

Enabling and Customer Services

Governance and Human Resources

**Service Plan
2026 – 2027**



The principal purpose of the Service is to deliver the following services:

- Business Support
- Business Intelligence and Policy
- Communications Unit (Communications, Web and Graphics)
- Democratic Services
- Human Resources, Pensions and Health and Safety
- Internal Audit
- Legal Services, Licensing Services and Risk Management

And in doing so:

- Align Governance and Human Resources services, strategies, plans, policies and practice to the delivery of Council Plan priorities.
- Provide Governance and Human Resources early intervention and prevention support across all Council functions.
- Promote high standards of governance and compliance across our Council.
- Support the Council with the provision of business intelligence, encouraging evidence-based decision making and forecasting.
- Drive change through review and analysis, working with services to identify and develop evidence-led options to achieve savings and cost reductions.
- Support the Council with strategic planning and policy to enable Council services to achieve the vision, principles and strategic outcomes in the Council Plan.
- Enhance democracy and sound decision-making, by providing advice, guidance and support to the Council, Committees and Elected Members.
- Audit and scrutinise services across the Council to ensure compliance and encourage improvements and best practice.
- Provide professional and technical health and safety support and oversight to the Council and its Officers in managing health and safety legislative responsibilities.
- Provide effective and efficient business support to all Council Services focussing on enabling, process improvement and development of staff.
- Lead on Strategic Planning and Performance for the Council, ensuring the provision of accurate and timely performance information and data to aid Council decision making.
- Provide legal advice, support, guidance and Court/Tribunal representation and where necessary representation at Inquiries across all Council functions.
- Provide assurance regarding the Council's corporate risk and business continuity.
- Deliver and support the licensing service to ensure compliance and customer focussed interactions.
- Delivering corporate communications by managing media, press, campaigns and digital channels.
- Supporting service-led engagement by providing expertise and trusted strategic guidance, governance and tools for teams delivering their own service specific communication.
- Upholding communications governance by ensuring brand consistency, accessibility and alignment with The Way, our communications governance framework.
- Managing corporate channels to maintain a clear, unified voice for the council.

The Governance and Human Resources Service plays a key role in **enabling** a wide range of activity which delivers on the Council's Strategic Outcomes.

The service supports projects within the following Council Plan Strategic Outcomes:

Our workforce and their skills base are growing through:

- Creating a coherent framework for employees to be recruited, managed and developed to support Council Plan Priorities through the development and improvement of the Council's Human Resources Policies, Procedures and Practices.

People have access to services that are modern, efficient and responsive

- By continuing to monitor improvements and investment in Governance and Human Resources Service to build capacity and capability, to improve efficiency, develop specialisms, improve effectiveness and strengthen governance.
- By updating our Licensing Board arrangements and exploring new digital solutions in order to deliver a more effective and efficient consideration of applications.
- By investing in trainees to 'grow our own' trained staff with specialisms in public sector matters.
- By investing in an efficient digital case management system for Legal Services to improve service efficiency and drive down costs.
- By investing and developing digital offerings for incident reporting, health and safety monitoring checks and e-learning this will enable easy and efficient recording and reporting for health and safety compliance, assurance and improvement.

The service demonstrates the Council's Principles by:

Support our Citizens

Working to **put customers at the heart of services** through:

- Improved communication interfaces.
- Enabling participation and engagement in the democratic processes.
- Ensuring the public have access to information and their data is handled appropriately.
- Ensuring that through the governance and human resources early intervention and prevention processes, the Council is able to deliver the best support and outcomes for our citizens.
- Helping to shape our culture and practices, building a highly effective and competent workforce, through the development and improvement of HR strategies, plans and policies.
- Improving governance compliance and internal controls reduce the level of waste in the council allowing funds to be available for those that need them most.

Supporting the most vulnerable and in need through:

- The advice, support, guidance, and court representation we provide in relation to Child Protection, Permanence, Adult Support and Protection and Adults with Incapacity.
- Considering the impact of Council services on the most vulnerable people in society.

