

# Service Improvement and Recovery Plan

The Service Improvement and Recovery plan is intended to give clear direction to everyone working in the service. The 'Service' can be defined by the relevant service lead. The Service Improvement and Recovery Plan should be discussed regularly at team meetings and at meetings with your Assistant Director, Director or Head of Service. **It needs to be brief and focused on improvement and the Council's strategic priorities.** The actions in the Service Plan will be uploaded to Pentana and regular/quarterly updates will be completed to report progress. Reports will be extracted and reported to CLT throughout the year. Plans will be review and refreshed annually as defined in the Council's Performance Management Framework.

In 2018, we set out a clear and ambitious vision of what we want to achieve in our [Council Plan 2018-22](#)

Our ambitions are set against 6 key themes:



## Service covered in this Plan: Democratic Service

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### About Our Service

In supporting the decision making process of the Council, the Committee Services team provide administration support to the Council's Panels, Boards and a variety of working groups. This work involves the preparation and distribution of papers whether in hard copy format or electronic, attendance at meetings and subsequent production of Minutes. More recently members of staff have been involved in developing processes for the conduct of remote meetings. Members Services Support Staff provides a comprehensive administrative support service to the Council's 28 Elected Members. This support service can range from dealing with enquiries whether by email/phone from constituents, diary work, arranging meetings and surgeries, dealing with correspondence and providing a level of IT support.

Other members of Democratic Support provide direct support to allow County Buildings to operate effectively. The County Buildings Officers provides a comprehensive security and janitorial service for the Council headquarters. The team are responsible for the security of the building, delivery of items within the building, mail duties, room setups, minor maintenance and driving duties. The Print Room/Mail Room Operator provides a printing service for high volume documents for the Services primarily located within the County Buildings and some outlying Council offices. A mail services is also provided which involves the franking of external mail, the distribution of internal mail to Services located within the County Buildings and also some outlying Council offices. This work is assisted by Council messengers based at Council headquarters.

Members of staff with Democratic Support provide administrative support to the Returning Officer in the preparation and facilitating of electoral events.

**Service Lead: Wynne Carlaw**

**Total FTE for Service: 16.5fte**

### How Have We Made A Difference? - Our performance over the last year

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- The Committee Services team has worked closely with IT to enable the Council to adapt to new ways of working via hybrid/remote Council meetings. This has involved familiarisation with new procedures and technology, the production of remote meeting protocols, additional IT training for members and the testing of new systems, thus allowing the Council's decision making process to continue.
- Members Services staff have provided remote and in-office support to Members to enable them to carry out their duties including IT support to facilitate attendance at meetings and briefings/training sessions, and to assist generally with new ways of working .during the Pandemic. The Provost also continued to attend some civic engagements in a virtual basis.
- We have ensured a County Buildings Officer presence throughout the Pandemic to allow essential work to continue within Council headquarters, and to ensure that the building is safe and complies with Scottish Government guidance. New procedures have been adopted to allow staff to safely enter and exit the

building and the arrangements for meetings have required to have been adapted to meet new ways of working in line with Scottish Government guidance.

- We have also ensured a presence with the Council's print room. This resulted in Panel papers being printed and mailed to Panel members to allow Panels to continue to operate.
- Mailroom staff have aided in maintaining the flow of mail throughout the Council.

## How will your service operate differently as a result of COVID-19

**Committee Services** – The Committee Services team has adopted a blended approach to carrying out their duties during the Pandemic. They have been working from home and working from County Buildings when they have been required to facilitate Council meetings and to issue Panel/Board/Working Groups' papers. This has worked well so far and will be reviewed, taking into consideration the business meetings and requirements of the Council. The team are working with IT to secure an integrated audio and visual solution that captures live council meetings, while allowing remote participation. Once procured the Council will require to consider whether hybrid meetings will continue beyond the Pandemic. Trialling of alternative electronic methods of issuing Panel papers will shortly be underway.

**Members Services** – Although challenging, Members Services staff have been successful in providing hybrid administrative support to Elected Members, working in County Buildings as agreed with their respective Members, and otherwise working from home. This model is working well and we will review this going forward taking into account the administrative and business requirements of our Elected Members. We will explore the opportunities to expand remote working, including remote surgeries.

**Print Room/Mailroom** – Printing and the delivery of mail will be kept under review after the Pandemic as it is anticipated that services may alter their ways of working to move further to online methods.

**County Buildings Officers** – There has been a requirement for County Buildings to remain open during the Pandemic for identified essential workers. The County Buildings Officers will continue to ensure that County Buildings are Covid 19 compliant and should there be a change to the operation of County Buildings, the County Buildings Officers will adapt their working pattern to accommodate.

# What are we going to do next – Action Plan

Action	How will you measure success?	Timescale	Responsibility	Council Plan Commitment (include the number of the relevant ambition statement as appropriate or mark N/A)	Collaborative working (specify services or third party organisations involved in this work)
Continue to work with IT colleagues on the procurement of an integrated audio and visual solution that captures live Council meetings and allows remote participation.	Successful implementation of an integrated audio and visual solution in relation to remote participation in Council meetings.	April 2021	Kevin Mullen / Wynne Carlaw	1. Effective Leadership that promotes fairness.	Successful contractor and Elected Members.
Progress trialling alternative electronic methods of issuing Panel papers.	Reduction in the number of hardcopy Panel papers issued manually.	April 2021	Alison Nelson, Janice McClure	1. Effective Leadership that promotes fairness	Hybrid Mail Contractor
Assessing existing and future requirements for printing.	Reduction in hardcopy.	April 2021	Wynne Carlaw/Alison Nelson	1. Effective Leadership that promotes fairness and	All Service users
Explore increased opportunities for members to work remotely, including holding remote surgeries, utilising council buildings where necessary.	If feasible, holding an increased number of remote surgeries.	September 2021	Wynne Carlaw/Alison Nelson	5. Stand up for South Ayrshire	Members Services staff, Elected Members and Facilities Management.

Preparing and facilitating the administration of the Scottish Parliamentary Election.	Successfully return an MSP without challenge.	May 2021	RO/Wynne Carlaw	5. Stand up for South Ayrshire	HR, Property Maintenance Team, Polling staff, Count Staff
Preparing and facilitating the administration of the Local Government Elections	Successfully return 28 Elected Members without challenge.	May 2022	RO/Wynne Carlaw		HR, Property Maintenance Team, Polling staff, Count Staff

