluster engagement and Place and Wellbeing assessment activity. In encouraging and promoting active travel, the Learning Estate team are promoting stakeholder and community engagement around school estate projects to develop learner routes to schools and promote healthier, more sustainable and environmentally friendly travel options.

Living Well Locally

ECS Resources and Performance provide care and support to those most in need through a range of service activity and action, including the 1140 provision for eligible 2-year-olds, the provision of statutory and discretionary Free School Meals (FSM) and improving disabled access to the learning estate i.e. adaptations to buildings and grounds.

Service Priorities

Early Years contribute by providing places for all children in their locality, particularly in relation to children with Additional Support Needs, where resources are allocated where they are needed and allow children to access provision close to home, with their peers. Assessing individual needs and ensuring strategies and interventions are put in place, while children are accessing Early Learning and Childcare, to meet need and give children the best start and as they move through education and into adulthood. Daily opportunities are planned to access outdoors and keep physically active, supporting healthy lifestyles. Children are supported to explore their local communities, to learn about their local heritage as well as their individual and unique heritage to value and celebrate these. Providing funded places for eligible 2-year-olds and extended provision supports families who are in crisis. Provide high quality learning experiences supports children to achieve their potential and the self-confidence to move through school and into employment. Supporting the sustainability of small providers in rural areas, so that they may be able to continue to provide high quality childcare provision.

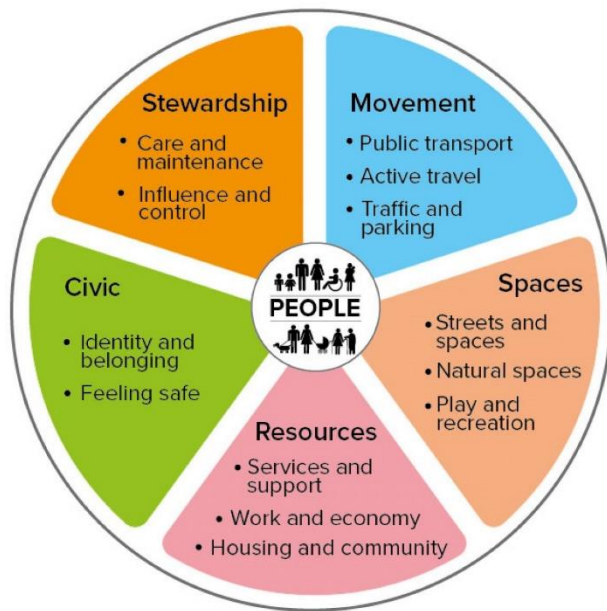
Business Support and Performance promote community access to Council assets through facilitating the lets process and are working with other Council services/teams to develop policy and practice to safeguard this. The Catering Service equality of educational and health/wellbeing outcomes through the delivery of a healthy, nutritious food offer to pupils and the provision of FSM to address the poverty related attainment gap. Further Catering Services facilitate pupil participation on local projects funded through Community benefits. Business Support and Performance continue to strengthen internal processes that provide support to residents that require support and intervention, including payments of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

ECS Resources and Performance services and teams are committed to promoting greater participation by communities and promoting the voice of children and young people through a range of approaches and activities. The Learning Estate strategy promotes stakeholder and community participation in generating shared and collective ambitions for the school estate and the ongoing embedding of Devolved School Management is focussed on building the capacity of parent and pupil stakeholder groups to play an active role in local decision-making. Catering Services have enhanced their routine customer engagement through questionnaires to facilitating a series of consultation activities with academy pupils to better understand their needs and priorities as customers.

Place Priorities

The [place strategy](#) was agreed in June 2024 and sets out our commitment to work more closely with our partners to deliver the services that will have the greatest impact for our communities.

Place and wellbeing outcomes



The principles of equality, net-zero emissions and sustainability underpin all of these themes, and all themes should be embedded in policy and action.

Ways of Working

To fulfil statutory/regulatory requirements and to ensure system resilience/sustainability, frontline and support services are organised through an over-arching strategic and operational framework, but Early Learning and Childcare services, business support, catering services and soft facilities management delivered through cluster model, able to respond to local needs and priorities. This operational model will facilitate appropriate and relevant service participation in the place planning processes. The service's central teams will underpin the rolling programme of place planning processes to ensure data management, capacity for change and alignment of core processes, including self-evaluation, planning and performance.

Building the capacity of local leaders and stakeholders to develop services/supports to residents and community and to facilitate collaboration and co-production with local system stakeholders will promote local decision-making and a sense of influence and control over opportunities and challenges.

Place and wellbeing will be at the heart of approaches to collaborative assessment and planning, promoting shared understanding of issues, shared ownership of solutions and shared sense of influence and belonging.

The service commit to partnership working with national, regional and local partners to ensure a coherence and cohesion between the local needs, priorities and capacities and the wider legislative, policy and operating contexts.

Place Priorities

Consultation and Engagement

Operational and strategic activity will continue to be underpinned and informed by a commitment to engagement, consultation and co-production with local system stakeholders. Catering services will continue service-wide engagement with customers (parents/carers and children/young people) but enhance this through place-specific engagement with local stakeholder groups to understand and respond to local priorities. The EY team will continue to collaborate with other Council services/teams and the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector to understand and respond to the childcare needs of residents and communities in terms of promoting employability, tackling poverty and overcoming rural barriers to accessing services. The Learning Estate team in delivering the strategy Movement Towards a Sustainable Estate are emphasising engagement, consultation and coproduction with school stakeholders and communities through cluster assessment, place and wellbeing assessments and the generation of place-specific solutions for the school estate. Business Support and Performance engage with internal services on customer satisfaction and engage with external customers for processes such as lets, to identify areas for improvement.

Risks, Challenges and Mitigations

Risks and challenges exist across all our services including financial, staffing and technological risks. These are kept under regular review as part of the service planning process and mitigation developing within and across Council services and teams

Data and Evidence

Service priorities have been identified through review of data including performance data, consultation and customer satisfaction data. Areas for improvement are identified and plans developed to implement improvement activity aligned to the Service priorities. A range of performance measures have been developed to measure progress.

Place Priorities

Place and Wellbeing Themes and Outcomes

Theme	Outcome	Outcome Number
Movement	Active Travel	P1
	Public Transport	P2
	Traffic and Parking	P3
Spaces	Streets and Spaces	P4
	Natural Spaces	P5
	Play and Recreation	P6
Resources	Services and Support	P7
	Work and Economy	P8
	Housing and Community	P9
Civic	Identity and Belonging	P10
	Feeling Safe	P11
Stewardship	Care and Maintenance	P12
Spaces	Influence and Control	P13

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Service Priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale	Council Priority	Place Priority
Transform the ECS Business Support function in line with long term business requirements, ensuring appropriate support arrangements are in place for all areas of the Directorate and levels of the system	Customer satisfaction improved from baseline (ECS Business Support function)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid Improvement Event: School Business Support. • Janitorial allocations review. • Administration tasking review (process and resource). 	Improved customer satisfaction with business support function.	Business Support Performance Manager	1: 03/2025 2: 03/2026	1 3	P6 P7 P12 P13
Strengthen the devolved school management scheme that supports greater empowerment of Head Teachers and local stakeholders, through capacity building, engagement and participation.	% of school stakeholders engaged in core training: - PowerBi training (since March 2022) - Cluster workshops (Devolved school management scheme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerBi training. • Cluster orientation sessions. • Area budget briefing sessions (2 per year). 	System stakeholders have capacity and confidence to meaningfully participate in devolved school management at school and authority levels, ensuring transparency, accountability, and ownership at all levels of systems.	Head of Resources & Performance	1: 03/2025	3	P7 P13

