

BUSINESS PLAN 2024/27



Delivering Excellence at the Heart of our Communities

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Business Plan. This Plan sets out the direction for Tayside Contracts over the next three years - where we intend to be by 2027, and how we will get there.

We have developed this Business Plan in the wake of the massive post- pandemic challenges of unprecedented inflation, and cost of living crisis, which has provided the most turbulent and unprecedented period of Tayside Contracts' 28-year existence.

Undoubtedly the main challenge to the organisation over the next three years will be the significant financial constraints public services will be under, as the country recovers from exceptional financial borrowing levels and record levels of inflation, in what was already a very difficult financial climate for our constituent Councils and Tayside Contracts.

Therefore, we are under pressure not only to maintain the quality of our current service delivery, but to meet ever increasing demands, improve our performance, and deliver best value for our community. To simply remain sustainable, we need a very clear focus on securing more commercial opportunities from a wider range of customers and maximising the economies of scale to be gained through increase collaboration and sharing services, with our constituent Councils, and with other partners, across the public and private sector.



Councillor Steven Rome
Convener of Tayside Contracts

Our Business Plan sets out how we will achieve our vision through our five strategic priorities:

- Confidence, Trust and Relationships
- Commercial Approach
- Collaboration and Sharing
- Continuous Improvement and Performance
- Communities, Councils and Customers

We are a high performing organisation with a clear vision and effective Elected Member and officer leadership, and robust relationships with our constituent Councils. We have sound governance and a talented and committed workforce. This a strong foundation for us to face future challenges and maximise future opportunities – and ensure that our dedicated and high performing team at Tayside Contracts, keep delivering the vital public service that our communities, customers and colleagues rely on.

Teamwork is essential, and we would like to thank members of the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee, colleagues from our three constituent Councils, our affiliated Trade Unions, and everyone within Tayside Contracts for your part in working together to co-create this Business Plan and helping to shape the future success of Tayside Contracts.



Keith McNamara
Managing Director



Tayside Contracts Business Plan 2024 - 2027

'Plan on a page'

Our Vision: (what we want to be) - A high performing and expanding shared service: proud of what we do and chosen for how we do it

Our Mission: (what we exist to do) - Supporting our communities through excellent services

Our Priorities: The 5C's



Enablers:



Our Values: the 4 P's



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

WHO WE ARE

For the past 28 years, Tayside Contracts has been the collaborative and commercial operating arm for the three Councils in Tayside (our constituent Councils):

- **Angus Council**
- **Dundee City Council**
- **Perth & Kinross Council**

We are not a private company. We are governed by a Joint Committee of 18 Elected Members from the three Councils, under a shared Minute of Agreement, signed by all three Councils.

WHAT WE DO

We are very proud of what we do in Tayside Contracts.

We are the largest civil engineering construction organisation in Tayside - in 2023/24 carrying out **£64 million** of road repairs, maintenance and construction, winter maintenance, and street lighting improvements.

We are also Tayside's largest catering organisation – serving over **5 million meals every year** to schools and community customers - that's nearly **30,000 meals each day**.

Our Facilities Management team keep over **400 buildings** clean and well maintained and help ensure all the occupants are safe.

We provide essential public services to the 420,000 residents in Tayside on behalf of the three Councils.

We currently employ **2,559 PEOPLE**

Our annual Turnover is around **£110 MILLION**

We operate as a business and carry out work for other public bodies, private firms and the wider public. Every pound we make through our commercial activities is reinvested in our public services and local communities. We have generated over £32million in surpluses during our existence, which have been distributed to the three Councils in Tayside.

By doing what we do, and making sure we provide high quality and cost-effective essential services, we are supporting the communities of Tayside.

Our **170 School Crossing Patrollers** help to keep the children of Tayside safe when travelling to and from school.

During the winter we treat on average over **355,000 kilometres of roads**, to protect the travelling public

All of these activities are supported by our highly professional Human Resources, Safety and Training, IT, Finance, Communications, Equalities and Business Support teams – who are invaluable to our success.

OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

VISION, MISSION, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, ENABLERS

This part of the Business Plan summarises what we want to be (our Vision), what we exist to do (our Mission), and how we aim to achieve this, through:

- our Strategic Priorities - these are the most important areas which we need to focus on, to be successful
- our Enablers - the things we need to do well as an organisation, to support us achieve our Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities
- our Values – who we need to be; how we need to act and behave, to achieve what we want for Tayside Contracts and our local communities.

...and how it all fits together, into what we call our strategic framework (see Figure 1)

In summary this part of the Plan sets out how we are going to work together, and shape the organisation, to ensure it is fit for purpose, and we are doing the right things to face the challenges and opportunities that the next 3 years will bring.

Figure 1 – Strategic Framework



OUR VISION

What we want to be...

‘A high performing and expanding shared service; proud of what we do and chosen for how we do it’

Looking beyond the three-year horizon of the business plan, our five-year vision is:

- we will be increasing the proportion of income generated from external (non constituent Council) customers, towards 20% of turnover
- we will be providing an expanded suite of consistent, standardised services, across all three constituent Councils
- we will be expanding on the shared services we currently provide for our constituent Councils, into a new range of services, which are consistent with the strengths and competencies of our shared service model
- we will demonstrate through benchmarking and with other comparators that we have the most efficient model of service delivery
- We will introduce new technologies and innovation such as Artificial Intelligence, to enhance our service provision
- We will continue reduce our carbon footprint, towards Government ‘net zero’ targets

OUR MISSION

We exist to...

‘Support the Communities of Tayside through Excellent Services’

The following parts of the Plan go into more detail about each of our Strategic Priorities, and what more we need to do to achieve these priorities.

Our Strategic Priorities are:

- Confidence, Trust and Relationships
- Commercial Approach
- Collaboration and Sharing
- Continuous Improvement and Performance
- Communities, Councils and Customers

To make sure everything we do is aligned to what we need to achieve, we have a Performance Management Framework which sets out a ‘golden thread’ from our Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities in the Business Plan, all the way to every person’s own contribution to Tayside Contracts’ priorities (see figure 2).

