



Legal and Democratic Services Service Plan 2014 – 2017



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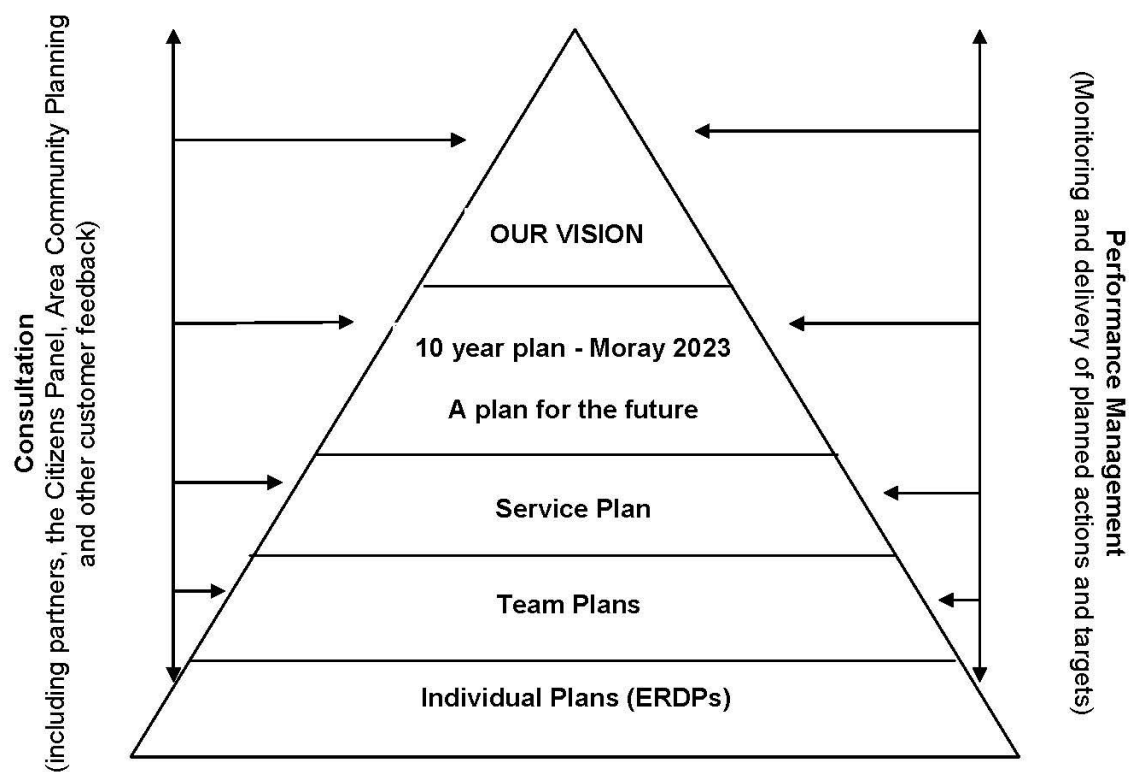
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Service Plan for Legal and Democratic Services (LDS) seeks to set out:

- how this Service Plan relates to the Council's objectives and priorities;
- the context in which we work;
- how the service is organised and resourced;
- how we perform and how we will improve our performance;
- the main risk factors affecting the service;
- planned actions to enable the service to contribute to the achievement of Council priorities.

1.2 The diagram below describes the relationship of the service plan to the wider strategic and corporate objectives to which the Council is committed. Service planning provides a means to identify the service role in the 'bigger picture' whilst providing a means for staff teams and individuals to see how their team/individual actions contribute to the Council's corporate objectives.



2. THE CORPORATE AND SERVICE OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The plan which details the priorities and activities of the Community Planning Partnership in Moray over coming years is the Moray 10 Year Plan – “Moray 2023 – A Plan for the Future”. This is the successor document to the previous Community Planning Partnership’s Single Outcome Agreement for 2012 – 2015. The 10 Year Plan identifies the following priorities which the Partnership seeks to deliver through collaborative working:

- healthier citizens
- ambitious and confident children and young people
- adults living healthier, sustainable independent lives safeguarded from harm
- a growing and diverse economy
- safer communities.

As a support service, Legal and Democratic Services works with other services across the Council to help them to deliver these priorities. Progress in delivery of the 10 year plan will be measured by reference to targets set for a selection of key performance measures at each of 2016/17, 2020/21 and 2023/24.

- 2.2 For 2013/14 Legal and Democratic Services identified a total of 27 current actions to contribute to identified outcomes of which 25 were fully implemented including preparation of a Project Plan for the merger of Customer Services with the Taxation and Benefits Services, a review of the Council’s Scheme of Delegation, completion of a move to fully electronic Committee Agenda preparation and a review of work styles and technology as part of the DBS corporate modernisation and improvement programme. As a result of that review, a number of further projects were identified including consolidation of the vast majority of corporate licensing administration within Legal Services and a review of the way in which administrative support is provided within Legal and Democratic Services including support for the Council’s 26 elected members. The 2 outstanding actions which were not fully implemented in 2013/14 are the Review of the Council’s Standing Orders and development and monitoring of a suite of performance indicators for Customer Services relative to efficiency and quality. The former has been delayed due to unanticipated work demands mainly relative to the libraries review and Health and Social Care integration and has been carried forward to the 2014/15 Action Plan. The latter has been delayed due to staffing issues within the DBS and Sharepoint Teams and will be carried forward into the 2014/15 Action Plan, albeit on a limited scale given the extent of the work associated with the service merger referred to previously. An analysis of the impact made thus far by the 13/14 service improvement activity is produced as **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 The 3 key service outcomes or objectives first identified in 2012/13 remain relevant for the service for the period 2014-17 and are as follows:

Outcome 1: Customers receive high quality services which meet their needs

Outcome 2: Through strong governance and probity arrangements, corporate decisions are robust, transparent and compliant with legislative requirements

Outcome 3: Legal and Democratic Services provide best value for our customers

- 2.4 Team plans for each of the sections within Legal and Democratic Services will support the actions identified in the overarching Service Plan. In turn, these will influence objectives for individual managers and staff within the Service, through the Employee Review and Development Programme.

3. LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

3.1 Service Context

3.1.1 Background

Legal and Democratic Services comprises Legal, Committee, Registrars and Members Support Services together with Customer Services. During 2014 administrative support for elected members will be consolidated within the existing LDS Administrative Support Team.

3.1.2 Challenges

Legal and Democratic Services has a broad remit, extending from helping to ensure the legal probity of the Council's activities and providing support for the Council's decision making apparatus and elected members to managing customer contact for a growing number of Council Services through the Customer Contact Centre and the Council's Access Points across Moray. The service also meets the Council's statutory responsibilities in respect of liquor and civic government licensing, the registration of births, deaths and marriages and supports the Returning Officer in meeting his statutory responsibilities relative to elections. Further detail on the context in which the main sections work is provided below.

Although all services will face challenges of varying degrees during the period from 2014-2017, particular challenges for Legal and Democratic Services include the European parliamentary Elections in May 2014 and Referendum on Scottish Independence in September 2014; fully implementing new ways of working in terms of the Council's Designing Better Services programme including migration to the Corporate Electronic Document Recognition and Management System "Sharepoint", and transfer of customer calls to the Council's Contact Centre; progressing the phased implementation of the merger of Customer Services with the Taxation and Benefits Services; developing the governance and accountability arrangements needed to deliver Health and Social Care integration in Moray; ensuring legislative compliance in progression of the Review of the School Estate and supporting finalisation of the new Local Development Plan.