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Service Priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale	Council Priority	Place Priority
Implement the Movement Toward a Sustainable Learning Estate giving best utilisation and Best Value	Improve the utilisation of the primary school estate.	Learning Estate strategy: Movement Towards a Sustainable Estate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced the number of pupil places in primary schools. Reduced carbon footprint of the primary estate. All buildings to be an A or a B for suitability. 	Quality Improvement Manager Learning Estates	1: 03/2025 2: 03/2026	1 2	P6 P7 P12 P13
	Reduce carbon footprint of the primary school estate.						
	Improve and maintain the suitability core facts for all school buildings.	ECS Enhancements and Revenue Improvement activity.					
Develop a strategic improvement plan for Catering Services promoting resilience, equality, and sustainability	% increase in statutory Free School Meals uptake in secondary schools.	Actions identified with strategic improvement plan (under development).	All eligible children & young people are accessing a quality free school meal & experiencing improved readiness to learn, develop & achieve.	Catering Services Manager	1: 03/2025	1 3	P6 P7 P13
	% increase in customer satisfaction (primary / secondary)		A steady increase to customer satisfaction % working with Stakeholders including pupils to identify areas of improvement.	Catering Services Manager	1: 03/2025	3	

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Service Priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale	Council Priority	Place Priority
Further strengthen the quality of provision across all settings to ensure the widest participation and achievement of children with ASN and those at risk of poor outcomes due to poverty and inequality	Percentage of LA and funded provider ELC settings achieving National Standards (4 / Good or better) across all Care Inspectorate QI areas.	Quality assurance, quality improvement and capacity building processes. Care Inspectorate Improvement Programme.	All eligible children are accessing their ELC entitlement in the highest quality settings to ensure that they have the best opportunity to thrive and achieve improved outcomes, and in doing so to support narrowing the attainment gap.	Quality Improvement Manager Early Years	1: 03/2025 2: 03/2026	1 2 3	P6 P7 P8 P13
	% of children with ASN accessing their full ELC entitlement.	Liaison with PVI sectors and partners, resourcing arrangements, engagement with families, training, and development for staff.		Quality Improvement Manager Early Years	1: 03/2025 2: 03/2026	1 2 3	P7, P8, P10, P11 P12, P13
	% of eligible 2-year-olds who take up access of their ELC entitlement.			Quality Improvement Manager Early Years	1: 03/2025 2: 03/2026	1 2 3	P7, P8, P10, P11 P12, P13

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

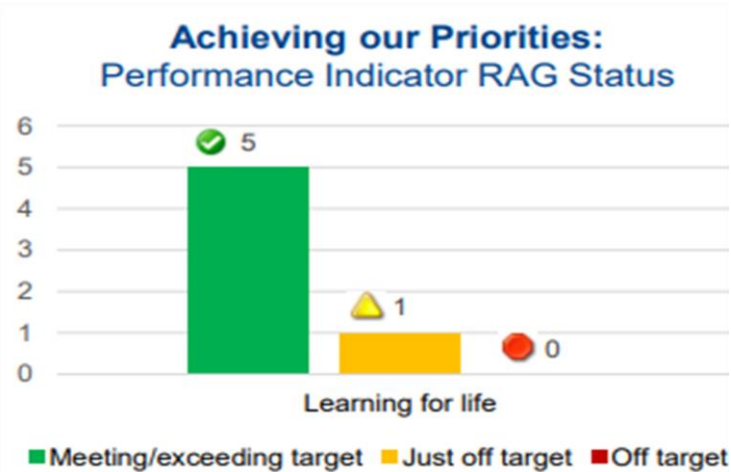
	What do you benchmark?	With whom (LGBF / APSE etc)	Frequency	How is the benchmarking information used to make improvements?
Learning Estate	Suitability of school buildings	Scottish Government	Annually in April to SG and assess on changes to the estate	Used to prioritise & direct funds of capital and revenue spend.
	Sufficiency of the school estate (% of utilisation)	Scottish Government	Submit annually in April to SG	Used to prioritise & direct funds of capital & revenue spend.
Early Years	Sustainable funded rate with funded providers, delivering ELC on our behalf	LGBF families Scotland wide comparisons	Annually	To ensure that the methodology for developing the funded rate is robust & reasonable & it supports sustainability for the sector.
	National Standard – Care Inspectorate Gratings	LGBF Families Local comparisons – settings type (Council and Funded Provider)	Quarterly	Learn from other authorities & via the Northern Alliance Group. Review the level of equity in provision across Aberdeenshire by analysing the spread of settings meeting the National Standard. Review the equity of provision using SIMD & quality data allowing for measuring impact of targeted support & strategy development.
	Cost (£) per ELC pupil	LGBF Families Scotland All councils	Annually	To ensure that the financial & budget processes that are in place ensure best value for public funds committed to ELC.
Catering	Academy – Selling £ / Primary - £ of school meal	APSE & ASSIST	Annually	Shows a comparison with LA's across Scotland & the UK. This helps show Value for Money in Aberdeenshire.
	Food only cost per lunchtime meal	APSE	Annually	Used for food production comparisons (vs other LA's), menu development, & best practice insight.
	Total cost per lunchtime meal	APSE	Annually	This is the total cost to produce a meal including labour, food costs & ancillaries (LA comparison & best practice insight).
	Labour cost (per hour)	Northern Alliance Scotland Catering	Annually	Part of Workforce Planning and Grading Review
	Meal Uptakes	APSE	Annually	Used for meal uptake comparisons with other LA's.
	Staff Absence	APSE	Annually	Used for staff absence comparisons.

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

Service Priority Performance Self-Evaluation Update – full year 2024/25

This will be updated when we have year-end performance for 2024/25. Below is a template of what to expect. A new page with updated results will be inserted bi-annually and be used to lead self-evaluation and improvement discussions at senior leadership level quarterly.

Overview



- Overview on how many PI's are on target / overdue etc

Key Successes

- Areas that are performing well
- Above the national average / benchmarking targets
- Improvements from previous reporting period
- Green rag status

Areas for Improvement

- Red rags
- Decrease from previous reporting
- Any improvement activity

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

Head of Service performance self-evaluation reflections (July 2024)

Catering Services continue to explore opportunities for income generation and diversification. The Catering Service are working with Live Life Aberdeenshire to look at developing a partnership to provide catering across several sites including Stonehaven Open Air Pool, Aden Park and supporting the delivery at the Deveron Centre.

In promoting equality of opportunity in attainment and health and wellbeing, work is ongoing with schools to identify the barriers for uptake of FSM (Free School Meals), which is a particular concern amongst secondary school pupils. In April 2024 there was a change to the primary school menu to become annualised. This change is due to an increase in special diet requirements, with every menu change there was a need to amend every special diet menu to coincide with the changes to the main menu. There are now over 1200 special diets with Aberdeenshire and the work around generating these menus was becoming unmanageable which was the rationale behind moving to an annualised menu. Catering will still use seasonal produce using vegetables and fruit as well as implementing more themed days. An online Secondary Meals portal will be launched to mirror what is already available in nursery and primary schools, this is in the development stages with a view to full launch early 2025. This gives detailed data on dietary information, ingredients and the all-important traffic light system for food and nutrition.

Although the Catering Services was nominated for the “Most Improved” award by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) based on annual reporting of key performance measures, the team were not successful but take pride in the recognition of the improvements that have been made by the service.