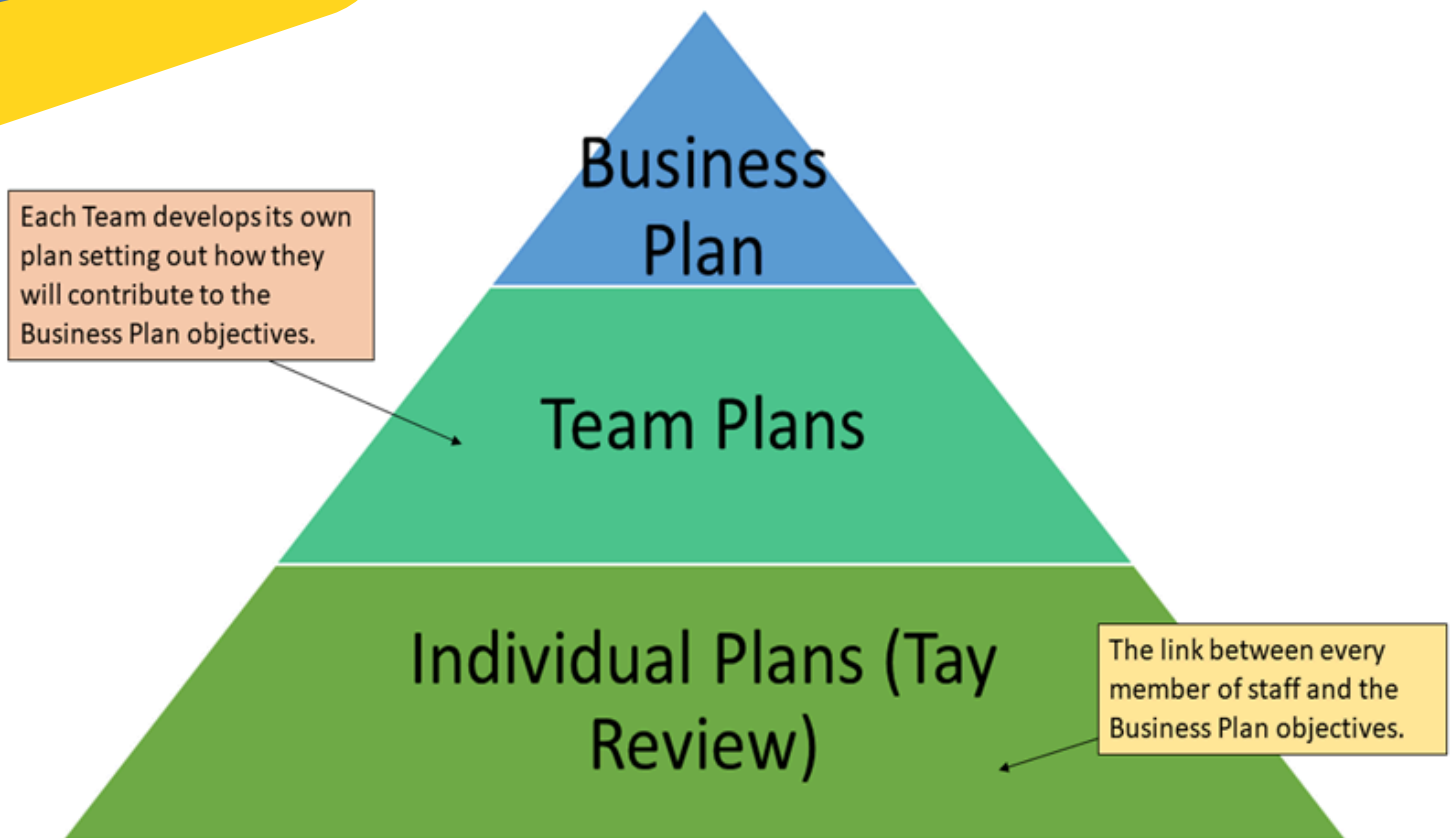


Figure 2 – Performance Management Framework



OUR VALUES

The values we share in Tayside Contracts define who all of us need to be, to help achieve our vision. Values set out how each of us need to behave and work with each other. The collective behaviours of all our people become our culture ('the way we do things round here'), and people will only bring their heads, minds and hearts to work, if they feel connected to our culture.

Through engagement with our people, we have settled on a series of values which we can all share in Tayside Contracts. These are:

People

(how we behave with each other)

- *We treat everyone fairly with kindness, compassion, respect and dignity*
- *We understand the importance of good physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing, and will do what we need to achieve these*
- *We can express ourselves, learn, grow and reach our full potential*

Performance

(how we will give our best at work)

- *We deliver upon our commitments to our customers without sacrificing quality*
- *We take responsibility for our own performance, choices, results, and learn from mistakes*
- *We know that there is always room for improving what we do*

Partnership

(how we work with others)

- *We achieve excellent results by working together, not as individuals*
- *We are stronger together - we welcome the voice and expertise of our partners*
- *We drive success by building relationships and connecting across teams, functions and areas*

Perception

(how we can shape the way others view us)

- *We behave and operate responsibly to maintain the reputation of Tayside Contracts and our constituent Councils*
- *We support our local communities whenever we get the chance*
- *We innovate, embrace opportunity and move with the times*

