



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Proud to be **apse** Overall Council of the Year 2017

Democratic Services Directorate Plan 2018 Update

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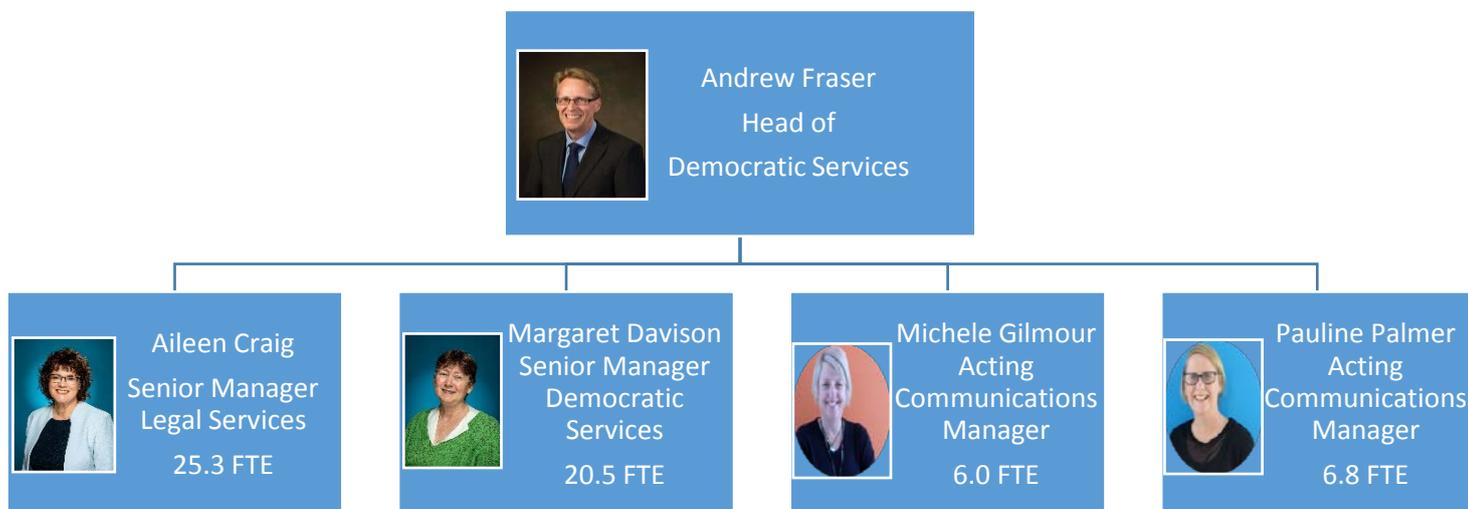
Focus. Passion. Inspiration.