Address Inequalities through:

- The ongoing assessment and support to our workforce to address any potential inequalities.
- To be an accredited living wage employer and to pay a fair, secure and liveable wage aligning the pay model to the Scottish Local Government Living Wage.
- Ensuring that all Council services treat people fairly irrespective of protected characteristics.

Support our Communities

Empowering communities and individuals through:

- Providing access for the public to decision making and information to enable them to take a participative role in decisions which impact their lives and the environment.

Work in partnership

- with Local, Regional and National Partners: across a range of functions to ensure our communities and our critical services are safe, protected and compliant.
- With services and communities to develop strategies, plans and policies to achieve strategic outcomes which benefit communities and individuals.
- With our external counterparts to ensure alignment with the high standards of other local authorities

Safeguard our Future

Address the Climate Emergency through:

Working with Members of the Climate Emergency Group and providing advice, guidance on meeting the Council Statutory Guidance, including response to Scottish Government consultations and legislation.

Be a Responsive Council

Communicate openly through:

- Information Governance and Complaints Handling processes which ensure that the Council is a listening, responsive organisation that welcomes feedback from its customers and takes steps to address any issues at the earliest opportunity.
- Public reporting of performance in line with the Council Plan and the Strategic Objectives and linking to Best Value Reports.
- Issuing press releases following Committee meetings, ensuring open and transparent messaging to the citizens of Dumfries and Galloway.
Communication channels we support include web, social media, newsletters and other public information methods.

Maintain high standards through:

- Good governance, evidence led decision making, corporate risk management, business continuity processes, internal audits, open and transparent communications and compliance.

Make best use of resources through:

- Early intervention and prevention support to Council services, ensuring best value, health and safety compliance and improvement and cost avoidance.

Be organised to deliver through:

- A solution focussed and enabled Governance and Human Resources Services, providing advice to Council services, recognising their needs and priorities as well as our obligations.
- Early engagement and participation in service planning to enable and support our people in delivering services effectively and safely.
- Horizon scanning, early intervention and prevention and evidence led decision making.
- Applying lessons learned techniques, developing specialists and deploying appropriate resources to deliver effective solutions.

Resource Plan

The following resources underpin the delivery of the Service Plan:

Budget:

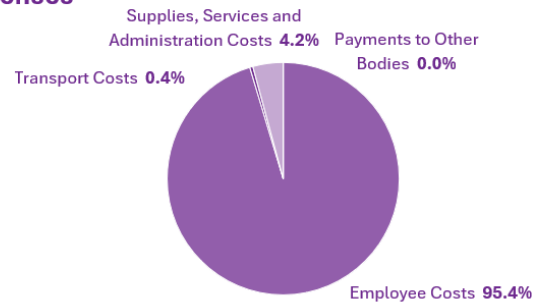
Resource Plan

The following resources underpin the delivery of the Service Plan:

Budget:

	Budget Estimates
Governance and Human Resources	
Budget Estimates Summary	
Service Analysis	Governance and Human Resources
	£
Expense	
Employee Costs	11,119,659
Transport Costs	50,736
Supplies, Services and Administration Costs	490,533
Payments to Other Bodies	750
Expense Total	11,661,678
Income	
Fees and Charges	- 529,753
Income Total	- 529,753
Grand Total	11,131,925