Early Years provide support at three levels depending on the needs of the ELC setting and where they are in relation to their improvement journey. The three levels are universal, targeted, and intensive support for ELC settings (both local authority and funded provider). Intensive support is for settings that fail to meet the National Standard and officers work in close collaboration with setting managers, head teachers and Quality Improvement Officers to ensure that this is addressed. In funded provider settings, the collaboration can include managers, private nursery owners, childminders, committees etc. As of July 2024, 92.5% of all Aberdeenshire settings delivering 1140 are meeting the National Standards (local authority settings 93.1%; funded provider settings 82%; childminders 100%).

Funded Provider and Council ELC settings provide funded ELC places for eligible 2 years olds. There is work underway to ensure that availability of accessible places meets demand to ensure maximum take up of places and impact on outcomes for children. By July 2024, the Early Years Team has provided resources for staff, equipment, and training to 41 ELC settings to support children with more complex needs. Work is underway to improve understanding of the impact on the number of funded hours accessed by children with additional support needs.

Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

Learning Estates officers are collaborating with colleagues to carry out Place and Wellbeing assessments in areas where change to the estate is being considered. These allow officers to fully understand the impacts that potential changes may have on the wider community and form a valuable part of the wider assessment process.

Following the FY 24/25 capital budget setting, the Learning Estate have had to reprofile and reprioritize programming to deliver ongoing improvements to the learning estate to give best utilisation and Best Value. In terms of project activity, the Peterhead Community Campus technical design and statutory consultation on planning are ongoing, however the Fraserburgh primary school project has been paused following budget setting in February 2024. The development of a new primary school at Chapelton is currently progressing with dialogue with the developer. Improvement works within schools using ECS Enhancements, Improved Disabled Access and Early Years budgets are ongoing with good progress anticipated by end of financial year 24/25.

Statutory consultations on the permanent closure of Easterfield School and Fisherford School are nearing completion. A previous consultation on a change to the Aboyne & Alford Academy catchment areas at Lumphanan has concluded and been fully implemented. Community engagement has taken place to progress the New School at Chapelton project and also for the options for the future of Clatt School, and a potential merger of Foveran and Tipperty Schools.

In February 2024, ECS Committee approved the Learning Estate strategy: Moving towards a Sustainable Estate and the team have completed the first phase of cluster assessment and engagement processes in Banff, Turriff and Westhill. Recommendations from these assessments and the launch of the next phase of cluster reviews will be considered by ECS Committee in the Autumn of 2024. Engagement with parents and staff of Kinneff School and Tullynessle School took place in Spring 2024 following a decision to mothball the schools from August 2024. Further engagement with both school communities will commence in the next session regarding the next steps for the future of both schools. There will be six cluster reviews commenced by the end of this year.

Business Support & Performance saw the revised Devolved School Management scheme continue to bed in during the second full year of implementation. The scheme has been subject to review by Internal Audit which has identified further areas for improvement. This will inform the formal review of the scheme which should take place every three years. Support on financial matters was a key improvement area highlighted in the Business Support & Performance annual survey to stakeholders is ongoing. Orientation sessions at area and cluster level have taken place and the focus now is on developing support for key themes throughout the financial year.

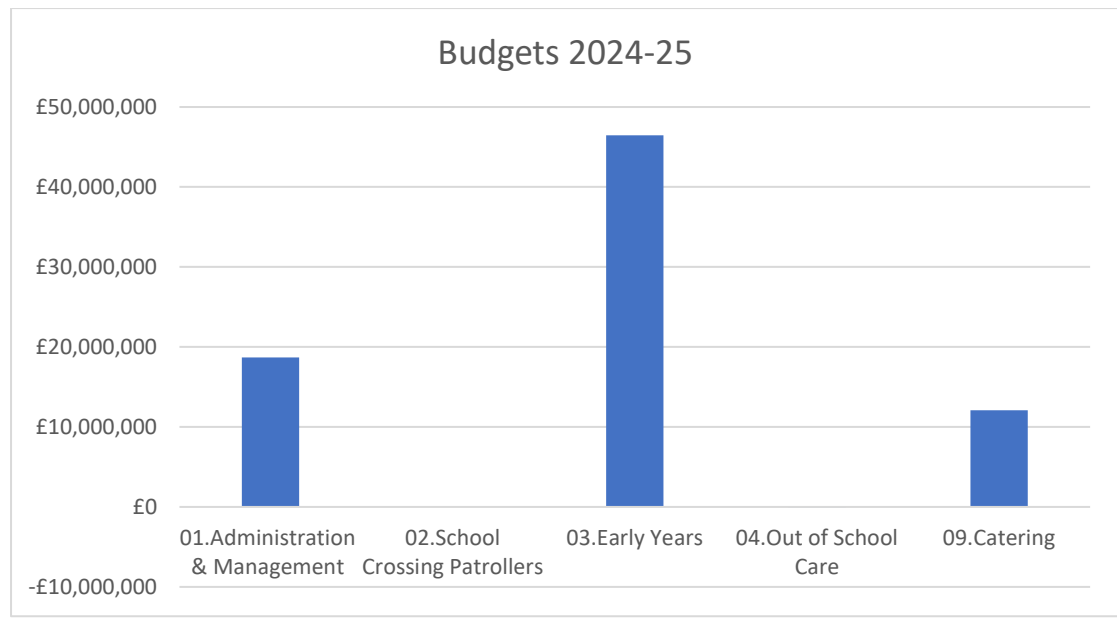
Benchmarking & Self-Evaluation

The two key workstreams of a revised resource allocation methodology for primary school management and a revised local business support model for schools are progressing well. Both these areas of strategic improvement and change will further embed key principles around Devolved Support Management, namely adequacy of professional support offer and transparency, equity and efficiency of resource distribution.

Janitorial provision in schools has been subject to a formal review process to remove historic inequities and local anomalies in the distribution of janitorial resources; to allocate janitorial resource in a different way and to move to a more efficient and flexible task-driven resource model. Formal consultation with staff has taken place and the revised model will be implemented in the second quarter of 2024/2025. Following the budget decision to remove the School Crossing Patrol service, this service ceased with effect from 5th July 2024.

Financial Profile

Resources & Performance Budget for 2024/25



The Budget is agreed annually in February.

Resources & Performance Budget 2024-25	£
01.Staff Costs	£57,496,361
02.Premises Costs	£1,133,500
03.Transport	£249,900
04.Supplies & Services	£10,027,613
05.Third Parties	£16,193,300
10.Income	(£7,907,700)
Total	£77,192,974

Financial Profile

Education & Children's Services Capital Plan Projects

	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 Proposed Budget £000	2026/27 Proposed Budget £000	2027/28 Proposed Budget £000	2028/29 Proposed Budget £000
Early Learning Childcare (1140 Hours Projects)	500	3,712	0	0	0
Early Learning Childcare (Children & Young Peoples Bill)	45	0	0	0	0
Chapelton Primary School	282	500	6,542	2,737	0
ECS Enhancements	2,111	250	500	500	500
Universal Free School Meals Expansion	1,526	0	0	0	0
Improved Disabled Access (Education)	250	50	100	100	100
Inverurie Community Campus	345	0	0	0	0
Kintore Primary School (Midmill)	290	0	0	0	0
Peterhead Community Campus	9,326	67,996	53,497	9,349	14,241
PFI Lifecycle Replacement (CFCR)	2,081	1,687	837	960	1,257
TOTAL - EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES	16,756	74,195	61,476	13,646	16,098