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

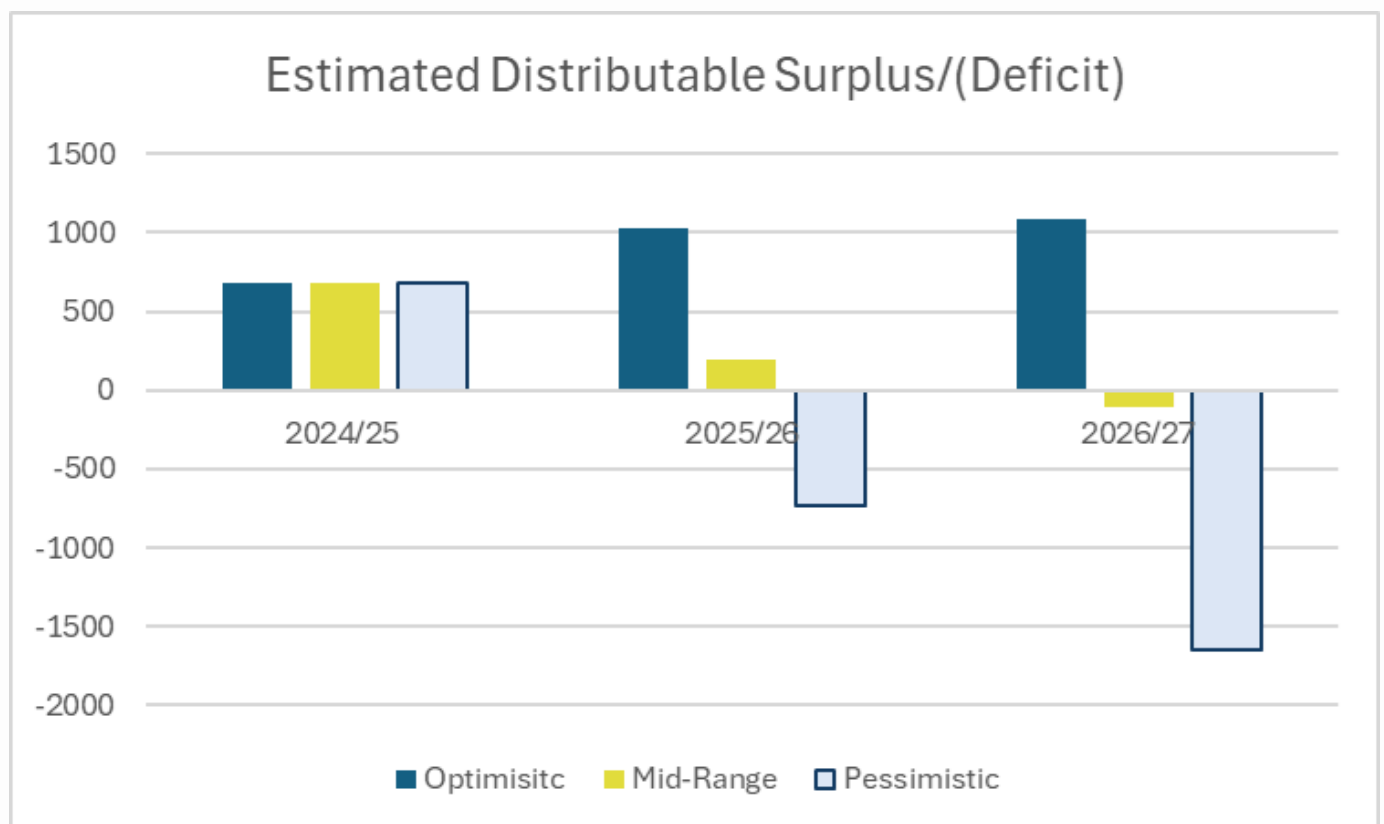
Developing a robust Business Plan that prepares us for the future, requires an in-depth analysis of our external operating environment, the pressures, we will face, and the future opportunities available; and also a review of our strengths and weaknesses, to respond to these challenges. The following is a brief summary of this analysis.

FINANCIAL

Economic forecasts indicate a very challenging period for Scottish local authorities, which will impact on Tayside contracts. For example, the Scottish Government is predicting a £1.9 billion gap in public sector funding by 2026/27 (Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023).

Our three-year Medium Term Financial Plan has analysed our financial future over 3 scenarios- optimistic, 'mid-range', and pessimistic. Under the mid-range scenario, we are predicting a £113,000 potential deficit by year three of the Business Plan period. See Table 1.