Expenses



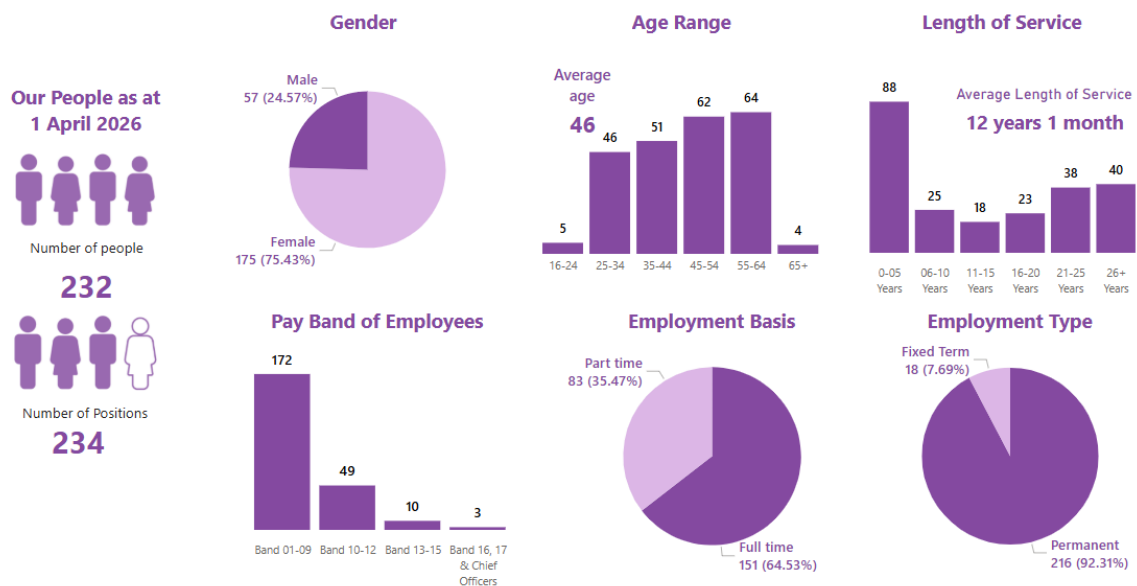
Income



Workforce:

Governance and Human Resources

Our People, Our Positions



Highlights of workforce engagement and planning in 2026/27:

As a team we actively promote the People Strategy Outcomes whereby we strive to

- Provide a positive experience
- Develop our people
- Engage our people
- Support our people
- Recognise good performance

The Service is committed to excellence with regards to workforce engagement and planning and undertakes comprehensive staff engagement through a range of approaches including staff development days, team meetings and 1:1s. The Service also has a staff communications team with representatives from every part of the Service.

Additionally, service leadership and officers engage and plan more broadly through a wide range of internal and external partnership and project working groups, leading to the development of our staff, including Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and promotion of employee successes via appropriate awards.

Governance and Human Resources Service Plan 2026/27 – all data will be recorded and reported through Pentana

Service Delivery 2026/27

What are we planning to do?	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
NEW MULTI-YEAR – Monitoring delivery of PSIF Improvement Plans and identify common themes and share areas of good practice.	Business Intelligence	Council Plan Principles
NEW – Preparation for the new Council Plan	Business Intelligence	Council Plan
NEW – Refresh the Strategic Planning and Performance Strategy and Framework	Business Intelligence	Strategic Planning and Performance Strategy
MULTI-YEAR – Support depopulation work following the completion of the research projects	Business Intelligence	Council Plan / LOIP Scottish Government Population Strategy, Scottish Government Addressing Depopulation Action Plan
NEW – Policy support and guidance on Council Plan related Strategies and Policies due for review	Business Intelligence	Council Plan
NEW – Lead and co-ordinate responses to Government Consultations	Business Intelligence	Council Plan
MULTI YEAR – Complete delivery of the new Information Strategy	Democratic Services	Information Strategy
MULTI YEAR – Implementation of Supporting Attendance Policy in support of organisational efficiency, effectiveness and a healthy workforce	Human Resources	People Strategy
MULTI YEAR – Delivery of a risk based internal audit plan as reported to Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in June 2026.	Internal Audit	Internal Audit Plan for 2026/27
MULTI YEAR – Support to the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercise for 2025/26	Internal Audit	Corporate Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
NEW – Identify and implement a new licensing case management system	Licensing	Council Plan

CARRY FORWARD – Support the development of the Council’s response to fraud and corruption through the Integrity Group	Risk and Assurance	Corporate Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
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Change and Improvement Activities 2026/27