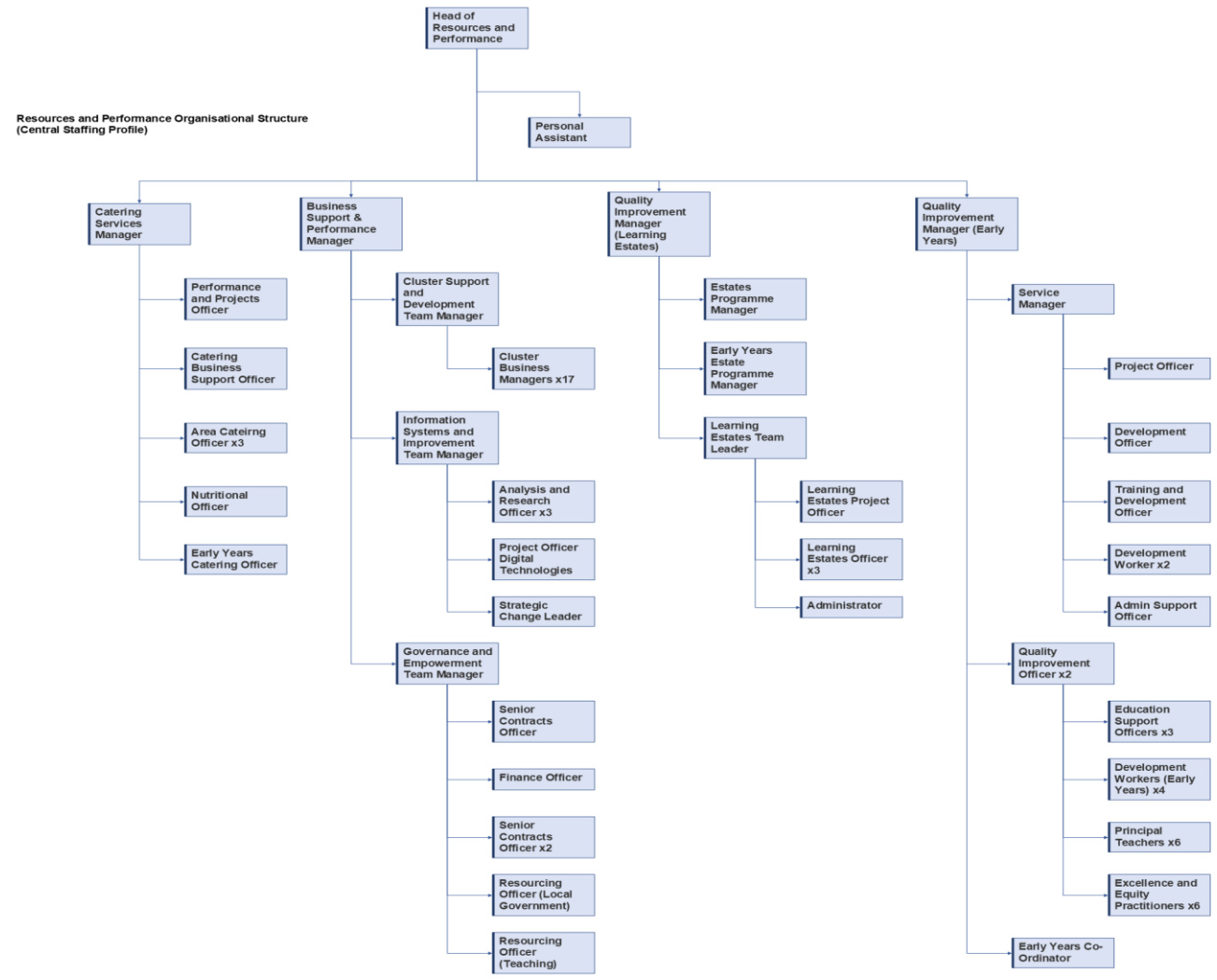
Financial Profile

Infrastructure Fund 2

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
IF2 Education & Children's Services Projects	2,427	500	1,500	1,500	1,500

Infrastructure Fund 2 was established to address backlog maintenance across the entire Council Estate.

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025



N.B this is a high-level overview of the Resources and Performance service, however there are further teams/staff that sit below this.

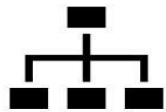
Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Measures of Success/ Progress Update

Provide a brief update on progress made during the reporting period.

The model for Strategic Workforce Planning:

To deliver against the workforce strategic outcomes outlined in the Target Operating Model 1.2, the following section breaks down our planned activities into five key areas of work, along with specific objectives and projected timeline. These are:



Right Structures

Setting up our council in a way that supports our cultural aspirations



Right People

Building our capacity through attracting, recruiting, moving talent



Right Skills

Building capability through awareness, desire, knowledge and ability



Right Place

Working where and when is best for the work and the customer



Right Support

Supporting employees to thrive, personally and professionally

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Workforce Plan

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Wellbeing	Issue/ Risk	The Resources and Performance Workforce may have wellbeing issues. The 87% Wellbeing Tool generated a limited response from Resources and Performance so there is limited data for analysis.
	Action(s)	<p>All managers to complete Mental Health at Work training course.</p> <p>87% Wellbeing Platform and App to be discussed and promoted to every team at least once by the Team Leader to ensure all employees in the service are aware of this support mechanism.</p> <p>Resources and Performance extended management team to discuss data analysis in workshop (Employee Wellbeing Survey and 87% Wellbeing Tool) and identify specific focus areas for action.</p> <p>Support information to be highlighted and provided to the whole service allowing all employees to be aware of the range of support available to them.</p> <p>PPP conversations to be carried out at least once every year with all team members to provide a consistency to the supportive conversations being had by managers, to provide a framework for constructive feedback and allow for regular conversations on workload and commitments to be discussed.</p>
	Progress/ Measure	<p>Measures of progress to include:</p> <p>All managers have completed Mental Health at Work training.</p> <p>An improved level of engagement with support resources throughout the whole service, measured through Wellbeing Assessments.</p>
		Throughout 23/24 and 24/25 ongoing process

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date	
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>			
Skills	Issue/ Risk	Resources & Performance staff may not have the required skills to implement technology solutions.	
	Action(s)	<p>Training Needs Analysis to be developed for M365 & the main systems used within the service to identify digital skills gaps so appropriate training/coaching can be identified & provided.</p> <p>Digital skills to be included in staff PPP discussions and in team meetings. Managers to identify appropriate training and learning opportunities.</p> <p>Managers to encourage discussion of digital improvement in team meetings, encouraging staff to suggest ideas for exploration, liaising with Digital Champion(s) as appropriate.</p>	Throughout 23/24 to be fully completed by 24/25
	Progress/ Measures	Monitor outputs from Digital TNAs and the resultant frequency of training/learning activities undertaken in response to outputs.	
Diversity	Issue/ Risk	<p>The Resources and Performance workforce may not reflect the wider community that they serve.</p> <p>As provision of equalities data is voluntary, some staff have chosen not to respond or selected 'Prefer not to say' in their responses. This indicates both a lack of engagement with the process & potentially a lack of confidence in the way the data will be used.</p> <p>The age profile of workforce presents a potential area for concern, with only 3.8% of employees aged under 30, while 61% of the workforce are 50 or over. The overall Resources and Performance workforce remains predominantly female 74%.</p>	
	Action(s)	<p>Improve quality of data available. Staff to be encouraged to record their 'Sensitive Information'.</p> <p>Develop the younger workforce through identifying potential opportunities to include Apprenticeship and entry level roles to teams.</p>	Ongoing
	Progress/ Measures	<p>Recognising that the provision of this information is voluntary, 100% return is not expected. However, the service should see improved data available across the service increased from the current rate.</p> <p>Services Managers to monitor the diversity profile of the workforce through the Workforce Profile Dashboard and report to Resources and Performance Core Management Team on changes or issues.</p>	

