

## REPORT TO ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL – 24 SEPTEMBER 2020

### REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE: LIVE LIFE ABERDEENSHIRE

#### 1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 This report recommends changes to the governance arrangements for the oversight of the Culture and Sport services delivered through Live Life Aberdeenshire due to the coronavirus pandemic.

#### 2 Recommendations

The Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 **Acknowledge that the pilot period for the Aberdeenshire Culture and Sport Sub-Committee has come to an end.**
- 2.2 **Acknowledge that the planned review of the governance of culture and sport services was delayed due to the unprecedented impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Live Life Aberdeenshire service.**
- 2.3 **Consider the recommendation from the Communities Committee regarding the responsibility for the oversight of the services provided by Live Life Aberdeenshire.**
- 2.4 **Reaffirm the Council's previous decision that Live Life Aberdeenshire should be the direct responsibility of the Communities Committee due to the changing nature of the service provision and the wider changes in governance introduced corporately and implications arising through the new Council priorities as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.**
- 2.5 **In the event that Council agrees that Communities Committee should have direct responsibility, to agree to disestablish the Sub-Committee and to recall the delegations given to the Culture and Sport Sub-Committee in the Terms of Reference agreed on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 by the Communities Committee with immediate effect.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision-Making Route

- 3.1 The Council, at its meeting on 26 April 2018, agreed that all matters relating to Lifelong Learning & Leisure be remitted to the Communities Committee; that a Business Unit be established to manage those customer facing Culture & Sport services; and a sub-committee be appointed made up of 4 Elected Members (3 Administration and 1 Partnership Member) and 4 externally appointed Members. Officers were instructed to report back on a review of the effectiveness of the arrangements for the delivery of outcomes relating to Council priorities and agreed strategies for Culture and Sport.

- 3.2 The Communities Committee, on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 established a Sub-Committee called the Culture and Sport Sub-Committee to oversee the delivery of services as agreed.
- 3.3 The coronavirus pandemic was unforeseen and due to Government advice, services ceased delivery in their more traditional form on March 23. Many staff were redeployed to assist with the response to the coronavirus pandemic including in the Grampian Assistance Hub and in the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership and Childcare Hubs to support key workers to continue in their essential roles.
- 3.4 On 3 September 2020, Communities Committee agreed to recommend to Council that the services provided by Live Life Aberdeenshire should be the direct responsibility of the Communities Committee and the Sub-Committee should be disestablished.

#### **4 Discussion**

- 4.1 At the meeting of Communities Committee on 20 December 2018, the name of the Business Unit was agreed as Live Life Aberdeenshire.
- 4.2 Performance information has been reported quarterly to the Culture & Sport Sub-Committee. Area level Live Life Aberdeenshire performance information has also been shared and discussed with each Area Committee as a specific element within the recently held informal Directorate Performance sessions. Performance information has not been included with this report as the services have not been running since March.
- 4.3 A Business Plan had been agreed following significant engagement involving Live Life Aberdeenshire staff, wider Council Officers, elected Members and Sub-Committee. The Business Plan set out the vision and commitment to a data informed and local intelligence led approach to delivering services which will address agreed priorities and the best outcomes in, with, and for our diverse Aberdeenshire communities.
- 4.4 Significant revision of the Business Plan agreed in January 2020 is underway in light of revised Council priorities. The vision remains pertinent and aligned particularly, but not exclusively, to the People Pillar and Health & Wellbeing priority of the Council. The delivery model will also be revised to ensure the significant learning and innovation demonstrated throughout the past few months is built on and best value is achieved whilst maximising impact.
- 4.5 The revised Business Plan will include a capital plan element which when delivered will ensure we can have an improved if smaller asset base, fit for purpose to deliver the programmes and activities which will support Live Life Aberdeenshire to succeed in improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities and reduce inequality.
- 4.6 Live Life Aberdeenshire through delivering its Business Plan priorities also supports economic development activity by innovating and introducing tailored packages of activity, for those visiting as well as living in Aberdeenshire to enjoy, and encourages people to stay longer and to return.