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1. Directorate Structure



2. Foreword

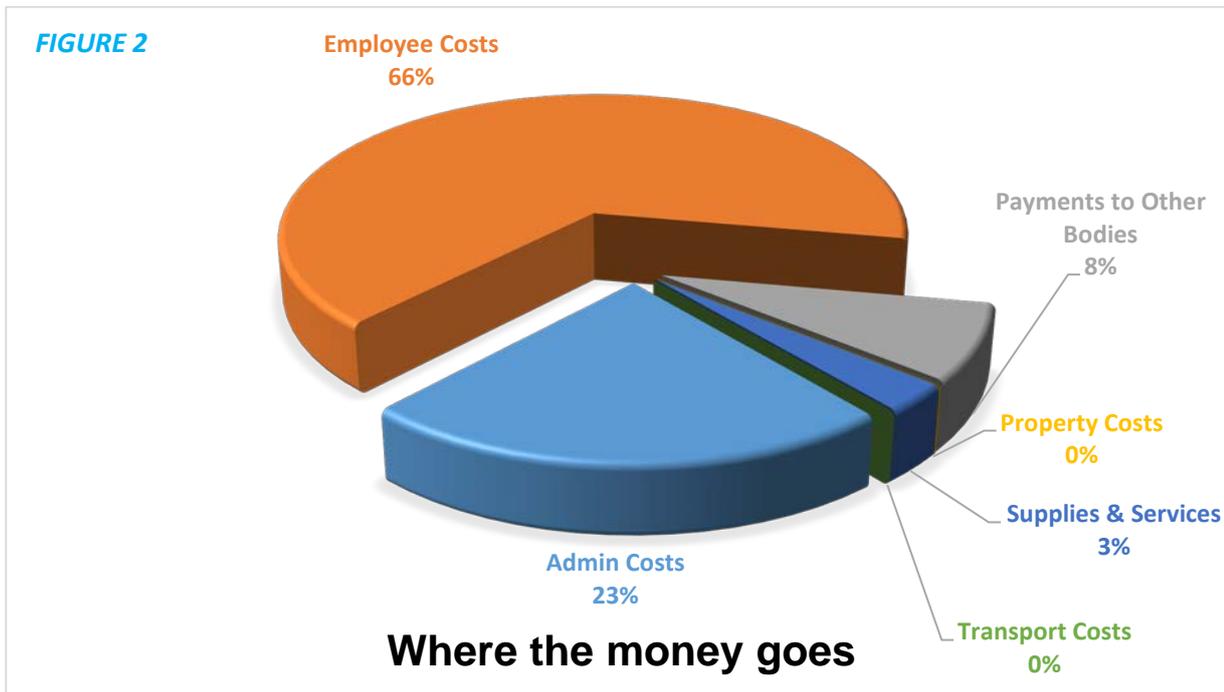
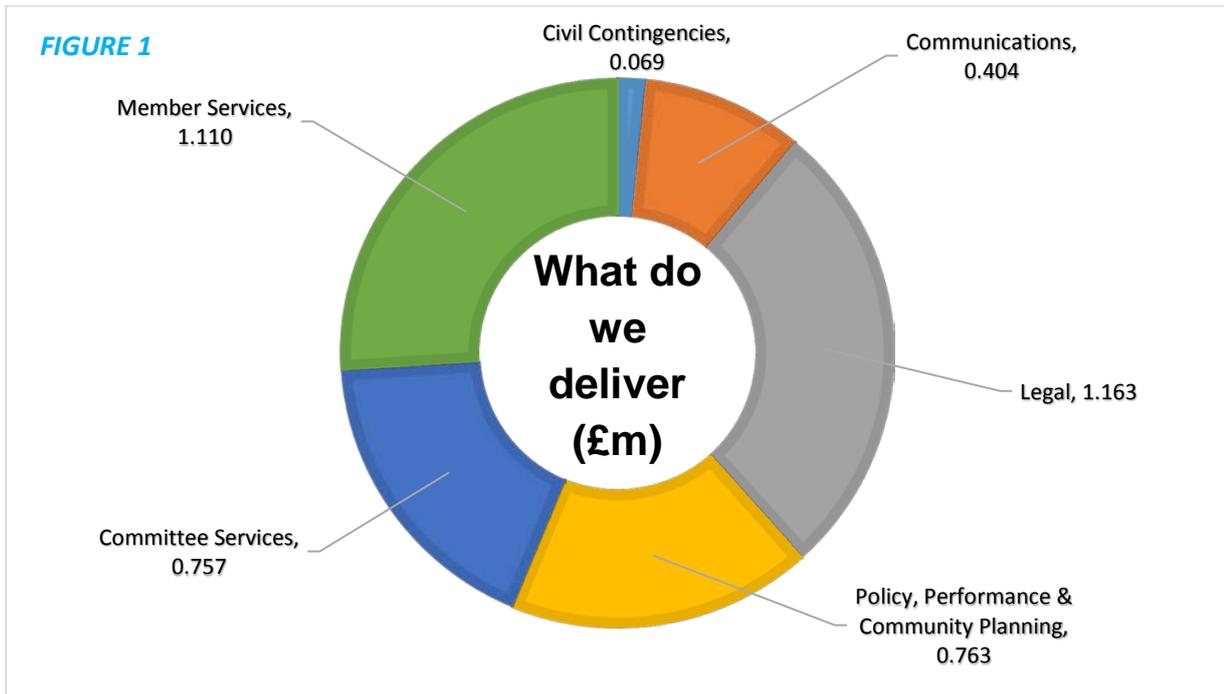
Our mission '*Making it Happen.*' sums up our supporting role in the delivery of the Council's priorities. Being at the heart of the authority, at the interface of Member/Officer decision making processes gives us a unique insight into the Council and its corporate priorities, allowing us to add value and expand the horizon of the possible. In other words, quoting our Communications Team, "to sprinkle the magic fairy dust".