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Establishment Control (FTE, Agency, Overtime use)	Issue/ Risk	<p>There is an anticipated continued reduction in staffing budgets each financial year.</p> <p>There are risks associated with the age profile as indicated within the Diversity priority detailed above and flexibility of skills and experience to fill required gaps within Resources and Performance critical posts across Services.</p>
	Action(s)	<p>Use turnover and voluntary service to manage areas of reduced demand or that have reduced resource requirement due to new digital processes.</p> <p>Provide opportunities to develop our attractiveness as an employer for the young workforce by creation of Modern Apprenticeships, consideration of providing Foundation Apprenticeship places and taking advantage of any relevant government funding opportunities to fund fixed term placements or apprenticeships.</p> <p>Encourage leavers to complete exit questionnaires to identify any issues.</p>
	Progress/ Measure	<p>Resources and Performance Core Management Team to monitor FTE, turnover, agency, external consultants, and overtime spend on a bi-annual basis.</p> <p>Resources and Performance Core Management Team to monitor numbers of new opportunities for under 25s.</p> <p>Service Managers to review Exit Questionnaire output and report potential shared issues to Resources and Performance Core Management Team.</p>
		Throughout 24/25

Our People: Staffing & Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions		Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>			
Succession Planning	Issue/ Risk	There are many career pathways across Resources & Performance, and these may not be clear. With the age profile of Resources and Performance there is a potential loss of considerable experience and knowledge due to the number of staff who may retire in the next 3-5 years.	
	Action(s)	Develop career pathways framework for Resources & Performance. Identify business critical roles for which potential successors are required. Ensure that there are robust handover processes for leavers and ensure that knowledge is not retained within a single post or postholder.	Throughout 24/25
	Progress/ Measures	Resources & Performance Core Management Team to monitor.	
Early Years Workforce	Issue/ Risk	Individual settings are different but are staffed to set formula.	
	Action(s)	Embed a flexible & agile workforce within Early Years which allows settings to respond to local priorities.	Throughout 24/25
	Issue/ Risk	There are not enough Early Years staff and there is no clear career progression pathway.	
	Action(s)	Across Early Years including grow your own programmes such as Modern Apprenticeships for entry level posts.	Throughout 24/25
Catering Workforce	Issue/ Risk	The catering service is changing, and jobs may need to change.	
	Action(s)	Work more holistically with schools to identify opportunities for Foundation Apprenticeships and Modern Apprenticeships. Review posts and gradings to ensure the structure remains fit for purpose.	Throughout 24/25
Business Support & Performance Workforce	Issue/ Risk	The Business Support & Performance Team is changing, the support we provide, and the posts required may need to change.	
	Action(s)	Phase 2 is ongoing. Focus is on janitorial allocations and school business support.	Throughout 24/25

Looking forward, ECS Resources and Performance will be leading and delivering significant change across wider ECS and the system. The transformation of our learning estate, as we move to a more sustainable model, will build on our prior experience and expertise to co-produce solutions with stakeholders and communities. Our facilitation of participatory improvement and change processes will deliver efficient, equitable and sustainable organisational and operational solutions for today and for the future. Acknowledging the current and coming financial challenges, ongoing review and rationalisation activity will ensure we continue to meet the needs of internal and external customers within the available budget envelope, securing Best Value and promoting both excellence and equity in our service delivery offers. These workstreams will present significant complexity and challenge to the service and wider Directorate but equally important opportunities to reset our structures, system, and processes to be more future-fit and future-facing. ECS Resources and Performance look forward to delivering our service priorities, working with colleagues across the organisation and with partners across the system to deliver within the context of the wider Council's ambitions.



Youth, Adult and Learning in Communities Business Plan 2024-2025



Vision Statement

Community Learning and Development, strengthening communities through wider learning

Service Function and Purpose

Communities Wellbeing and Partnerships includes sports and community facilities, libraries, cultural and heritage services as well as Community Learning and Development and Instrumental Music Services. In Aberdeenshire Council the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Service and Instrumental Music Service (IMS) sit within, and reports to, Education and Children's Services Committee and uphold the Education and Children's Services values of Integrity, Equity and Empowerment. All other parts of Communities Wellbeing and Partnerships reports to Communities Committee and is therefore not included in this Business Plan. CLD provides a targeted service to learners and communities across Aberdeenshire.

The service uses National and local data to target those most in need and deliver on the National Performance Framework areas:

- Improving life chances for people of all ages through learning, personal development and active citizenship
- Building stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential communities

CLD is a professional practice which uses a range of formal and informal methods of learning and social development with individuals and groups in their communities. Staff work to deliver positive change in communities, in the personal lives of those living and working in our council area and where our services are most needed in Aberdeenshire.

CLD enables people to identify their own individual and collective goals, to engage in learning and take action to bring about change for themselves and their communities. CLD programmes and activities are developed in dialogue with communities and participants, working particularly with those excluded from participation in the decisions and processes that shape their lives.

Through working in these ways, CLD extends the reach of democracy and widens its scope.

Service Function and Purpose

Community Learning and Development (CLD)

CLD have recently refreshed our service delivery plan. We are a targeted service and have used the SIMD data and Intermediate Zone summaries, the Strategic Assessment, focusing on Education, employment, average income, connectivity and levels of skills and qualifications. In partnership with key stakeholder with LLCPs we are gathering and sharing additional local data and intelligence and planned our service delivery plan based on this. Where appropriate we are working in partnership to plan and deliver support.

As part of the prioritisation process, the service used additional criteria and weighting to focus our delivery for those communities and or groups that are most in need. These took account of the service 4 priority themes:

- Accreditation,
- Skills for life which includes employability skills, ESOL and Literacies,
- Capacity Building and
- Voice

CLD delivery is based on the National CLD priorities: Improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship; Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities. These directly align with Aberdeenshire Council Plan 2024-2029.

Place

The current priority delivery areas for CLD, Inverurie, Turriff, Kemnay, Huntly, Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Mintlaw and Banff. There are other areas around Stonehaven including the coastal strip and Upper Deeside (Aboyne and beyond), and a number of rural villages where we focus service delivery based on evidential data. The service has a robust referral process in place, where anyone across Aberdeenshire can request support from CLD. Through the referral process, a learning offer may be made based on an individual's needs, and service capacity to deliver.

Whilst all of CLD delivery is in communities, we are a targeted service and provision fits most comfortably under three of the Place and Wellbeing outcomes: **Stewardship:** CLD supports young people and adults to influence and co-produce the services that they need; **Civic:** CLD supports individuals and groups to build their skills in order to contribute and participate in their school, community and family lives; **Resources:** CLD supports individuals to build their literacy skills (emotional, functional, digital, health and financial) in order to actively participate in and contribute to the communities they live in.

Service Function and Purpose

Instrumental Music Service

The Instrumental Music Service (IMS) is committed to working together with schools and communities to secure continuous improvement in outcomes for children and young people through music opportunities. Our ambition is to offer the best opportunities for as many people as possible.

We uphold the Education and Children's Services values of Integrity, Equity and Empowerment. The quality of our service is important to us which will be further developed through our commitment & engagement with pupils & parents.