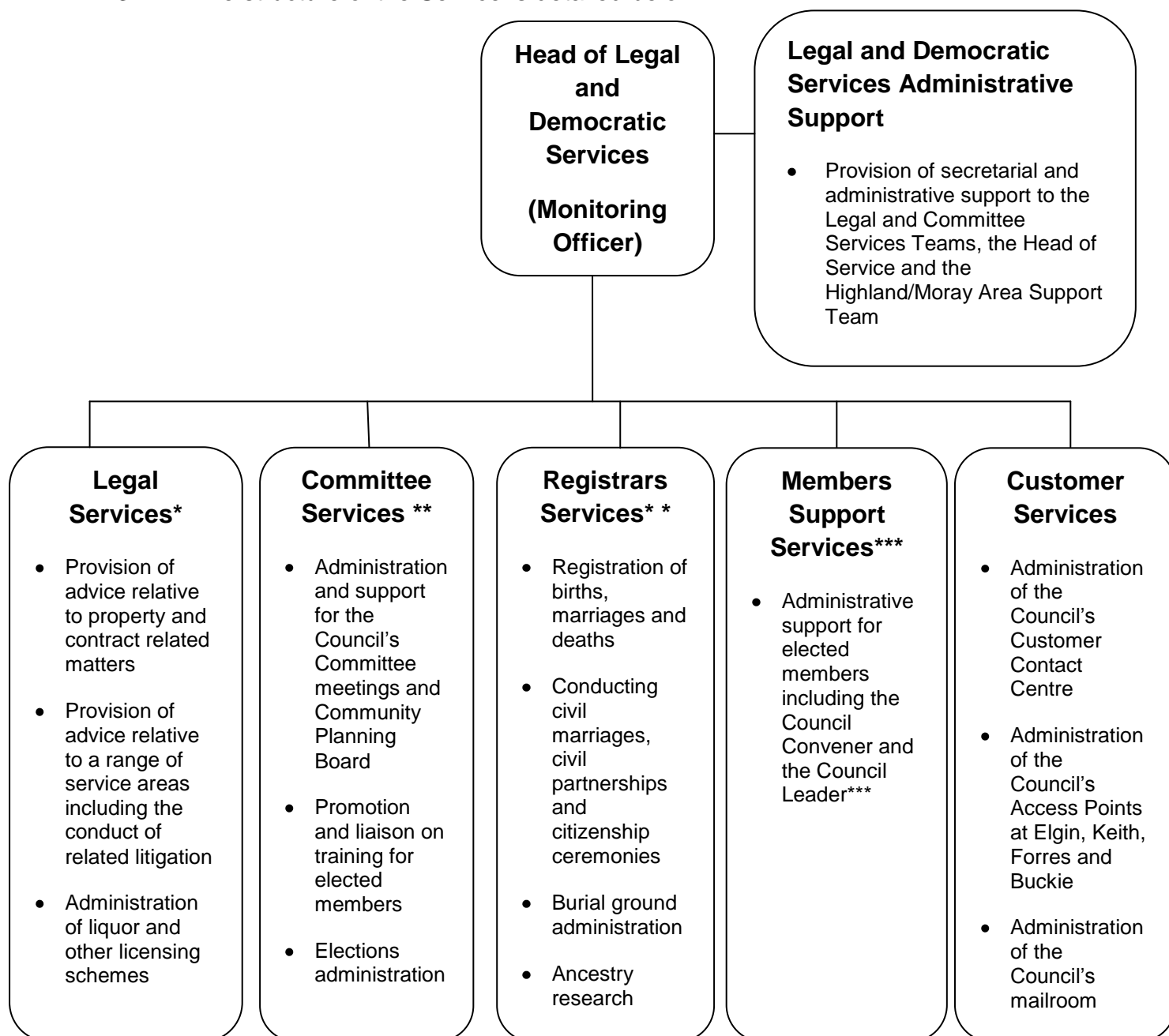
3.1.3 Achievements

It is important to recognise the past achievements of the service as well as the challenges to be faced as staff within the service have proved themselves to be dedicated, highly experienced in their field and fully engaged with the corporate priorities. Recent successes include completion of a major review of civic government fees; reorganisation of the Auchernack Trust which had been inactive for over a decade; favourable resolution of a number of flood compensation claims; successful completion of 2 local by-elections within 12 months; completion of the centralisation of the Registrars Service and effective handling of Social Welfare Fund calls by the Contact Centre on

timescales shorter than those achieved by the Department of Work and Pensions in the midst of the ongoing transfer of customer calls for a succession of other services.

3.2 Structures/Functions

3.2.1 The structure of the Service is detailed below.



* Legal Services comprises two teams – the Property and Contracts Team and the Litigation and Licensing Team – each lead by a Service Manager

** These teams are together referred to as Democratic Services and share a Service Manager

*** This support will be merged with the Legal and Democratic Services Administrative Support Team in May 2014

3.3 Head of Service and Administrative Support

- 3.3.1 The Head of Service is responsible for the overall management, performance and development of the Service, with four Service Managers and one Team Leader reporting to the Head. The Head of Service also works with the Council's Senior Management Team to progress corporate and strategic objectives which in 2013/4 included the review of the Performance Management Framework and initiation of work on a corporate Customer Focus Strategy.
- 3.3.2 In addition the Head of Service is also the Monitoring Officer for the Council. This is a broad ranging statutory role which includes the promotion of good governance through monitoring and review of corporate governance arrangements, compliance with legislative requirements through the monitoring of Committee agendas and constituent reports and the promotion of high standards of conduct amongst elected members by reference to the Councillor's Code of Conduct.
- 3.3.3 Following a structural review of Legal Services in 2012, an Administrative Support Team was formed to better manage administrative and secretarial support for the Legal and Committee Teams and also for the Head of Service. The configuration of support for Legal and Democratic Services within that team was reviewed in 2013/4 and as a result support for elected members will be integrated within that team with effect from the summer of 2014. Staffing below is correct from that point.
- 3.3.4 Staffing resources are as follows:

Posts (FTE)	Grades 1- 6	Grades 7-10	Grades 11+	Total staffing budget
Head of Service	0	0	1	
LDS Administrative Support	8	1	0	
Total Staff	8	0	1	£275k

3.4 Legal Services

- 3.4.1 Staff within legal services deal with a diverse and complex range of work reflecting the variety of issues for which the Council has responsibility, ensuring that at all times the council operates in accordance with the law in an increasingly complex statutory and regulatory environment. The majority of staff time is spent supporting the work of internal clients - the various service departments - on core matters such as the framing and enforcement of leases and the care and protection of adults and children. This work therefore tends to be driven by demands and priorities within client service departments. Legal staff also routinely provide advice and guidance relative to service policies and procedures, governance issues and also act as legal advisers where required relative to business transacted at the Council's various Committees and subcommittees. This work broadly follows the Committee

cycle. Legal Services also provides a service to external clients relative to liquor and civic government licensing. Demand in these areas tends follow national and local economic trends and developments.