What are we planning to do and what is the intended outcome?	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR – Council Plan Measurement Framework	Business Intelligence	Council’s Principles / Council Plan
MULTI YEAR – Support for the Budget Development Process to meet savings targets and enable service delivery	Business Intelligence / Enabling Change Team	Financial Strategy Council’s Principles
NEW – Participation in the National Self Evaluation Framework Pilot	Business Intelligence	COSLA / Improvement Service
NEW – Lead and coordinate national and local award applications by working with services to showcase improvement, innovation and good practice across the Council.	Business Intelligence	
NEW – Implement Communications Strategy Priority Initiatives/Campaigns	Communications	
NEW – Internal Communications Plan (roll out)	Communications	
NEW – New Social Media Approach (continuing development)	Communications	
NEW – Capital Projects Communications and Marketing Planner/Narrative (devise and implement)	Communications	
MULTI YEAR – To review Health and Safety Policy and Standards in line with programmed review dates	Health and Safety	Council’s Principles
NEW - MULTI YEAR – Delivery of Council Health and Safety Management Audit Programme	Health and Safety	Council’s Principles
MULTI YEAR – To review, develop and update Human Resources Policies in line with review dates	Human Resources	Council’s Principles
MULTI YEAR – Project to deliver workforce efficiencies across a range of HR activities including vacancy management, agency and consultancy, absence management, overtime, job evaluation	Human Resources	Council Plan
MULTI YEAR – Develop and implement an Enabling Manager Programme across the Council.	Human Resources	People Strategy

MULTI YEAR – Review of the Internal Audit function	Risk and Assurance	Council's Principles
NEW – Seek mandate to develop proposals to implement the recommendations arising from the Common Good Review, for approval by Elected Members	Risk and Assurance	Council's Principles

Governance and Human Resources Success Measures 2026/27

Measures

Success Measure	Annual Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
Percentage of internal audit outputs complete in a year.	75%	Annual	Internal
Percentage of Member satisfied with service as measured through Member satisfaction survey	85%	Annual	Internal
Customer Satisfaction levels within Legal Services	80%	Annual	Internal
Customer Feedback Form sent to all completed Internal Audit customers	100%	Annual	Internal
Percentage of jobs advertised and appointed to within 28 working days	80%	Quarterly	Internal
Number of people purchasing annual leave	200	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of people on flexible working arrangements	4,250	Six Monthly	Internal
Council Turnover rate	10%	Six Monthly	Internal
Insight reports delivered to schedule	2	Monthly	Internal
Performance monitoring reports delivered to schedule	9	Quarterly	Internal
Internal Customer Satisfaction with business support provided	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Total number of request for additional Business Support accepted/refused	85%	Monthly	Internal
Maintain size of GovDelivery email list and increase open rate	79,627 Increase open rate by 5% from 39 to 41	Monthly	Internal
Facebook followers of corporate Facebook page	37,500	Monthly	Internal
Instagram followers of corporate Instagram page	3,300	Monthly	Internal
Website page views (to corporate website)	3.15M	Monthly	Internal

NEW – Growth in WhatsApp Channel followers	2,000	Monthly	Internal
NEW – Growth in LinkedIn Channel Followers	6,000	Monthly	Internal

Council Wide Indicators

Success Measure	Annual Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
People			
The average number of days lost per all other (non-teacher) local government employees through sickness absence	9 days	Monthly	Internal / External: LGBF
Percentage of days lost per employee through sickness absence as a percentage of total possible attendances	4%	Monthly	Internal
Percentage of staff who have completed an appraisal in the last 12 months	95%	Monthly	Internal
Enquiries/Complaints			
Percentage of Elected Member enquiries dealt with through the Elected Members Enquiry Service within the agreed timescales	85%	Quarterly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Community Council enquiries dealt with through the Community Council Enquiry Service within the agreed timescale.	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of MP/MSP enquiries dealt with through the Enquiry Service within agreed timescale	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of Youth Councillor enquiries dealt with through the Enquiry Service within the agreed timescale	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of Stage 1 complaint responses issued within statutory timescales	80%	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Stage 1 complaint responses where extension was authorised	Data only	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Stage 2 complaint responses issued within statutory timescales	80%	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network