We aim to continuously develop the service and maintain an efficient and modern service which maximises digital technology. We do this through exploring & offering new ways of working in order to support free instrumental music tuition in Scotland. This includes working in partnership with communities, schools, organisations and individuals.

IMS Core Delivery

The IMS operates in all 17 Community School Networks across Aberdeenshire providing group and individual lessons. Hybrid working, large groups and whole class delivery enables the service to delivery effectively and creatively. As a result, the number of pupils accessing tuition has increased by 85.8% in the same time period.

The IMS aims to deliver tuition to all schools in Aberdeenshire, however, as Aberdeenshire is a geographically challenging area, not all primary schools receive tuition. This is as a result of a combination of the geographical challenge and the number (FTE) of instructors that are available to the Service. There are currently 25 primary schools without tuition compared to 38 in 2019. Academies all receive 7 disciplines, and 3 academies receive 9 disciplines as listed below:

Disciplines delivered to all academies:

Upper Strings	Piano / keyboard
Lower Strings	Guitar
Woodwind	Percussion
Brass	

3 academies receive Bagpipe and Pipe Drum tuition in addition to the 7 disciplines above.

Service Function and Purpose

The Scottish Government Free Tuition was initiated in 2021, so there are no fees for instrumental tuition.

Number of pupils who received tuition for each discipline:

Brass	387
Guitar	237
Lower Strings	264
Percussion	209
Piano / keyboard	220
Traditional - Bagpipe	137
Traditional - Pipe Band Drum	47
Upper Strings	884
Woodwind	487
Whole class / partnership project tuition	178
Total number of pupils who received tuition in 2023/24	3050

The Service supports instructors and schools in running school ensembles, groups and extra-curricular projects at lunchtimes and after school. The table below shows the extra-curricular groups that were led directly by instructors in Aberdeenshire schools.

Type of ensemble	Number of ensembles directed by IMS instructors
Rock Band	5
Guitar Group	7
Brass Ensemble	5
Concert Band	7
String Ensemble	13
Lower String Ensemble	3
Woodwind Ensemble	6
Pipe Band	1
Ceilidh / Folk Group	6
Orchestra	2

Service Function and Purpose

Class Band	2
Choir	1
Percussion Ensemble	1
Total	59

The Service encourages pupils to work towards accreditation through examinations with external examination boards and supporting SQA courses, including stand-alone performance units.

Aberdeenshire Youth Music Sessions (AYMS)

AYMS runs at weekends in throughout the academic session concluding in a concert for parents and invited guests. It provides additional music making opportunities for young people in Aberdeenshire. These sessions aim to be self-sustaining as participants are charged for attending. Staff costs and letting fees for the venues and schools where the AYMS sessions take place that are not fully covered are subsidised by the Scottish Government Free Tuition funding. The cost taken from the funding is reported back to the Scottish Government as expansion of the IMS tuition offer. Scottish Government funding for free tuition is expected to continue, however if it did not continue, we would increase the fees to enable AYMS to be self-financing.

In 2023-24 the overall the cost of all of the AYMS Projects was £3072. Project fees received were £2406 with the shortfall of £666 being covered by the Scottish Government Free Tuition funding. Whilst this is not core delivery for the service it does clearly contribute to increased offer of music making opportunities and learning and has a positive impact on children and young people's learning and skills both in music, transferable skills and increased positive mental health and wellbeing.

Fees for participants attending AYMS sessions are currently £6 per session, however, there are no fees for Young Leaders or for families that are eligible for Free School Meals. All AYMS projects were staffed by IMS Instructors employed by the Council. Current AYMS project staff are based in the central and south areas of Aberdeenshire. Two AYMS partnership projects with the Benedetti Foundation and the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland are scheduled for the coming academic session 2024-25 which will be based in the North. These projects will be funded by the respective organisations, so there will be no fee for participants.

Service Function and Purpose

Date	Event	Number of pupils
Term 2: November / December 2023	Concert Band - Mackie Academy	33
	Junior String Orchestra - Mackie Academy	24
	Strings, Brass and Woodwind - Inverurie Academy	25
Term 3: February / March 2024	Concert Band - Mackie Academy	45
	Junior String Orchestra - Mackie Academy	32
	Junior String Orchestra - Inverurie Academy	20
Term 4: June 2024	AEA – Shrek Jnr	13
Total Number		192

Youth Music Initiative

The IMS and Live Life Aberdeenshire Arts Team worked in partnership to deliver over 20 Youth Music Initiative (YMI) projects to school pupils from nursery through to secondary school age. YMI is funded wholly externally through Creative Scotland and is not subsidised by Aberdeenshire Council. It offers an additional range of music making opportunities across Aberdeenshire and often in areas where the IMS service does not have an offer. 6 out of 149 primary schools received no tuition from the IMS or YMI in academic session 2023-24. The 4 Special Schools received Kodály tuition all year round.

Service Priorities

Service Priorities and how they support the Council Plan

The [Council Plan](#) was agreed in June 2024 and sets out the Council Strategic Priorities

Aberdeenshire Council works with and for our communities. We will provide essential local services and additional help to those who need it most.

A sustainable economy

We will support a strong and diverse economy by attracting people of working age to our region, complementing our highly skilled local workforce.

- Support new and existing businesses to thrive and provide fair work opportunities
- Secure inward investment to sustain economic growth
- Contribute to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce by developing the skills our children and young people need for learning, life and work now and in the future
- Equip residents to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives through lifelong learning
- Attract and retain people of working age to the region

Connected communities

We will work with communities and partners to enhance the sense of connection among our places. This includes supporting communities to come up with innovative solutions to ensure our places are resilient and vibrant.

- Support communities to articulate the challenges facing them and how we can achieve better outcomes together
- Collaborate with partners and communities to attract investment to enhance travel and transport connections between our towns and villages
- Encourage and promote active travel – supporting healthier, more sustainable and environmentally friendly travel options
- Improve digital connectivity by securing investment for better infrastructure for homes and businesses

Service Priorities

Living well locally

We will encourage and support our residents to lead healthy and active lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities. We will make proactive choices that will allow us to cater to the needs of our increasingly ageing population.

- Help people to lead independent lives through prevention and early intervention, providing care and support to those most in need
- Facilitate the provision of affordable housing
- Work with and support opportunities for residents to be healthy and active
- Improve the life chances of people at risk of falling into poverty, or already living in poverty
- Promote greater participation by communities so we are working to shared and collective ambitions in our places
- Ensure children and young people have a greater say in matters that will affect them now and, in the future,

How we will work with communities

- Everything we do will consider the impact on our places and will be informed by the voices of our communities. We will involve communities and service users in shaping our services, including how and where they are delivered. We will work with local people to actively shape the places they live and work in, through supporting volunteering and helping them to make the best use of the assets and resources in their area.

Climate change

- Climate change and the drive to net zero will be at the heart of how we make decisions and deliver services to support the delivery of our strategic priorities in the long-term. Our decisions will be informed through the lens of climate change to support our communities to have a sustainable future.

The National priorities for CLD

- Improving life chances for people of all ages through learning, personal development & active citizenship.
- Building stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential communities.

Framing our delivery against clear outcomes designed to change lives and strengthen communities.