Of course, all this is set against a background of decreasing resources and increasing demand - a need to deliver more for less. This means that we need to be clear about our priorities, those of other Directorates and Members, and how we will deliver them. To enable transformation we need to be flexible and adaptable, and to innovate. At the same time we need to deliver high quality professional services, on time and on budget.

The bedrock for our priorities remains the principles of reducing inequality, continuous improvement, sound governance, and effective communication.

Andrew Fraser
Head of Democratic Services
March 2018

3. Our budget and how we intend to spend it



4. Key drivers for our services

There are a number of factors and legislation which directly influence the work carried out by Democratic Services on a day to day basis, the most significant are:

Supporting Democracy – We organise elections and the Council's decision making and governance processes, as well as managing the interface between Members and officers. As such, the work of the Service, is influenced by the national and local political climate.

Major Transformational Change – Reducing resource and increasing demand requires transformational change. Current examples include the pan-Ayrshire Economic Partnership and the Ayrshire Growth Deal, both of which will result in extensive work for the service.

Partnership Working – The need to work in partnership towards common priorities underlies our support for Community and Locality Planning, Community Asset transfer, and pan-Ayrshire proposals.

Continuous Improvement – A performance culture lies at the heart of a high performing Council. The need to embed this forms the work of our Performance Team and supports the forthcoming Best Value Audit, and assessments such as Recognised for Excellence or PSIF.

Inequalities within North Ayrshire – North Ayrshire has high levels of unemployment, poor health and other inequalities, in particular in the Three Towns and Irvine. The Fair for All Strategy aims to reduce inequality and improve equity across North Ayrshire. Tackling child poverty is a priority for North Ayrshire.

Reputation – A robust Communications Strategy plays a critical role in supporting and communicating changes and in managing both internal and external communications.

5. Directorate Priorities

This Plan identifies how we will contribute to achieving the Council's mission '***To improve the lives of North Ayrshire people and develop stronger communities***' and our vision '***To be a leading organisation defined by excellent and innovative services***'. The plan also outlines our key priorities and how we will support our people to deliver on these. The plan gives an overview of our services, what we aim to achieve, information on our resources, our key actions and the performance indicators we will use to measure how well we are meeting the needs of the communities we serve. A full list of our performance measures and actions can be found in section 12.

5.1. Our Priorities

Democratic Services *Making it Happen*

Strategic Priorities 2018/19

Supporting the Council and its Partners to Make it Happen

- Lead corporate performance initiatives e.g. Council Plan, Best Value Review, Public Performance Reporting
- Support Fair for All, the CPP's Strategy to promote equity
- Support the Council to develop evidence based policy
- Work with staff to improve engagement and wellbeing
- Support delivery of Locality Action Plans and use these, with participatory budgeting and the Community Investment Fund to engage communities and enhance partnership working
- Support equality mainstreaming across the Council
- Successfully deliver elections, particularly the Largs Bid election
- Support the democratic process and outside body appointments