3.4.2 Whilst the majority of work carried out within Legal Services may be described as “routine” in that the legal concepts involved are familiar and the work volumes are broadly predictable, Legal Services are also regularly engaged in specific projects of strategic importance which involve less familiar concepts and so require the development of new areas of expertise. The Western Link Road Project, possible development at Borough Briggs and work relative to the Libraries and School Estates Reviews are recent examples. The service must also identify and react to the introduction of new legislation which impacts on the work of the Council, collaborating with service departments to ensure that any changes which are required are implemented, that staff are aware of the new requirements and are properly trained. The new Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill which will enable Health and Social Care Integration, The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill and the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013 are 3 recent examples which have prompted considerable work the timing of which is outwith the control of the service. Service Managers remain alert to the Scottish, Westminster and European legislative programme and continue to meet with Heads of Service to ensure that legal resources are deployed in a managed and efficient manner, with due regard to corporate priorities.

3.4.3 Areas of variable work are often hard to predict and so create challenges in terms of resources. Traditionally peaks in service demand have been met by strict prioritisation of resources, with the result that routine and non-urgent work is often considerably delayed in order to allocate legal resources to urgent high priority work. Where variable work cannot be managed in this way, or where specialist legal advice is required, work may be outsourced to the private sector. Levels of outsourcing vary year on year depending on the volume and complexity of legal issues raised, this in turn being influenced by a range of factors such as budget savings and the nature of economic and service development work ongoing. This is relevant as, although external legal advice may now be obtained at best value to the Council by means of a Legal Services Agreement with Morton Fraser, Solicitors, the maintenance of in house expertise in core work areas remains the most cost effective means of meeting the vast majority of the Council’s legal needs.

3.4.4 The staffing resources are:

Posts (FTE)	Grades 1- 6	Grades 7-10	Grades 11+	Total staffing budget
Property and Contracts	1.5	1.5	3.2	
Litigation and Licensing	1.5	2	3	
Total Staff	3	3.5	6.2	
				£638k

Income from fees for professional services and licence administration offsets the costs of service provision.

3.5 Committee Services

3.5.1 Effective and efficient operation of the council's democratic processes is an often overlooked but nonetheless essential prerequisite to the efficient delivery of services in Moray. In particular, Committee Services aims to ensure that the Council has effective political structures and processes to govern decision-making and the exercise of authority and effective scrutiny within the Council; to timeously convene all official meetings of the Council including the preparation and despatch of all agendas and Committee papers; to promote high standards of conduct for Elected Members and Officers and support the induction, training, and development of Elected Members and also to support the Returning Officer at all General, Scottish Parliamentary, European, Local Government, Community Council and any other elections and Referendums including the forthcoming referendum on Independence. To help meet this demand, during the months surrounding an election the Democratic Services Manager formally assumes the role of Depute Returning Officer on a full time basis.

3.5.2 Whilst the date of scheduled committee meetings is known, the volume of business for each meeting has a direct bearing on the ancillary work required such as the drafting of action sheets and minutes, and this varies considerably from meeting to meeting. Unscheduled Special Meetings and other meetings such as those relative to school exclusion appeals which must be convened within statutory timescales also present a challenge for the service.

3.5.3 The staffing resources are:

Posts (FTE)	Grades 1- 6	Grades 7-10	Grades 11+	Total staffing budget
Democratic Services	0	3	1	
Elections Officer	0	1	0	
Total Staff	0	4	1	£216k

3.6 Registrars Services

3.6.1 The Moray Registration Service is responsible for the registration of births, marriages and deaths for the registration district of Moray, offering the "Tell Us Once Service", a service which, following a birth or death, will allow certain information to be passed to other departments within the Council and the Government avoiding the need for separate notifications, making it easier for the public. The Service also conducts all civil marriages, including civil partnerships, both within the offices of the Registrar and in external licensed

premises. The Service is also responsible for hosting and conducting Citizenship ceremonies for applicants who have been granted British nationality by the Home Office. The Service also undertakes all burial ground administration in respect for cemeteries, including lair purchasing and erection of headstones, as well as undertaking ancestry research.

The Service has operated from a central location in Elgin since January 2013, this change having been implemented gradually following a Council decision in 2009 to centralise the service. The service operates an appointments system, which the public can access either via telephone, e-mail, or face to face. Appointments are available between 9.00am and 4pm. The Service is available in Elgin Monday to Friday and Saturday for pre-booked ceremonies. The availability of appointments in local offices was a little used facility and was withdrawn with effect from 31.3.14.

3.6.2 Demand for the Registration service is dependent on the needs of the public when dealing with a life event. Timing is often critical and so close liaison is required with other parties involved in the event including the Burial Ground Service and undertakers.

3.6.3 The staffing resources are:

Posts (FTE)	Grades 1- 6	Grades 7-10	Grades 11+	Total staffing budget
Registrars Service	3.6	1	0	
Total Staff	3.6	1	0	£131k

Income from fees for professional services offsets the costs of service provision.

3.7 Members Support Services

3.7.1 The Members Support Service provides general administrative and secretarial support for the Council's 26 elected members, specialist support being available for the Council Leader and the Council Convener in their corporate roles. General support includes the arrangement of surgeries, meetings, travel and accommodation, the processing of members' expenses, arrangement of travel and accommodation and maintenance of Councillors' Training Records.

3.7.2 Demand for this service varies from member to member, but is usually at its highest following local government elections and at its lowest during the brief summer committee vacation period. With effect from the summer of 2014 this support will be provided from within the LDS Administrative Support Team and staffing figures are therefore shown in paragraph 3.3.4 above. Oversight of the Members Services allowances and expenses budget which amounts to £ 605,000 per annum will be provided within this team.

3.8 Customer Services

- 3.8.1 The Customer Service Contact Centre was established a number of years ago with the Revenues Service implementing a call handling team to deal with Council Tax and Housing Benefit enquiries. That service provision was later extended to a small number of other service areas, the most significant of these being Waste Services.
- 3.8.2 The Designing Better Services (DBS) initiative sought to significantly extend the range of services where initial customer contact would be handled by a corporate Customer Services Team. Customer Services is now an emerging service area designed to deliver front-end customer contact on behalf of the vast majority of Council services and a supporting role for some administrative tasks such as paper file management, daily mail handling etc. In pursuit of this objective, Customer Services provides initial customer telephone and e-mail contact for a growing range of council services through the Customer Contact Centre. It also manages the Council's central Mail Room and its Access Points at which customers attending the Council's area offices at Elgin, Forres, Keith and Buckie in person are received and assisted.
- 3.8.3 The DBS program of work defines the pace at which the service grows and the way in which it grows. The development of the service centres on the vision and requirements established within the DBS Customer Services business case. Currently, full implementation is scheduled to be achieved by December 2015.
- 3.8.4 Over the next 2 years the work plan for Customer Services will be highly influenced by the implementation of the DBS core project with the emphasis focused on the development of new processes and working practices that enable services to transfer the front-end customer contact and other operational support tasks to Customer Services. The implementation of these projects, the post implementation reviews and thereafter the support and enhancement of the processes will present a major challenge for the service's management and support team. It will also require a high level of involvement and training for operational staff to absorb the on-going changes. The planning for the development and implementation aspects of this work is detailed in the DBS core project documentation, the support element is being developed as part of Customer Service planning.
- 3.8.5 Further challenges will be presented by the merger of Customer Services with the Taxation and Benefits Services. The three main objectives of the merger are as follows:
- To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale and the re-design and re-alignment of processes. Whilst there is a considerable amount of analysis work still to be undertaken as part of the project and this may result in limited redesign, efficiency savings of approximately £200,000 are currently projected. To put this in context, the staffing budget for

Customer Services, Benefits and Taxation totals just over £2.5 million at present.