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Council priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Instrumental Music Service					
Sustainable economy	Provide instrumental music tuition in addition to the Scottish Music Curriculum in schools.	Maintain average pupil numbers per instructor.	Young people have increased access to instrumental tuition.	Music Development Manager	Throughout 2024-2029
	Contribute to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce by developing the skill our young people need for learning, life and work.	Employ and develop a holistic teaching approach.	Young people have skills in their specialist discipline (instrument) to achieve qualifications. Young people have attained transferable skills for their future through access to instrumental tuition.		
Connected communities	Enhance the sense of community connection.	Liaise and promote community music groups and ensembles.	Young people and families are aware of a range of community music opportunities.		
Living well locally	Number of young people with improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes through instrumental tuition. Ensure young people have a greater say in matters that affect them.	Maintain delivery of a range of music opportunities and activities including AYMS. Connect with young people through Engage HQ.	Young people have improved mental health and wellbeing as a result of engagement with the Instrumental Music Service. Young people and families have a voice which will inform the Service areas for development.		

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Council priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Community Learning and Development					
<p>Sustainable economy</p> <p>Contribute to the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce by developing the skills our children and young people need for learning, life and work now and in the future</p>	<p>Number of adults and young people engaging in CLD activity.</p> <p>Number of adults and young people completing Nationally recognised accreditation through CLD activity.</p>	<p>CLD service key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation • Capacity Building • Learning for Life • Voice <p>Through two key service priorities, Accreditation and Learning for life CLD deliver targeted learning and development support to adults and young people.</p>	<p>Adults and young people have improved skills and resilience as a result of engagement in CLD activity.</p>	<p>Service Manager, YALC</p>	<p>Throughout 2024-2029</p>
<p>Equip residents to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives through lifelong learning</p>	<p>Number of adults and young people completing wider achievements.</p> <p>Number of adults and young people engaging in CLD activities.</p>	<p>CLD service key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation • Capacity Building • Learning for Life • Voice <p>Through two key service priorities, Accreditation and Learning for life CLD deliver targeted learning and development support to adults and young people.</p>	<p>Adults and young people have improved skills and resilience as a result of engagement in CLD activity.</p>		

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Council priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale
<p>Connected Communities</p> <p>Support communities to articulate the challenges facing them and how we can achieve better outcomes together</p>	<p>Number of young people, adults and community groups receiving capacity building support, taking part in influence and engagement activity including one off events through CLD activity.</p>	<p>CLD service key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation • Capacity Building • Learning for Life • Voice <p>Through Community Capacity Building key priority CLD support communities.</p>	<p>Young people and adults including community groups have increased skills and capacity as a result of engagement in CLD activity.</p> <p>Skills to have a greater say in what matters. Have skills and understanding of mechanisms of how to participate in their communities</p>		
<p>Living Well Locally</p> <p>Improve the life chances of people at risk of falling into poverty, or already living in poverty</p>	<p>Number of adults and young people engaging in skills for life learning through CLD activity</p>	<p>CLD service key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation • Capacity Building • Learning for Life • Voice <p>Through three of our priorities Voice, Skills for life and Capacity Building CLD support learners to complete and achieve their individual learning plans.</p> <p>CLD deliver family learning and core literacies provision.</p>	<p>Adults and young people have improved literacy skills to allow them to understand their choices in order to navigate and mitigate the impact of poverty</p>		

Service Performance Indicators 2024-2025

Council priority	Service performance measure	Action	Anticipated outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale
<p>Promote greater participation by communities so we are working to shared and collective ambitions in our places</p> <p>Ensure children and young people have a greater say in matters that will affect them now and in the future</p>	<p>Numbers of adults and young people engaging in CLD activity including family learning.</p> <p>Number of adults and young people participating in political literacy and participatory democracy through CLD activities.</p> <p>Number of young people participating and influencing what matters to them through CLD activity</p>	<p>CLD promote and encourage active citizenship and participation (political literacy) including capacity building support to individuals and groups.</p> <p>CLD deliver political literacy and capacity building support to young people.</p>	<p>Skills to have a greater say in what matters. Have skills and understanding of mechanisms of how to participate in their communities</p>		

Benchmarking and Self-Evaluation

Service Manager reflections

August 2024

IMS are continuing to improve and modernise the service and this is being enhanced by an embedded use of self-evaluation. This is assisting with reflecting on service delivery and setting service improvements. Self-evaluation is now embedded in in-service time and improvements include a focus on digital delivery. The recently developed and approved IMS Service Delivery Plan has clear targets for 2024-2025 and the service is already working towards achieving these.

CLD has been making improvements at all levels for the last 27 months following a change in structure and senior management. The service is currently working on a refining understanding of data to target delivery across North, Central and South. A new Service Delivery Plan is in place for 2024-2025 from April 2024 focusing on the needs across Aberdeenshire, taking a North, Central, South service focus to maximise impact.

As part of this process the service is where possible moving staff to support this need. The Improvement Team are providing support across the service around outcome focussed planning, use of data, evaluation and evaluative writing. Planning and evaluation are integral to all CLD service delivery. Concurrent with this the service is piloting new materials to better capture and report the impact. The service has refreshed the Key Performance Indicators that they report against, adopting CLD Managers Scotland Key Performance Indicators. A new targeted Service Delivery Plan holds all the service information in one place, based on data and local intelligence.

To maximise the impact CLD has and to meet the broad reach of a large rural authority, the service is focusing on more digital delivery where appropriate and in partnership with learners and communities. Materials and tools are continuing to be explored and developed in order to achieve this and training will be provided where appropriate. The service is testing the use of a referral form which will assist with a more streamlined approach to assessing learners and either signposting on or supporting new learners.

As part of the focus on improvement and efficiency and to support agile working, CLD have set up CWP SharePoint space. This provides a shared space for communication, materials, and support. The service also provided Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement training across all senior staff in CWP.

Dominique Carlisle-Kitz, Service Manager, Youth, Adult and Learning in Communities

Financial Profile

The budget is agreed annually by Full Council in February.