Provide a comprehensive and responsive Legal Service

- Provide comprehensive support for major Council initiatives e.g. Pan-Ayrshire Economic Partnership, the developing Ayrshire Growth deal, new housing initiatives, GDPR, and municipalisation activities
- Finalise and implement an evidence based Licensing Policy Statement and Overprovision Assessment for the Licensing Board
- Re-licence all Personal Licences under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
- Review the Council's governance arrangements
- Through the Monitoring Officer ensure that the Council complies with all legal requirements

Effective delivery of Communications

- Implement the commitments and standards outlined in the Communications Strategy and review progress
- Transform the service to better reflect the increasingly digital nature of communications
- Embed improved internal communications channels to drive and support council priorities
- Enhance and promote North Ayrshire Council to local, regional and national audiences

6. What we do

6.1. Democratic Services

Democratic Services provides a wide range of services which support the delivery of the Council's Strategic Priorities. These services are outlined below.

6.1.1 Democratic Services

In 2015 Committee Services, Policy and Performance, Community and Locality Planning and Council Officers came together as a single team. The work covers:

- **Committee Services and the Ayrshire Area Support Team** – The Team functions at the heart of the Council's democratic core. They play an important part in ensuring efficient and transparent decision making. They also support Elected Members and Children's Panel Members in their roles.
- **Policy and Performance** – The Team supports performance management capacity and a culture of continuous improvement across the Council. The Team also develops strategic policy advice.
- **Community Planning and Locality Planning** and incorporating coordination of Equalities and health improvement of Council employees. The Team supports Community Planning and the development of Locality Planning.
- **Council Officers** – The Team is responsible for the management of Cunninghame House and provision of transport and security services to elected members.

6.1.2 Communications and Member Services

The Corporate Communications Team provides an integrated Communications service for the whole Council. The team cover a wide variety of disciplines and are responsible for ensuring the Council's operations, priorities, values, ambitions and challenges are better understood, both externally and internally. Services include:

- media relations
- internal communications
- marketing
- events support and members services

6.1.3 Legal and Licensing Services

Legal and Licensing comprises three teams – Contracts, Litigation and Licensing. Together they deliver a comprehensive legal service to the whole Council. The Service provides extensive legal support across many diverse areas of law to all Directorates. This includes representing the Council in court and tribunals and fulfils the Licensing obligation for the Council in respect of Liquor Licensing and Civic Government Licensing and Landlord Registration.

6.1.4 Civil Contingencies

In April 2016 South Ayrshire Council became the lead authority for the pan-Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team. Democratic Services link with the Team and is also the single Point of Contact in relation to counter terrorism and the implementation of the 'Prevent' duty.

6.1.5 Key Strategies

We have responsibility for the development and implementation of the following strategies:

Strategy Name	Key Strategy Outcomes	Start Date	End Date	Review Date
Scheme of Administration Scheme of Delegation Standing Orders	■ Ensures proper governance arrangements are in place	2017		Annually
Member/Officer Protocol Councillors' Register of Interests	■ Ensures proper governance arrangements are in place	2017		Annually
Local Outcomes Improvement Plan	■ LOIP Priorities	2017	2022	2018
Fair for All Strategy	■ Promote equity in North Ayrshire	2016		Annually
Healthy Working Lives	■ A healthier and more productive workforce	2016	2017	Annually
Equality Action Plan	■ Equality of protected groups	2017	2018	Annually
Performance Management Strategy	■ To embed a high performance culture throughout the Council	2015		2018
Communications Strategy	■ Ensure the Council is understood externally and internally	2016	Ongoing	Ongoing
North Ayrshire Civil Contingencies , Response and Recovery Plan	■ Effective handling of emergencies	2017	Ongoing	Ongoing
Emergency Control Centre Plan and Emergency Contact Directory	■ Effective handling of emergencies	2016/2017	Ongoing	Annually
Care for People Emergency Support Centre Guidelines	■ Effective handling of emergencies	2016	Ongoing	Ongoing
Hunterston Off-site Contingency Plan	■ Effective Handling of Emergencies	2016	Ongoing	Ongoing
Procedure Manuals (Legal and Licensing)	■ To deliver a comprehensive legal service to the Council		Ongoing	
Gypsy Traveller Unauthorised Encampment Policy (with Housing)	■ To provide a framework for the Council's interaction with unauthorised encampments	2013	2014	
Licensing Policy Statement and Overprovision Policy	■ To provide the policy context for liquor licensing decisions	2013	2018	2018