Percentage of Stage 2 complaint responses where extension was authorised	Data only	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations requests received that have been responded to within 20 working days of receipt	90%	Monthly	Internal/External
Percentage of requests for subject access requests completed within one month	85%	Monthly	Internal
Finance			
Revenue Budget Outturn - Projected Outturn as a % of Budget	100%	Quarterly	Internal
Health and Safety			
Number of Head of Service Safety Visits	4	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number Significant Health and Safety Risk Priorities with Actions Overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number HSE/SFRS Interfaces resulting in legal enforcement action	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of HSE/SFRS Interfaces with actions overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of RIDDOR reportable incidents outside of HSE legal reporting timescales	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Serious Incident Investigation Reports Overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number of Serious Incident Reports with actions overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of RIDDOR Reportable Dangerous Occurrences, Employee Injuries and Diseases	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of 3rd Party RIDDOR incidents	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Reported Near Misses	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Employee Reported Accidents	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Reported Violent Incidents to Employees	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal

Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators

Success Measure	Annual Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
The percentage employees in the highest paid 5% of earners among council employees that are women (excludes teachers)	50%	Quarterly	Internal / External – Scottish Local Authorities and LGBF
Gender Pay Gap	5%	Quarterly	Internal / External LGBF
The average number of days lost per teacher through sickness absence	7.5 days	Monthly	Internal / External LGBF
The average number of days lost per all other (non-teacher) local government employees through sickness absence	9 days	Monthly	Internal / External LGBF

Governance and Human Resources Risk Register

Risk	Risk Factors	Mitigation / Contingency
Failing to ensure the Council complies with statutory responsibility or regulations	Complying with significant range of legislation that has both general and specific application across the Council, affecting reputation; resulting in legal challenge; compensation or fines; complaints or inspections.	Internal Controls - Specialist officers are available and support Council services to comply with the wide range of regulation and legislation the Council is required to comply with. - Clear Standing orders and Schemes of Delegation set out the extent of decision making and the framework in which decisions can be taken. - Policies and procedures are developed and available for a wide range of routine and non-routine matters to assist Members and Officers to proceed with decision making in compliance with legislation.

		• Internal control processes are reviewed by managers and assessed by Internal Audit to ensure they are adequate. • Staff training and developments on essential aspects of compliance are in place and delivered to staff who require this. • Effective complaints procedures are available and internal review procedures help us learn. • Powers of Monitoring Officer are exercised and approach to this is elaborated for officers and Elected Members. Corporate Services professional advisers participate in important project boards to ensure early advice is available and taken account of.
Not ensuring our information security and data protection processes are adequate	• Processing of personal data securely using appropriate technical and organisational measures. • Implementation of records management plan. • Compliance with new general data protection regulations. • Ensuring partners and suppliers comply with GDPR in relation to their work and activity with the Council. • Awareness, recognition and responsiveness to requests from data subjects seeking to exercise their new rights under GDPR.	Internal Controls • Development and improvement of software and processes to comply with GDPR and RMP. • Formulation and implementation of GDPR Action Plan. • Review and implementation of updated Records Management Plan. • Record retention procedures and schedules in place and adhered to. • Regular update and review with ICO guidance and requirements. • Appointment of Data Protection Officer for Council to advise on processes and development and navigate complex regulations and requirements. • Training and education of staff and other ICT users to raise awareness and improve skills.