- To complete the transition from two services to one Service over a 2 year period.
- To maintain service performance and staff morale levels during the course of the project.

The merger, which involves over one hundred staff, will require very careful management if service performance is to be maintained within reasonable parameters. A detailed project plan is in place to enable progress to be monitored and communications with staff will be facilitated through regular bulletins and briefings.

3.8.6 As in many support services, service demand is difficult to predict in an area where the customer base continues to evolve, as is the case with the Contact Centre and Mail Room. External factors also have a significant impact such as holiday periods or inclement weather. As the period post implementation increases for services however, the understanding of volumes and trends develops and this is used by managers to inform staffing levels, the scripts used in customer calls and to generally maximise efficiency whilst improving the customer experience.

3.8.7 Although staffing resources will change considerably over the next two years both as a result of the merger and as more services transfer to the Contact Centre, current staffing resources as at 31.3.14 are as follows:

Posts	Grades 1- 6	Grades 7-10	Grades 11+	Total staffing budget
Customer Services Contact Centre	20	2	1	
Customer Services Support	4	0	0	
Mail Room and Access Points Administrative	24.4	1	0	
Total Staff	48.4	3	1	£1,200k

By the end of the DBS Customer Services project and conclusion of the merger process, staffing overall is expected to reduce by roughly eight full time equivalent posts.

4. BUDGETARY PROVISION

4.1 Revenue budgetary provision for the work of Legal and Democratic Services is contained within a number of budget headings across the Council's Central Services budget. The vast majority of this provision relates to staffing costs (including part payment of professional subscriptions and training) and also to incidental supplies and services such as postages, printing and telephony costs. In a number of areas the cost of service provision is offset by income received for professional services including license administration. Further details of budgets which do not provide solely for staffing related costs or into which income is directed are detailed below. There is no capital budget allocated to Legal and Democratic Services.

4.2 Head of Service - Legal and Democratic Services Administration and Management

4.2.1 This budget includes a small allowance of £8500 relative to specialist services. This allows the Head of Service to pay for limited external specialist services, most commonly specialist legal advice but also expert witness costs and fees for sheriff officers. Given the limitations of this budget, in cases where significant or ongoing external specialist services are required, relevant costs are generally passed onto the client service by agreement, to meet from their own budget.

4.2.2 In addition, a small income budget of £10,850 reflects income generated from the issue of property enquiry certificates. Income in this area has fallen however due to difficulties with the information which Scottish Water supplies for these certificates.

4.2.3 The Head of Service also manages a small budget relative to the Children's Panel in Moray. With effect from June 2013 Moray Council and Highland Council formed a Joint Area Support Team to cover both local authority areas. Highland is the lead authority in this partnership, and the majority of administration for the Area Support Team is undertaken from Inverness. Budgets are reconciled annually. Efficiency savings have been made through this reconfiguration of the support for the local Children's Panel.

4.3 Property and Contracts

4.3.1 This budget includes provision for an average annual income from fees of £22,500. The team seek reimbursement for the cost of time they spend on discretionary legal work such as leases, planning agreements and sale of additional garden ground. Income is variable but is generally within this range.

4.4 Litigation and Licensing

4.4.1 As well as its litigation remit, this team also handles liquor licensing, civic government licensing (which includes the licensing of taxis, late hours catering establishments and public entertainment) and gambling licensing.

Liquor and gambling licensing produce an average annual income of £140,000, with civic government licensing adding to this income by on average £40,000, although income in both areas varies from year to year. A factor in this variation is the level at which licensing fees are set. Fees for most liquor licences are prescribed by statute, but Licensing Authorities are free to set their own civic government fees. In both cases, fees must be set to recover administration costs and so fee reviews are conducted regularly to ensure that fees match costs as far as possible. Costs include not only staff time but costs relative to the software package used to administer these licences. A comprehensive fee review was concluded for civic government licences recently and an annual review is undertaken every autumn for liquor licences. Software costs will reduce in 2014 as part of a rationalisation undertaken relative to the administration of civic government licences which will see the licensing team in Legal Services assume responsibility for the majority of licences issued across the Council.

4.5 Registrars

- 4.5.1 The Registration Service charges statutory fees for the registration of births, deaths and marriages and also to conduct marriage and civil partnership ceremonies, locally set fees being chargeable only for certain ceremonies at weekends and in external venues, although the latter will end shortly. Income of on average £108,000 a year is generated from these fees. The service expects to generate additional income from 2014/5 onwards of £10,000 by charging a small fee for use of the Council's marriage rooms which, unlike other Council accommodation, have to date been provided for free.

4.6 Procurement

- 4.6.1 Legal and Democratic Services is a comparatively low user of third party goods and services. Rather the service tends to be involved in formalising contracts on behalf of other Council services. As a result, very few contracts within the service are affected by the procurement requirements in terms of the Public Contracts Directive and related legislation. Contracts currently falling within procurement thresholds relate to mail services and mail equipment used in the central Mailroom. In addition, following a competitive tendering exercise, in June 2012 the Council entered into an agreement with Morton Fraser Solicitors for a 3 year period. The agreement covers the provision of legal services over a broad range of areas and has enabled the Council to ensure that it obtains best value in the small number of cases in which such services cannot be effectively or efficiently provided in house.

5. HOW WE PERFORM

5.1 Performance management concerns everyone in Legal and Democratic Services. Every member of staff contributes in some way to the performance of the service through individual and team performance. How we perform is assessed in a number of ways:

- Key performance/statutory performance indicators
- Regulatory regimes
- Self assessment
- Local performance indicators
- Benchmarking
- Customer feedback
- Employee feedback

5.2 Key Performance/Statutory Performance Indicators

5.2.1 The Accounts Commission, acting through Audit Scotland, began from 2013/14 to formally monitor performance on a number of new key performance indicators relating to a variety of activities across the Council. These PIs together form what is known as the SOLACE Benchmarking Performance Indicators or the Local Government Benchmarking Framework and they have replaced the Statutory Performance Indicators previously reported and monitored in a number of areas. These new Performance Indicators, which focus largely although not exclusively on cost and value for money, include 2 indicators relevant to Legal and Democratic Services, namely:

- Central Support Services (where these are not held within the service itself) as a Proportion of Council Running Costs – this indicator will provide information about the level of support that is required for front-line services, and includes Legal Services as well as Finance, Human Resources and ICT support. To draw this down to service level as far as possible, an annual local indicator also gives the cost of the legal function (both in house and externally sourced) as a percentage of Council Running Costs.
- Cost of the Democratic Core per 1,000 Population – this indicator shows costs associated with the Democratic Core – in the case of Moray, this includes Committee Services, Members Support, the Chief Executive's office and a proportion of senior managers' time spent on discharging the democratic business of the Council for example in preparation for and attendance at Committee meetings, senior management meetings and so on.

5.2.2 The figures for 2012/13 are due to be published shortly, but those for 2010/11 and 2011/12 were considered at the Council's Audit and Performance Review Committee in March 2014 and revealed that Moray rose within its family

grouping of eight authorities from 5th to 4th in the first indicator (14th of 32 nationally) and fell from 3rd to 4th place in its family grouping (9th to 11th of 32 nationally) in the second indicator. As a result Moray is in the second quartile relative to other Councils across Scotland and mid ranking within its family grouping.