- 4.7 To deliver the innovative and outward looking services, programmes and activities which were envisaged to be possible with the establishment of the Sub-Committee, continued collaboration between Live Life Aberdeenshire the wider Council and its partners is desirable and necessary.
- 4.8 The services provided by Live Life Aberdeenshire are not the subject of this report. Instead, the report focusses on the governance arrangements and ensuring their ongoing suitability in light of the pandemic and changes resulting from this.

#### **Review of Governance of Live Life Aberdeenshire**

- 4.9 Work had been underway, prior to the pandemic, on reviewing the governance arrangements to ensure the Sub-Committee was the most appropriate vehicle for oversight of the work of Live Life Aberdeenshire.
- 4.10 Due to the impact of the coronavirus in Scotland, many changes have been made to the operating environment of Live Life Aberdeenshire. The Council has agreed new priorities and the recovery process includes oversight through the Adaptive Services Board and Recovery Reference Group.
- 4.11 Given the unprecedented impact on the delivery of the service and change in Council priorities, the recommendation is that, in the current climate, the Sub-Committee is not best placed to make the decisions on matters within its remit. Decisions require to be made in the context of the Council's response to coronavirus being cognisant of the impact of decisions on other areas of the Council and the budget and so it is currently appropriate that the Communities Committee, who are represented on the Recovery Reference Group, resume the responsibility for the Live Life Aberdeenshire services.
- 4.12 The Chair and Vice Chair of the Culture and Sport Sub-Committee have communicated with Officers and suggested that, due to the unprecedented pressures facing the service and the corporate arrangements that are already in place, the requirement for officers to also report to a Culture and Sport Sub-Committee would only add further time to the response to the challenges faced by the service.
- 4.13 It may be appropriate in the medium term to consider how industry specific expertise might be harnessed to support innovation and business development within Live Life Aberdeenshire, perhaps through a panel or steering group mechanism.
- 4.14 Communities Committee may remit to Officers to consider the timing of introduction any such mechanism and return to Committee with options at a future date.
- 4.15 The review of the governance arrangements was due to be considered by Full Council earlier this year. The decision to establish the Sub-Committee was an integral part of the decision by Full Council to establish a Business Unit for the delivery of sport and culture services and is therefore appropriate that the Communities Committee considered the arrangements and have made a recommendation to Council. Council are being asked to consider the recommendation from Communities Committee and make a determination.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

5.1 This report helps deliver the following Council Priorities.

- Health and Wellbeing
- Resilient Communities

5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			x
Staffing			x
Equalities			x
Fairer Scotland Duty			x
Town Centre First			X
Sustainability			X
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X

5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required as there are no impacts on those with protected characteristics directly relating to the governance arrangements of the service.

5.4 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

ACORP004 - Business and organisational change (including- ensuring governance structures support change; and, managing the pace of change) [Corporate Risk Register](#).

No Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level.

## 6 Scheme of Governance

6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

The Communities Committee have the power to make the decision as all lifelong learning and leisure matters are within their remit in accordance with [Part 2A of the List of Committee Powers](#) D1.1.e.

The Communities Committee can, in terms of the General Provisions 4a of Part 2A of the List of Committee powers, instead of taking a decision, make a recommendation to Full Council in which event the matter shall be decided by Full Council after consideration of the Committee's recommendation. Such recommendations must be made in a report submitted to Full Council by the

appropriate service. The Communities Committee have made a recommendation to Council under this provision to disestablish the Culture and Sport Sub-Committee and to recall the delegations granted by the Communities Committee on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 and it is for Council to make the final determination.

**Laurence Findlay**  
**Director of Education & Children's Services**

Report prepared by      Avril Nicol, Interim Head of Service  
Date                              12 August 2020