		• Open approach to procedures and reporting of breaches – including detecting, reporting and investigation. • Review of existing contracts and agreements with partners and contractors to meet GDPR requirements. Development of standard clauses for future contracts and agreements to ensure compliance is embedded on data protection and information security.
Failure to deliver critical/essential services	• Disruption to the Governance and Human Resources functions, beyond the identified maximum tolerable period of disruption. • Disruption may lead to; ○ Loss of life, property, infrastructure & environment ○ Interruption to service provision ○ Disruption to daily life of wider community ○ Increase in complaints from public and Elected Members ○ Possible loss of reputation ○ Possible negative media coverage ○ Possible Legal impacts Potential Inquiries	Mitigation Plan – All constituent elements of the Service have undertaken a Business Impact Assessment and a Vulnerability Assessment in order to identify existing mitigations embedded within normal business practices, as well as any further mitigations which may benefit- from being developed. This will include procedures and action cards as identified by respective service areas. Contingency Plan – Dumfries and Galloway Council has adopted a single Incident Management Plan, which provides the model of response for all Service or Organisational level disruption. Any significant Business Continuity interruption may also be in parallel with a Major Incident response, managed through D&G LRP
Challenges in maintaining a sustainable Workforce which meets demand	• Challenges in the recruitment of competent persons to fulfil roles in specialist areas impacts on the ability of the service to provide effective enabling services. E.g. Legal, HR & H&S	• Council Workforce Plan • Maximising awareness of vacancy opportunities through professional and peer networks

	• Insufficient staffing numbers having a negative impact on the ability to meet demand and provide effective Business Support services • Budget limitations and savings limiting ability to recruit • Increasing demands places additional strain on existing resources	• Budget monitoring arrangements with Finance • Ongoing workload management/resource allocation • Team development sessions to increase awareness and understanding of roles across the team • Quantification of incoming work requests which are not allocated • Effective prioritisation of workloads
Failure to appropriately engage with services or be engaged by services	• Failure of services to engage appropriately in Business Intelligence activities can lead to reputational damage, failure to adhere to the duty of Best Value, and impact Council Plan delivery. • Work pressure resulting in services not responding • Lack of understanding / uncertainty around process and timescales • Communication between services, Business Intelligence and senior management • Extending requests for Business support are meaning that even with effective resource management and movement there is a risk of not being able to support services as they would wish whilst ensuring delivery of priorities for service and council • Service/officers does something against detailed comms governance outlined in The Way (threat to council reputation) • Failure to seek legal support, advice and guidance early enough resulting in reactive working and urgent and sometimes costly immediate deployment of critical resources when a planned approach is more likely to be robust, safer and thorough and provide better outcomes	• Consultation guidance • Strategic Planning and Performance Strategy and Framework • Business Planning Guidance • Budget Savings templates and Budget engagement process • Budget stakeholder engagement process • Strategy and Plans management and guidance • New engagement framework support assisting services to identify priorities • New engagement framework supports forward planning and proactive identified support • Effective resource planning in place to support identified priorities • 'The Way' in place. Helpful Comms guidance, and rules. • Will be added to as issues/new guidance arise. • Rolling out/socialising this year: (presentations to all management teams) • Emails/videos

		• All comms/marketing staff report to Comms Unit, even if funded by service. Clear guidance is on The Way. Solution-focussed conversations ongoing. • Good working relationships focussing on horizon scanning and applying early intervention and prevention techniques
Failure to recognise and adapt to changes in working environment	• Failure to recognise changes in Legislation and Statutory Guidance and support services in implementing change to ensure compliance, affecting reputation; resulting in legal challenge; compensation or fines; complaints or inspections. • Failure to effectively support political change in the organisation, such as change in administration or appointment of Elected Members	• Legal Horizon Scanning • Legal Advice Notes • Service Advice and Engagement with those affected • Management Level Briefings • Elected Member Briefings • Local Code of Corporate Governance • Council Standing Orders • Schemes of Administration and Delegation • Elections procedures • Member Induction processes • Member and Officer Protocols
Failure to manage Budget or to deliver financially sustainable Service	• Failure or services to manage Budgets appropriately • Failure of Services to achieve Income Targets • Failure of Services to manage External expenditure levels • Failure of services to keep recruitment activity and staffing costs within defined limits • Failure to recover costs for subsidised work	• Effective and regular Budget Monitoring including monitoring of income • Robust management of External Expenditure • Regular engagement with Finance • Regular Performance Reporting • Budget Management Training & Refreshers • Vacancy Management • Regular reviews of Fees and Charges • Full cost recovery wherever possible and feasible