5.3 Self Assessment

5.3.1 Self assessment is a key process within Legal and Democratic Services, particularly in those areas which are subject to external inspection as recognised national performance standards exist in these areas. It is also used as part of the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) approach adopted by the Council. Teams in Legal and Democratic Services conducted a PSIF Review in 2013 and actions from these reviews have either been included in the relevant Team Plan or **Appendix 2** of the Service Plan.

Areas of strength commonly identified across services included a clear understanding of corporate core values; planning and involvement with customers and stakeholders is good although all teams felt there was still room for improvement; learning and experience is shared; staff are involved in service planning and understand their roles and responsibilities and teams work effectively together.

Cross-cutting areas identified for action at Service level (to be included in the Service and/or Team Plans as appropriate) include the following:

- i. A Need for Clear Communication on the Corporate Strategic Landscape and LDS Performance – A Quick Guide will be prepared for staff showing the current key strategic documents and where employees fit into this landscape. In addition a bulletin will be issued six monthly across LDS showing relevant performance information in each team, both that reported and that produced for management information. Although this information has been available at team level to date, staff feel disconnected from the reporting process and have been unable to view their team results in the wider context of Legal and Democratic Services.
- ii. Training and Development was identified as an area for action in most teams. The reasons for this vary from budgetary constraints in Legal and Committee Services to operational constraints in Customer Services. In both areas steps will be taken to work more closely with partners and neighbouring authorities to share good practice and identify innovative approaches to training and development that can be accommodated within these constraints.
- iii. Review and Refine Supporting Information for DBS New Ways of Working – following implementation of DBS a range of documents have been produced including FAQs, Contact Centre scripts, web based information pages and for Legal Services a pro forma advice request. These documents will be reviewed following early implementation

experience to ensure they meet customer/client needs as far as possible.

5.4 Regulatory Regimes

- 5.4.1 Legal and Democratic Services is not subject to direct inspection by an external inspection agency but contributes indirectly to a number of inspections including Best Value inspections, Child Protection inspections and periodic inspections by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners relative to the Council's covert surveillance operations. .

5.5 Local Performance Indicators

- 5.5.1 The Council has developed a Performance Management Framework to ensure that appropriate scrutiny of performance is carried out, and this framework was reviewed during 2012/13. As a result, Legal and Democratic Services have developed a revised suite of outcome indicators within this framework. These are reported within the half yearly reports prepared for relevant Council Committees and are specifically commented upon in the performance reports prepared for these Committees. The suite of reported indicators is produced within **Appendix 2** along with relevant service delivery and improvement actions. Additional Management Indicators have been added for 14/15 as a result of the PSIF process but these are not reported.

5.6 Benchmarking

- 5.6.1 Benchmarking within support services has traditionally been challenging as each Council tends to deliver support to its front-line services in a different way. As regards cost, the SOLACE indicators will now help to address that deficit.

In addition, Moray has participated in work undertaken by SOLAR (The Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators in Scotland) to develop a range of performance indicators for benchmarking of local government legal services across Scotland. Participation levels have increased from 10 authorities in 2011/12 to 18 authorities in 12/13. A range of performance indicators covering cost, outsourcing, staffing composition and training and development have been used, and the information gathered will be analysed and two key performance indicators (the cost of the legal function (legal services provided both in house and externally) as a percentage of the Council's running costs and the cost per hour of providing legal work) reported to Committee for consideration by members.

Performance during 2013/14 is still being assessed but information available to date is as follows:

- Legal Services – Results for 2011/12 revealed that although the costs of the legal function relative to the Council's running costs were comparatively high, the cost per hour of providing legal services was

lower. It is recognised that staffing costs in Moray are high, mainly due to issues around recruitment and retention and the absence of economies of scale in terms of the wide range of work covered, but the staff in post are productive and so the cost per hour was lower and compares favourably with outsourcing costs. Results for 13/14 are currently being analysed and will be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in June 2014. Current indications are that the trend outlined in 2011/12 continued in 2012/13.

- Registrars – An indicator of the accuracy assessed by the General Register Office as achieved by this service in making data entries to the national Database in the registration of births, deaths and marriages has been reported for some years along with benchmarking information. The Moray Registrars Service is consistently ranked in the top 5 Councils in Scotland for its performance in this area and recently achieved a 99% accuracy rating for the period Jan – Dec 2013.
- Customer Services - Although no other Scottish Authority currently operates a Contact Centre with the same service coverage as Moray, in 2012 Customer Services joined a small benchmarking club to enable comparison of its 2 reported local performance indicators relative to the percentage of calls answered against those received and the percentage of those answered within 20 seconds. That group is no longer in operation however. As a result enquiries are currently being made via CIPFA as to the costs of benchmarking on Customer Services. Costs in this respect may be prohibitive however – this has been the experience in other areas. If so, efforts will continue to be made to identify benchmarking partners in Scotland and benchmarking can continue by comparison with previous year's performance.

5.7 Customer Engagement and Responsiveness

5.7.1 Legal and Democratic Services has a range of mechanisms in place to seek feedback from its customers on the service it delivers. These are detailed below:

- Customer Satisfaction Surveys – Customer Satisfaction Surveys are undertaken biennially for Legal Services and Committee Services and annually for Customer Services and the Registrars.

During 2013/4 the following results were gathered and reported:

- ❖ Customer Services – a satisfaction rate of 87.5% for call handling was reported in September 2013, albeit from a very small sample of callers. Satisfaction rates with Access Point services averaging 89% were reported in March 2014.
- ❖ Committee Services and Members Support Services - a satisfaction rate based on 13 member responses of 100% for each of Committee Services and Members Support Services

(73% and 80% very satisfied respectively) was reported in March 2014.

- ❖ Registrars – a satisfaction rate of 100% (89% very satisfied) was reported in March 2014.

All comments made during the surveys have been analysed and addressed in actions reflected at either Team Plan or Service Plan level.

During 2014/5 the following surveys will be undertaken but phased to for internal participants to avoid overload:

- ❖ Customer Services – Access Point Survey and telephone survey results
 - ❖ Registrars – customer survey
 - ❖ Legal Services - client services survey including elected members
 - ❖ Licensing – customer survey including those attending Board/Committee
 - ❖ Committee Services - client services survey
 - ❖ Administrative Support – Informal survey of Elected Members
- Annual Review Meetings are held with Heads of Service and Service Managers which assist with forward planning but also provide a forum for customer feedback
 - Regular operational meetings are held with groups of officers who regularly seek legal advice such as those within Housing, Social Work and Estates
 - Ad hoc satisfaction information is routinely sought on the conclusion of significant pieces of work.

5.8 Employee Survey 2013 and Employee Engagement

5.8.1 During 2013 the Council repeated its biennial staff survey. This is the first survey in which Customer Services have been included as part of Legal and Democratic Services. Previously Personnel (now Human Resources) were included within this service.