CLD budget 2024/2025

Annual budget £2,746,900

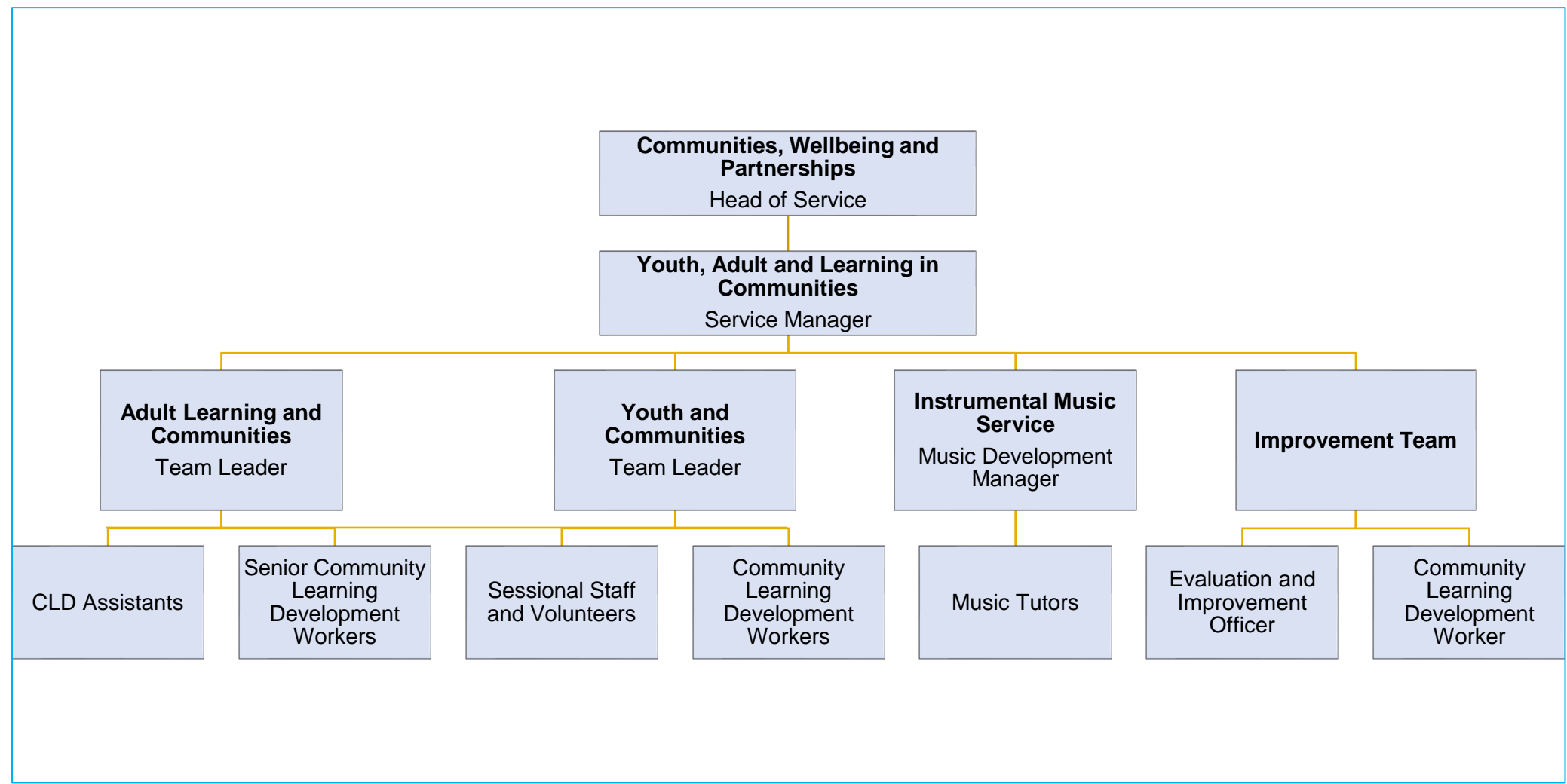
IMS budget 2024/2025

Annual budget £2,215,000

Scottish Government Free Tuition funding £623,000

Our People: Staffing and Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Service Staffing Profile



Our People: Staffing and Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Aberdeenshire Council have identified, at a corporate level, that all Business Plans must address the following workforce planning activities to support the Council in being fit and flexible for the future: Wellbeing, Digital Skills, Diversity and Succession Planning, Establishment Control. Services also identify actions relating to industry and service specific drivers based on their own internal and external environmental analysis to ensure they have the right people in the right place doing the right things at the right time for them to meet their overall service outcomes and priorities.

Workforce Planning requires a level of forecasting and should be in place for a rolling 3-year period as many workforce planning actions require time to come to fruition, e.g. natural turnover, skills development, succession planning. Also providing a transparent 3-year workforce plan allows for better transparency and levels of engagement with the workforce.

Key priorities and updates are provided below.

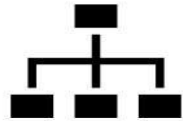
Our People: Staffing and Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Measures of Success / Progress Update

Provide a brief update on progress made during the reporting period.

The model for Strategic Workforce Planning:

To deliver against the workforce strategic outcomes outlined in the Target Operating Model 1.2, the following section breaks down our planned activities into five key areas of work, along with specific objectives and projected timeline. These are:



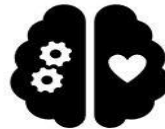
Right Structures

Setting up our council in a way that supports our cultural aspirations



Right People

Building our capacity through attracting, recruiting, moving talent



Right Skills

Building capability through awareness, desire, knowledge and ability



Right Place

Working where and when is best for the work and the customer



Right Support

Supporting employees to thrive, personally and professionally

Our People: Staffing and Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Workforce Plan

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Wellbeing Strong and stable workforce	Issue / Risk	Recruitment and retention of staff impact ability to deliver service and increase risk for quality delivery of our services.
	Action(s)	Review number of applicants for position offered and success in recruitment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce and monitor service exit survey to inform improvements. • Increase service profile and career opportunities with recruits, students and on social media. • Development of a quality Modern Apprenticeships programme & promote within ECS. • Address the use of relief staff for core roles.
	Progress / Measure	Percentage of permanent staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising trends. • Turnover. • Workforce stability (length of service). • Themes from exit and retention interviews. • Modern apprenticeships offer and retention
		Ongoing

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Skills Skilled and knowledgeable workforce	Issue / Risk	Without the right knowledge and skills, the service will be unable to meet the evolving needs of the service.
		Ongoing

Our People: Staffing and Workforce Planning 2024-2025

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
	<p>Action(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills and training audit across suite of services. • Training needs to be identified and reviewed as part of annual PPP. • Review and development of induction materials for all staff. • Identify and deliver a programme of internal and external training across services to address changing service requirements. • Increase workforce awareness of the Learning Organisation. • Increase accreditation offer as a result of staff professional development. • Development of workforce planning and training group across CWP. 	
	<p>Progress / Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Survey. • Training take-up and completion rates. • Feedback form workforce. 	
Diversity	<p>Issue / Risk</p> <p>The CLD workforce may not reflect the wider community that they serve.</p> <p>As provision of equalities data is voluntary, some staff have chosen not to respond or selected 'Prefer not to say' in their responses. This indicates both a lack of engagement with the process and potentially a lack of confidence in the way the data will be used.</p> <p>The services aging workforce presents a potential area for concern.</p>	Ongoing
	<p>Action(s)</p> <p>Staff to be encouraged to record and update their 'Sensitive Information' screen through their Employee Self Service accounts.</p> <p>Develop the younger workforce through identifying potential opportunities</p>	
	<p>Progress / Measures</p> <p>Recognising that the provision of this information is voluntary, 100% return is not expected.</p> <p>Services Managers to monitor the diversity profile of the workforce through the Workforce Profile Dashboard and report to Core Management Team on changes or issues.</p>	

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Succession Planning	Issue / Risk	Lack of career progression impacts staff recruitment and retention. Inability to recruit to roles places services delivery and staff wellbeing at risk.
	Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development and offer opportunities that provide an insight to roles within CWP. Promote leadership and management training. Development of Sport and Leisure / CLD career pathway. Development of mentoring / coaching opportunities.
	Progress / Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of PPP completed and actioned. Workforce Survey
		Ongoing

Priority	Key Actions	Target Date
Corporate Workforce Planning Priorities <i>All Services to identify actions for the following corporate Workforce Planning Priorities:</i>		
Establishment Control (FTE, Agency, Overtime use)	Issue / Risk	There is an anticipated continued reduction in staffing budgets each financial year.
	Action(s)	Use turnover and voluntary service to manage areas of reduced demand or that have reduced resource requirement due to new digital processes.
	Progress / Measures	Core Management Team to monitor FTE, turnover, agency, external consultants, and overtime spend on a bi-annual basis.
		Ongoing

Concluding Summary

Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships provide wider learning, instrumental music, cultural arts, library, and sports opportunities, adding to the health, wellbeing, and vibrancy of Aberdeenshire. This will enable us to support the strengthening of our community.

Our Business Plan will continue to focus our efforts on agreed priorities to target groups which will drive and add value to the services that we provide to Aberdeenshire residents.