7. Our Improvement Journey

We believe in continual improvement and constantly look to develop what we do for the community. We also strive to provide value for money.

Democratic Services supported the Corporate Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) self-assessment in 2017. Improvements identified through the self-assessment will be taken forward alongside our preparations for our forthcoming Best Value Audit.

8. Improving Children's Outcomes

We are committed to supporting North Ayrshire Council becoming a **child centred council** where children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.

Significant research including from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation highlights that many factors can contribute to improving outcomes for children and young people and, as such, activity by one or two services within the Council is unlikely to succeed. All Directorates therefore have a role to play in improving outcomes for children and young people.

Significant work is already underway across the Council to improve educational attainment, improve health outcomes, support parents and reduce youth unemployment.

The [Children's Services Plan](#) highlights four priorities shown in the table below and details several promises on how the priorities will be met.

Democratic Services helps improve children's outcomes by the following:

Children's Services Plan priority	What are you doing to support and add value to the delivery of priority	Existing Evidence, e.g. reports for Fair for All
Improve how children and young people engage with school	Provision of legal advice to Educational Services on statutory duties including coordinated support plans	
Help children and young people to be physically active and be at a healthy weight		
Help to address and prevent early exposure to smoking, drinking and taking substances	The Licensing Team work with retailers to minimise under age sales, and the Board takes enforcement action against retailers convicted of selling to under age persons. The standard licensing conditions relating to children are intended to achieve the statutory licensing objective "protecting children from harm".	Licensing Board Equality Mainstreaming Report 2013-2017 and Equality Outcomes Report 2017-2021
Support the social and emotional development of children and young people		
Any other activities which helps improve children's outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CPP supports the overall delivery of the priorities through coordination of the LOIP (and its thriving NA priority) and our support to Fair for All (and its child poverty focus). • Communications have a key role in raising awareness and publicising the Child Centred Council • The Ayrshire Support Team (AST) support the Children's Hearings Service • Supported review of Community Councils to reduce the age of eligibility to 16 to encourage participation of young people • Provide appropriate placements for modern apprentices and graduates • Release of staff for volunteering opportunities • Provide legal advice and support to Services in child protection including child protection orders to safeguard the wellbeing of children 	

9. Managing our Risks

The key risk for Democratic Services is outlined in Appendix A. We continue to be proactive in responding to the financial challenge.

10. Equalities

Democratic Services support the Council to fulfil its public sector equality duty including:

- Coordination of the Corporate Equality Group which has oversight of cross Council equality issues
- Ensuring the Council is meeting the 'Specific Duties' under the Equality Act

- Developing and monitoring the Equality Action Plan
- Production of an annual Equality Report
- Promotion of equalities training
- Supporting services to undertake equality impact assessments
- Continually reviewing the Council's approach to equalities and making it more transparent and visible.

Democratic Services have undertaken a number of actions during 2017/18 to support the Equality Outcomes developed during 2016. The actions identified by all Council Services can be found in North Ayrshire Council Equality Outcomes section of the Council's external site. Actions can be found in the table below:

Equality Outcomes	Actions being taken to support the delivery of Equality Outcomes
In Ayrshire, public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers	Democratic Services positively support a range of arrangements for flexible working including homeworking and compressed hours Democratic Services has corporate responsibility to ensure that employees are able to respond to the needs of colleagues and customers. Equality awareness and training will be proactively promoted to staff. We will review the Equality Impact Assessment online training programme.