5.8.2 The results of the 2013 survey were of concern in a number of areas. In particular job satisfaction fell to 49% (2011 figures for the service as then configured are indicated in brackets followed by the 2013 corporate average – in this case 79%/66%), motivation to 51% (73%/65%), morale to 3% (35%/40%) and job security to 16% (24%/41%). Particular issues were also apparent with line management and supervision and training and development. Whilst these results were based on a lower response rate than elsewhere within Corporate Services, and the downward trend apparent in Legal and Democratic Services was also apparent across a number of fronts corporately, for example as regards job security and training and

development, the results indicated a clear issue with employee engagement. As a result, a series of meetings were held with each team within Legal and Democratic Services to consider what action should be taken to address the issues identified in the survey. At those meetings many reported that the results around morale and job security were significantly affected by the combination of the budget savings at that point in progress including cuts within Legal Services, the Registrars and in administrative support in general across the service coupled with the constant change which the service has experienced over the past two years in particular. Where ongoing concerns were evident, actions have been imported either into Team Plans or in **Appendix 2** of this Service Plan. These actions, supplemented by action to be taken corporately in response to the survey should result in improvements in these areas

5.9 Workforce Planning

5.9.1 Workforce planning is undertaken on an annual basis using the corporate template and takes account of the 3 corporate workforce priorities: workforce transformation and change, employee engagement and developing leadership capacity. Key workforce information is also reviewed as part of the process which includes data on employee demographics (e.g. numbers, age and gender profiles, turnover and absence) as well as consideration of a range of other information related to recruitment, planning, external and national developments, efficiency reviews and any other factors that may reshape the workforce in some way. The service plan reflects the key issues and actions arising from workforce planning activity and identifies gaps, actions required and proposed outcomes with timescales and officer responsibility.

5.9.2 The workforce planning process for Legal and Democratic Services has highlighted a number of issues as set out below:

1 Employee Engagement in Legal and Democratic Services is low. This poses a risk for the service because staff who are not fully engaged are less happy, less productive and more inclined to leave. A range of actions both corporately and within the service have been identified and will be progressed at Service or Team level as appropriate..

2 Turnover in Customer Services and the Contact Centre in particular is high. This is believed to be largely due to a combination of a high proportion of temporary contracts, the stressful environment and constant change faced by staff working in a rapidly expanding service. It creates risks for the service as it takes weeks to train a member of staff, particularly in the more complex call handling areas. In terms of action to address this, the level of temporary contracts is now being reduced, the job design for Customer Services Operators is under review, regular training and development time is being identified and ring fenced and thorough exit interviews will continue to be undertaken to confirm the extent to which these and related measures are improving retention rates.

3. The workforce in Customer Services will be reshaped over the coming 2 years as part of the Project Merging Customer Services with the Revenues and Taxation Services. Effective management of this change, expected to affect over 100 staff, will be pivotal to successful implementation of the project and so will be addressed in phases with change management and staff consultation targeted to each individual phase. In addition each manager is provided with a fortnightly bulletin on progress to enable them to keep their teams fully briefed. Human Resources are supporting the change management process.

4. The Administrative Review, coming as it does in the midst of major change through DBS will have a significant impact on staff across LDS as well as on elected members. The risk is being managed through regular communication with stakeholders and a detailed project plan, again supported by Human Resources.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Our approach to risk management is to identify the risks that might impact on the effectiveness of our activities and services. Risk management takes place in this way at 3 levels: Corporate Level – these strategic risks are assessed by the Corporate Management Team; Service Level - these cross cutting risks are assessed by the Head of Service, and Team Level – these risks are assessed by Service Managers. We also identify risks in relation to the delivery of key operations such as elections through specific risk assessments for these operations.

6.2 The Legal and Democratic Services Risk Registers identify key risks across our services (these are risks graded as 'red' or 'amber' on the risk assessment scale adopted at a corporate level). Actions to address these risks are reflected in this Service Plan.

6.3 'Red' Service risks

6.3.1 There is 1 risk identified in this category relating to issues around the security of paper records which are not currently digitised. Many risks previously identified in this category have been addressed by system changes and improvements. Risk control activity is in place for this risk meantime and the records in question will be digitised before the end of 2014.

6.4 'Amber' Service risks

6.4.1 Risks are identified in relation to ICT/Systems reliance; data security, project planning and provision of adequate skilled cover within small or specialised teams. Operational/continuity risks are identified in relation to service performance.

6.4.2 Risk control activity is in place for these risks.

7. SERVICE PLAN ACTIONS/IMPROVEMENTS 2014/17

- 7.1 The key service outcomes or objectives for 2014-17 are grouped within the headings of:

Outcome 1: Customers receive high quality services which meet their needs

Outcome 2: Through strong governance and probity arrangements, corporate decisions are robust, transparent and compliant with legislative requirements

Outcome 3: Legal and Democratic Services provide best value for our customers

- 7.2 Actions within these priorities are set out for each service in **Appendix 2**. These actions do not simply reflect 'day to day business' but specifically make reference to key projects or improvement work to be carried out in 2014-17. In particular, improvements address changes anticipated through the DBS programme including the aspiration to move from paper light to paperless working and channel shift towards greater self service by both internal and external customers, all broadly within this time frame.
- 7.3 Each section within the Service will develop team plans to reflect the further detail of the work to be carried out to ensure delivery of these projects or delivery of improvements. Team plans will be reviewed by section management teams, with a quarterly report being provided to the Legal and Democratic Services Management Team.
- 7.4 Legal and Democratic Services will review and report Service Plan progress on a 6 monthly basis.

IMPACT OF 13/14 IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

SERVICE OUTCOME 1			
Customers receive high quality services which meet their needs.			
	National Outcome 15	Single Outcome Agreement 2012	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outcome 12: Our services are high quality, continually improving and efficient	Indirect link through National Outcome 15: Councils will provide services which are of high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local needs.	
Projects/Actions that contribute to this outcome – 13/14			
Action		Impact of Improvement/Activity	
Legal Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Assist successful implementation of SharePoint by developing a Document Indexing Protocol for Legal Documents2. Facilitate flexible working by presenting a Business Case on Digital Dictation to the DBS Project Board3. Develop staff skills and promote workforce planning by extending the pilot of Personal Development Plans to all Solicitors and Paralegals		<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. This is ensuring that document creation and naming is handled consistently across LDS, and that a robust approach is taken to movement of document sets/documents to the records centre for archiving2. This is about to go out to tender. The benefits of digital dictation will be considered in this document in 2015.3. This has helped staff to focus on skills development but some have commented on unhelpful duplication between this document, the ERDP review and, for lawyers, the Continuing Professional Development Plan which they must keep. As a result the format is being reviewed.	

<p>4. Promote an appropriate balance between efficiency and proportionate risk management by reviewing authorised signatories to legal documents</p> <p>Committee Services:</p> <p>1. Improve service to elected members by conducting a customer satisfaction survey, analysing the results and preparing an Improvement Plan for implementation</p> <p>2. Launch Petitions Process</p> <p>Registration Service:</p> <p>1. Improve service by conducting a post-centralisation satisfaction survey with external customers, analysing the results and preparing an Improvement Plan for implementation</p>	<p>4. This has freed up management time and allowed legal staff to assume full responsibility for formal documents at an appropriate level. Risk management is continually reviewed and one example of this was a reminder of the need to document each use of the Corporate Seal in the Seal Register.</p> <p>1. Participation levels were low but results from those responding were generally very complimentary. Improvement actions identified related to the members' portal on which work has since been done and in terms of the provision of ICT support for members which has been taken forward through the Members ICT Working Group and as a result new technology will shortly be rolled out to members. Work on further improving the portal is ongoing. Issues as to the consistency of minutes have been raised with committee clerks and will continue to be monitored. Satisfaction with these improvements will be picked up in the next survey in 2016.</p> <p>2. Only 1 valid petition has been received since the process was introduced and that was rejected at the first stage. Further experience of operation of the process will be required before any meaningful conclusions may be drawn on the process.</p> <p>1. Customers commented favourably about service accessibility following centralisation and Funeral Directors who tend to act as agents relative to burials and death registrations reported no concerns about centralisation or the withdrawal of local</p>
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2. Complete, analyse and prepare Action Plan for implementation relative to PSIF self evaluation to further inform service improvements
3. Review opening hours in light of customer satisfaction survey results, considering whether flexible staff working could improve the customer experience
4. Assess opportunity to improve service by offering personalised citizenship, baby naming or renewal of vows ceremonies for an appropriate fee
5. Together with ICT and Environmental Services, to prepare a business case for digitisation of burial ground records for submission to the DBS Project Board

Members Support:

1. Improve service to elected members by conducting a customer satisfaction survey, analysing the results and preparing an Improvement Plan for implementation

appointments.