Table 1 Estimated Distributable Surplus/(Deficit)



	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Optimistic	675	1,029	1,086	2,790
Mid-Range	675	189	(113)	751
Pessimistic	675	(739)	(1,644)	(1,708)

Our approach, set out in the Business Plan, is to offset this risk by targeting additional income from collaborative services with our councils (which are currently provided by others) by 5% (a £4million increase by year 3), and increasing our income from external (non-core council) sources by 33% (a £2m increase).

If core council funding reduces during this period to such an extent that we can no longer deliver the current level of specified services, we will manage this through reducing our services commensurately (which will in turn reduces our own costs, to ensure our financial sustainability), and/or by increasing our targeted levels of external income, to protect jobs and services.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population predictions for Tayside indicate a higher proportion of older people in future years. This is reflected within the Tayside Contracts workforce, with an ageing profile, which represents a threat to the organisation, without suitable succession planning arrangements in place.

An ageing population can represent an opportunity through the provision of our meals service to the care sector.

Conversely, predicted reductions in younger age population could impact on school rolls, and therefore on the services we provide within schools, particularly catering.



SOCIETAL

As 73% of our employees are on the lowest local authority pay grade, and 81% of our employees are part time, the cost-of-living pressures continue to have an impact on our people. This is evidenced by stress and depression being recorded as the highest cause of employee absence in Tayside Contracts by a significant margin (25% of all absences).

Another pressure on the organisation is the widening differential between private and public sector pay levels, which will be an increasing challenge on recruitment and retention for Tayside Contracts, especially for certain specialist posts which are already in short supply. The recruitment and retention challenges represent a significant risk to the delivery of our services, both for our constituent Councils, and also our plans to expand commercial activities to other public and private sector customers.

POLITICAL

The Scottish Government's commitment to extend universal free school meals to primary six and seven pupils by September 2026, will increase the number of school meals to be provided, which will provide additional income. It will also be an opportunity to provide school meals services to other Councils that may struggle with the additional capacity and infrastructure needed to provide this service within their existing means. The financial pressures on other

Councils may force them to consider the Tayside Contracts meals delivery model, to replicate the £1 million annual financial savings already achieved by the Tayside Councils, in proactively adopting this model.

Scottish Government elections in 2026 and Scottish Council elections in 2027 may introduce changes in legislation and policy, which could impact Tayside Contracts.

TECHNOLOGY

The exponential advancement in technology, such as artificial intelligence and robotics, offers potential significant opportunities for greater productivity and efficiency. However, the increased reliance on technology and rise in cyber security issues, is a significant threat to all organisations.

ENVIRONMENTAL

As the period of this Business Plan approaches 2030 targets for carbon reduction, especially in relation to zero emission vehicle fleets, there will be an increased expectation, and potentially legislative requirements, on Tayside Contracts to advance its carbon reduction commitments.

Climate change is bringing about more frequent and unpredictable weather, with less severe winters, but more extreme weather events throughout the year, which requires a new way of planning and response to these events, to ensure we help protect the communities of Tayside.



CONFIDENCE, TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS



'Proud of what we do, chosen for how we do it'

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Maintaining the trust and confidence of our customers, partners and owners is the foundation of our future success.

We rely on our constituent Councils to trust us to deliver shared services on their behalf – not because we have a Joint Agreement that tells them to do so – but because Councils willingly choose Tayside Contracts, based on their confidence in our ability to deliver excellent services, which provide best value. It is vital not to lose sight of the significant financial and operational benefits that the unique Tayside Contracts shared service model delivers for our three constituent Councils.

Our accountability to the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee is central to sustaining trust amongst our Elected Members - giving them the confidence to support our work and be advocates for our activities amongst our constituent Councils, and beyond; and to work towards the next phase of collaborative and commercial opportunities, which would benefit from being provided by Tayside Contracts.

We are ambitious to grow our organisation by maximising business opportunities from customers beyond our constituent Councils. We therefore need these other prospective customers to choose Tayside Contracts, for how we do things - for delivering best value, high quality services. Promoting a positive image and maintaining our reputation, amongst current and prospective customers, are critical to our ambitions.