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council is required to carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) for new or revised policies or budget proposals and procedures and publish these. [EIA Guidance](#), screening forms and full EIA templates are located on Connects. Democratic Services have completed EIAs relating to:

- Screening of 2018/19 budget proposals
- Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)

11. Workforce Planning

Democratic Services is committed to ensuring it has workforce fit for the future when developing plans to deliver our services.

The *Our Future Workforce* guide outlines what workforce planning is, the current workforce, our priorities for the future and a high level overview of financial and external factors which will impact the Council. The guide is complemented with a case study, our six step methodology and quick reference articles, in topics such as Vacancy Management, Voluntary Early Release, Redeployment and Workforce Management. Topics will continue to be evolved that support Directorates to shape our workforce of the future.

This provides a simple toolkit which helps managers to ensure that resources are deployed in the best possible way to support the delivery of excellent and innovate services.

As part of Workforce Planning we will:

- analyse Council priorities and likely projects, and expected areas of demand and growth;
- undertake a review of structures to deal with budgetary pressures and increasing demand;
- align staffing resources and skills to ensure fit with likely areas of future demand
- ensure that training and development is targeted towards new and developing areas and expected skills gaps
- support health and wellbeing
- address findings of the 2017 Employee Engagement Survey

12. Delivery

Details of the 2018/19 actions and associated performance indicators and risks are shown below.

Key: SP2: Working together to develop stronger communities Enablers.

Performance Indicators

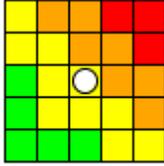
Strategic Priorities	Indicator Ref.	Indicator Description	Actuals			Benchmark	Targets		Lead
			15/16	16/17	17/18		18/19	19/20	
SP2	DP_DS_P19	Percentage of respondents who agree that Locality Partnerships are helping to address local issues and local inequalities			New		Baseline to be established		Community Planning
Enabler	DP_DS_P01	Employee Engagement Level	69.9%	N/A – survey every 2 years	81.6%		82%	84%	Democratic Services
Enabler	DP_DS_P03	Percentage of key corporate governance documents up to date		100%	100%		100%	100%	Democratic Services
Enabler	DP_DS_P04	Implementation of PMF work plan		95%	75% (as at Q3)		100%	100%	Policy and Performance
Enabler	SOL_CORP01	Support Services as % of total gross expenditure	2.17%	1.8%	LGBF Indicator - will be available end Feb 2019		2.5%	2.5%	Democratic Services
Enabler	DP_DS_P06	Percentage of very satisfied and satisfied customers (Legal Services)	95.38%	100%	96%		95%	95%	Legal Services
Enabler	DP_DS_P04	Percentage of Elected Members very satisfied or satisfied with services provided		94.12%	100%		100%	100%	Democratic Services
Enabler	SP_D&AS_A01	Absence rate - Days lost per employee per annum	4.12	4.46	4.48 (as at Q3)		5	TBC	Democratic Services
Enabler	SP_D&AS_B1	Percentage of staff who have had a PPD interview in last 12 months	100%	100%	Will be available in April 2018		100%	100%	Democratic Services
Enabler	SP_D&AS_A03	Total cost of the legal function as a percentage of organisational running costs (expenditure)	0.13%	0.14%			0.29%	TBC	Legal Services
Enabler	SP_D&AS_A11	Average hourly rate of in-house legal team	£46.95	£49.09			£60	TBC	Legal Services
Enabler	SP201516_DS_I06	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days for Democratic Services	95.78%	92.86%	94.0% (as at Q3)		96%	97%	Democratic Services
Enabler	DP_DS_P15	The value of media (print/online/TV/radio) coverage secured for North Ayrshire Council		19,592	12,981 (as at Q3)		Data Only	Data Only	Communications
Enabler	DP_DS_P16	Staff satisfaction levels with internal communications via annual staff Internal Communications Survey		59%	66%		66%	66%	Communications