2. The impact of the PSIF Review actions will be assessed in team meetings, but some improvements already implemented including Joint Legal Services meetings to promote consistency are acknowledged to be of assistance.
 3. Opening Hours have been revised – the office has opened until 5pm since November 2013. Customers commented favourably about service accessibility in the survey.
 4. These options were assessed but not progressed on the view that the market was already very competitive in these areas.
 5. The contract for digitisation is about to be awarded. It is anticipated that this will increase not only efficiency but also customer satisfaction but the impacts cannot currently be assessed. This will be picked up in the 2015 or 2016 customer satisfaction survey depending on the implementation date.
1. Improvement actions identified related to the members' portal on which work has since been done and the provision of ICT support for members which has been taken forward through the Members ICT Working Group and as a result new technology and training will shortly be rolled out to members. Work on further improving the portal is ongoing. As support arrangements for members are about to be reconfigured, a repeat satisfaction survey will be undertaken before the end of 2014 and this will assess the extent to which these actions

<p>Customer Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve service by analysing PSIF results, preparing an Improvement Plan and implementing plan. 2. Improve service by developing and monitoring a suite of performance indicators relative to efficiency and quality in the contact centre, mail room and access points, assessing which are appropriate for onward reporting to Committee 	<p>have improved outcomes for members.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The impact of the PSIF Review actions will be assessed in team meetings 2. This action was not implemented during 2013/4 and will be carried forward in part in the revised plan for 2014-2017.
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SERVICE OUTCOME 2			
Through strong governance and probity arrangements, corporate decisions are robust, transparent and compliant with legislative requirements.			
	National Outcome 15	Single Outcome Agreement 2012	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 12: Our services are high quality, continually improving and efficient • Commitment to be responsible and accountable • Commitment to Leadership and Governance Improvement Programme, to include a focus on effective community engagement and equalities 	Indirect link through National Outcome 15: Councils will provide services which are of high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local needs.	
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective – 13/14			

Action	Impact of Improvement/Activity
<p>Legal Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete review of Scheme of Delegation 2. Complete Review of Standing Orders 3. Submit Monitoring Officer Annual Report 4. Submit Annual Report on Covert Surveillance Activity 5. Review suite of Governance documents approved in July 2012 <p>Committee Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review styles used by Committee Clerks to ensure a uniform style, promoting clarity and consistency 2. Review arrangements relative to the issue of agendas to 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Scheme was comprehensively revised in August 2013 improving corporate governance as the previous scheme did not reflect statutory and structural changes. 2. This action is being carried forward. 3. This action improves member understanding of the role of the Monitoring Officer but as it has now become a routine report, it will not feature in future action plans. 4. This action improves member understanding of the nature and extent of surveillance activity across the Council but as it has now become a routine report, it will not feature in future action plans 5. Minor changes were made to the governance documents which were generally favourably received and commented upon in the 2012/13 Best Value Inspection Report. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This action has been completed but, apart from the absence of adverse comment, it is difficult to monitor the extent to which the action has fully addressed the issue. This will be picked up in the next customer satisfaction survey. 2. The Monitoring Officer now has sight of details of the

better identify the reason/source underlying any delay in submission of routine items with a view to increasing accountability for that delay	submission date of all reports along with the reason for lateness and responsible officer. Very few reports have been issued outwith the normal 7 day window and then only because earlier submission would have been impossible. Agenda setting meetings have been introduced for Full Council and the Policy and Resources Committee and their impact upon late reports is an improvement action for 2014.
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SERVICE OUTCOME 3			
Outcome 3: Legal and Democratic Services provide best value for our customers.			
	National Outcome 15	Single Outcome Agreement 2012	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to provide Best Value for Moray in our services • Outcome 12: Our services are high quality, continually improving and efficient 	Indirect link through National Outcome 15: Councils will provide services which are of high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local needs.	
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective – 13/14			
Action		Impact of Improvement/Activity	
Legal Services: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commence benchmarking with other authorities across a broad range of value for money Indicators through the SOLAR Group 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Benchmarking has been significantly delayed but the results of the 2013 survey are about to be reported and these will give members an indication of how Moray has fared relative to comparable authorities within the group of 18 participating authorities. 	

<p>Committee Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Committee paper distribution arrangements to minimise postal and printing costs and promote access to electronic papers 2. Move to full electronic Committee agenda preparation <p>Members Support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review distribution of mail for members with a view to minimising postal costs <p>Customer Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working with the Head of Financial Services, compare and evaluate proposals for service consolidation with the Revenues Service, recommending best value to the Service Development Group and securing Committee approval <p>All Services within Legal and Democratic Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review opportunities for savings and assess future work styles and technology provision 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This has been completed and many members uplift their papers or rely on electronic agendas. Postal costs have been minimised as far as possible at present. 2. This has been completed with no adverse comment and considerable paper saving over time. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many members uplift their mail but mail scanning through the mailroom to sharepoint has not been implemented to preserve the confidentiality of mail to members. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The high level proposal to merge Customer Services with the Taxation and Benefits Services was approved at Policy and Resources Committee on 21st January 2014 as part of the Tranche 6 review and the detailed project plan was approved at the same committee on 18th March 2014. Assessment as to the extent to which the merger improves outcomes as anticipated will not be possible until the project is fully implemented in 2016. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two additional projects were identified as a result of this analysis namely the administrative review in LDS and the consolidation of licensing administration within legal services. Both projects have yet to be fully implemented.
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SERVICE OUTCOME 1				
Customers receive high quality services which meet their needs.				
	National Outcome 15			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 12: Our services are high quality, continually improving and efficient 			
Projects/Actions that contribute to this outcome – 14/15				
Action	Data Prompting Action	Priority Level	Milestone	Responsibility*
All Services:				
1. (i) Fully implement Share Point (ii) converting server to read only and (iii) keeping reliance on paper records to a minimum	1. Successful implementation of DBS	1	i. May 2014 ii. December 2014	HoS
2. Review Service Web Page contents using public satisfaction survey results and by reference to approach in other authorities	2. Successful implementation of DBS; PSIF Review Action	2	iii. December 2014 March 2015	LSM/DSM

Legal Services:				
3. Repeat Customer Satisfaction Survey for Legal Services including survey of elected members and also for Licensing Services, reporting results and Action Plan	3. Best Value Audit Report 2013 stresses importance of customer satisfaction information; PSIF Review action to include members in Legal Services survey; LDS Employee Engagement Action	2	September 2014	LSM
4. Improve links with neighbouring authorities to share expertise, good practice and training	4. Christie Commission; PSIF Review action; LDS Employee Engagement Action	2	November 2014	LSM
5. Review use of Standard Instruction/Contact Form using satisfaction survey results	5. To ensure new DBS way of working is also meeting internal customer needs	2	October 2014	LSM
6. Implement Digital Dictation	6. Tranche 6 Project Plan	1	June 2014	LSM
7. Implement consolidation of licensing administration within Legal Services and software migration	7. Tranche 6 Project Plan	1	August 2014	LSM
8. Implement Administrative Review Actions including merger of Members Support within the LDS Administration Team	8. Tranche 6 project Plan	1	May 2014	HoS

Committee Services:					
9. Repeat Customer Satisfaction Survey, reporting results with Action Plan	9. Best Value Audit Report 2013 stresses importance of customer satisfaction information Survey is biennial	2	December 2014	DSM	
10. Work with Members ICT Group/nominated representatives to conduct a follow up review of the Members Portal and consider whether further reconfiguration or training is necessary	10. Customer satisfaction Survey Results 2013/14	3	October 2014	DSM	
Registrars:					
11. Publish annual GRO Inspection Results on web pages and in central office	11. PSIF Review action	3	May 2014	DSM	
12. Implement Digitisation of Burial Ground Records	12. Risk Mitigation; Customer satisfaction Surveys; Tranche 6 Project Plan	1	November 2014	DSM	
Customer Services:					
13. Repeat Customer Satisfaction Survey, reporting results and Action Plan	13. Best Value Audit Report 2013 stresses importance of customer satisfaction information; Survey is annual; LDS Employee	2	December 2014	CSM	

	Engagement Action			
14. Improve service by developing and piloting initially as management information indicators relative to email enquiries and return call service	14. Carried forward on reduced scale from 13/14 as unimplemented action	2	March 2015	CSM
15. Review Telephony Strategy including use of automatic voice recognition technology and adjusting service groupings	15. Performance data and increasing demands suggest alternative approaches are required; LDS Employee Engagement Action	1	March 2015	CSM
Legal and Democratic Services Administration and Support:				
16. Conduct Informal Satisfaction Survey of Elected Members and develop Action Plan for any outstanding concerns	16. Survey to assess satisfaction levels post Administrative Review – member request	2	November 2014	HoS
Projects/Actions that contribute to this outcome – to be programmed for 15-18				
All Services in LDS: 1. Repeat PSIF self-evaluation in 2016 Legal Services: 2.Prepare a cost/benefit analysis of case Management Software for Legal Services once Share Point capabilities have been fully				

assessed

3. Consider use of SMS messaging for licensing reminders

*Key

HoS – Head of Service

LSM – Legal Services Managers

DSM – Democratic Services Manager

CSM – Customer Services Manager

Indicators to demonstrate performance for service outcome 1			
Legal Services			
Service Outcome/Statement	Service Committee		Benchmarked
	Report to	Frequency	
1. Customer satisfaction index – a composite indicator compiled from the responses to a set of statements by customers – expectations are met or exceeded	P&R	Biennial	Internally Only
2. Council house sales, percentage of house sales completed within statutory 26 weeks	P and R	6 monthly	Internal Only

Committee Services			
Service Outcome/Statement	Service Committee		Benchmarked
	Report to	Frequency	
Customer satisfaction index – a composite indicator compiled from the responses to a set of statements by customers – expectations are met or exceeded	P & R	Biennial	Internally Only

Registrars			
Service Outcome/Statement	Service Committee		Benchmarked
	Report to	Frequency	
1. General Register Office report – percentage error rate in registration of births, marriages and deaths	P&R	Annual	Yes
2. Customer satisfaction index – a composite indicator compiled from the responses to a set of statements by customers – expectations are met or exceeded	P & R	Annual	Internally only

Customer Services			
Service Outcome/Statement	Service Committee		Benchmarked
	Report to	Frequency	
1. Percentage of telephone calls answered against those received – annually revised target	P&R	6 monthly	Internally Only
2. Percentage of telephone calls answered within 20 seconds – annually revised target.	P&R	6 monthly	Internally Only
3. Customer satisfaction index – a composite indicator compiled from the responses to a set of statements by customers – expectations are met or exceeded	P & R	Annual	Internally Only

SERVICE OUTCOME 2				
Through strong governance and probity arrangements, corporate decisions are robust, transparent and compliant with legislative requirements.				
	National Outcome 15			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 12: Our services are high quality, continually improving and efficient • Commitment to be responsible and accountable • Commitment to Leadership and Governance Improvement Programme, to include a focus on effective community engagement and equalities 			
Projects/Actions that contribute to this outcome – 14/15				
Action	Data Prompting Action	Priority Level	Milestone	Responsibility*
Legal Services:				
1. Complete a Review of Standing Orders	1. Carried over from 13/14 as incomplete action	1	October 2014	HoS
2. Provide refresher training for members on the Councillors Code of Conduct with additional session on planning issues	2. PSIF Review and issue of new guidance on pre-application procedures in planning; LDS Employee Engagement Action	1	December 2014	HoS
Committee Services:				
3. Review Agenda Setting Process	3. Member concerns about late	2	October	DSM

introduced for Full Council and Policy and Resources Committees to examine whether it has met objective of reducing late reports	reports expressed in Committee Services Customer satisfaction Survey and in Committee.		2014	
4. Review Committee Actions Database set up to track progress on completion of committee instructions to examine whether it has met objective of improving communications between CMT, SMT and Committee Chairs on this issue	4. Member concerns and desire to provide fulsome answers as to progress at Committee Question Time	2	October 2014	DSM
Projects/Actions that contribute to this outcome – to be programmed for 15-18				
Legal Services: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Scheme of Administration by end of 2015 2. Biennial Review of Suite of Governance Documents in 2015 				

Indicators to demonstrate performance for service outcome 2			
Committee Services			
Service Outcome/Statement	Service Committee		Benchmarked
	Report to	Frequency	
CS001 – Committee agenda – percentage issued on time or early	P&R	6 Monthly	Internally Only
CS002 – Committee action sheets – percentage issued on time or early	P&R	6 monthly	Internally Only
CS003 – Committee draft minutes – percentage issued on time or early	P&R	6 monthly	Internally Only

SERVICE OUTCOME 3			
Outcome 3: Legal and Democratic Services provide best value for our customers.			
	National Outcome 15		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to provide Best Value for Moray in our services Outcome 12: Our services are high quality, continually improving and efficient 		

Projects/Actions that contribute to this outcome – 14/15				
Action	Data Prompting Action	Priority Level	Milestone	Responsibility*
Legal Services: 1. Continue to work with SOLAR benchmarking Group to refine new benchmarking data and review cost efficiency of service	1. Best Value Audit Report 2013 stresses importance of benchmarking	2	October 2014	HoS
Customer Services: 2. Progress phased implementation of Merger of Customer Services and the Taxation and Benefits Services	2. Tranche 6 Project Plan	1	March 2015	HoS
Projects/Actions that contribute to this outcome – to be programmed for 15-18				

Indicators to demonstrate performance for service outcome 3 {Note: Supplemented by SOLACE Corporate Services Performance Indicators relative to Central Support Costs and Costs of the Democratic Core} Legal Services			
Service Outcome/Statement	Service Committee		Benchmarked
	Report to	Frequency	
Total cost of the legal function as a percentage of organisational running costs (expenditure)	P&R	Annual	Yes
Cost per hour of providing legal work	P&R	Annual	Yes