Strategic Priorities	Indicator Ref.	Indicator Description	Actuals			Benchmark	Targets		Lead
			15/16	16/17	17/18		18/19	19/20	
Enabler	DP_DS_P18	The number of Social Media impressions and engagements arising from proactive digital media campaigns		New PI	Will be available in April 2018		Data Only	Data Only	Communications

Actions

Strategic Priorities	Action Ref.	Action Description	What success will look like	Lead Service	Linked to Risk
Enabler		Lead corporate performance initiatives e.g. Council Plan, Best Value Review, Public Performance Reporting	The Council will have implemented a new Council Plan and received positive audits in terms of Best Value and Public Performance Reporting	Policy and Performance	N/A
SP2		Support Fair for All, the CPP's Strategy to promote equity	Inequity is reduced through the Fair for All Strategy	Community Planning	N/A
Enabler		Support the Council to develop evidence based policy	The Council is developing policy to support its vision	Policy and Performance	N/A
Enabler		Work with staff to improve staff engagement and wellbeing	Further motivated and engaged staff	Policy and Performance	N/A
Enabler		Support delivery of Locality Plan Actions and use these, as well as participatory budgeting and the Community Investment Fund to engage communities and enhance partnership working	Locality Planning, participatory budgeting and the Community Investment Fund is achieving positive outcomes for communities and enhancing partnership working	Community Planning	N/A
Enabler		Support equality mainstreaming	Staff have embedded equalities into their work practices and staff are aware of their responsibilities	Community Planning	N/A
Enabler		Successfully deliver elections, particularly the Largs Bid election	Successful delivery of elections	Committee Services	N/A
Enabler		Support the democratic process and outside body appointments	The democratic process is fully supported	Committee Services	N/A
Enabler		Provide comprehensive support for major Council initiatives e.g. Pan-Ayrshire Economic Partnership, the developing Ayrshire Growth deal, new housing initiatives, GDPR, and municipalisation activities	Comprehensive Legal support is provided for major Council initiatives	Legal Services	N/A
Enabler		Finalise and implement an evidence based Licensing Policy Statement and Overprovision Assessment for the Licensing Board	Licensing Policy Statement and Overprovision Assessment is implemented	Legal Services	N/A
Enabler		Re-licence all Personal Licences under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005	All Personal Licences are re-licensed	Legal Services	N/A
Enabler		Review the Council's governance arrangements	The Council's governance arrangements have been reviewed	Legal Services	N/A
Enabler		Through the Monitoring Officer ensure that the Council complies with all legal requirements	Council is fully compliant with all legal requirements	Legal Services	N/A
Enabler		Implement the commitments and standards outlined in the Communications Strategy and review progress	Transparent and effective communications for all stakeholders	Communications	N/A
Enabler		Transform the service to better reflect the increasingly digital nature of communications.	Communications are more digital	Communications	N/A
Enabler		Embed improved internal communications channels to drive and support council priorities.	Highly engaged workforce	Communications	N/A
Enabler		Enhance and promote North Ayrshire Council to local, regional and national audiences.	North Ayrshire Council is viewed as a reputable and innovative local authority	Communications	N/A

Appendix A – Risks

Risk Code & Title	Resource and resilience	Current Risk Matrix
Risk	As a result of budget cuts the service goes beyond being sustainable and can no longer deliver the required service to an acceptable quality.	 <p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>
Consequence	As much of our work is driven by others, and is essential to deliver their priorities, this will impact on all services. While little of our work can be outsourced, those parts that can be outsourced are at higher cost. Not getting things right first time can also incur greater cost as well as reputational damage.	Current Risk Score Impact x Likelihood
Current Controls	Focussing available resources on key areas of demand	9