Within our organisation, and with our Council partners, a strong collective culture, focus on agreed priorities, and positive working relationships, ensures we achieve the necessary trust and confidence of our Council colleagues. This focus is led through the Joint Committee and the Tayside Contracts Governance and Strategy Group, as well as managing customer relationships, with leaders and operational colleagues at all levels within our constituent Councils.



WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

We are proud of positive trust-building and inter-organisational close working with our constituent Councils, including:

- We commissioned (jointly with Council Chief Executives) an independently conducted review in 2023, which concluded that Tayside Contracts *"is a valid model for going forward...there is no benefit to any or all the Councils stepping away from the Tayside Contracts model"*.
- The confidence of our constituent Councils has been demonstrated by their commitment in extending the shared Tayside – wide Street Lighting Partnership, and also the Roads Maintenance Partnerships in Dundee City to March 2028, and Perth and Kinross to March 2026 with the option to extend to March 2028.
- The strong working relationship between Angus Council colleagues and our vehicle workshop maintenance team keeping Angus Council staff on the move, has been rewarded by Angus Council extending our provision of their fleet services to March 2026.
- We regularly invite joint committee members to suggest areas for further engagement sessions, to provide an opportunity to share more information about our work, and in the last year, we carried out 9 engagement events for members, including two sessions seeking Joint Committee members views on the governance of Tayside Contracts.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

We will continue to develop relationships with our Joint Committee and constituent Councils. Our actions will centre around three main themes: -

- Building Confidence and Reassurance
- Supporting our Councils
- Developing our Self Awareness



BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND REASSURANCE

Demonstrating that Tayside Contracts is a sustainable model for the financial future is essential to maintaining the confidence of elected members and colleagues in constituent Councils. We have developed a Medium-Term Financial Plan, and will continue to review and update this, so we are continually planning and preparing for different financial scenarios.

We will continue to work with Elected Members, both within the Joint Committee, and across the three Councils, to identify the key areas of our activities, where they are seeking further, detailed reassurance of our effectiveness. This includes gathering any views on the future governance needs of Tayside Contracts. We will explore these issues through a programme of engagement events or, if required, more formally through the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee.

We have established a short life Elected Member/ Officer Working Group, to develop a dashboard of key performance indicators which will be shared openly with Joint Committee members and Council colleagues, to demonstrate transparency of our effectiveness, and areas for improvement.

We will update our Communications Strategy, to enhance sharing of Tayside Contracts' positive successes stories

actively with Elected Members, Council colleagues, customers and the media – in a format that best suits these stakeholders. This includes providing clear demonstration of the benefits that this unique model brings, which would not be available if Tayside Contracts did not exist.

SUPPORTING OUR COUNCILS

We will continue to improve the ways we demonstrate transparency and in our financial and operational performance to our Council customer colleagues, building on the performance dashboard we have set in place for the Governance & Strategy group, and improved links between the senior Finance officers in Tayside Contracts and the three constituent Councils. This supports the openness of our activity, and shared opportunities to learn and improve on our performance.

We will work closely with our officer colleagues within the constituent Councils to develop a programme of areas for shared development (such as greater collaborative efficiencies through standardised approaches), via joint sessions, such as workshops and engagement events. Not only will these address key subject areas, they will also break down any barriers, and foster a sense of openness and team building between colleagues in our respective organisations.

A strong link between colleagues in Councils and Tayside Contracts is vital to effective feedback loops and seamless service delivery to our customers, and we will continue to support the strong close working within groups such as the Tri Council Governance Group on Roads Maintenance and Fleet, the Tayside Facilities Partnering Group, as well as the Street Lighting and Roads Maintenance Partnership Boards, and the other customer/ Tayside Contracts client meetings with individual Council customers.

BUILDING OUR SELF AWARENESS

We will make customer relationship feedback more consistent and systematic across Tayside Contracts. We will continue to participate in annual national APSE Benchmarking exercises, so we can compare our performance and learn from others. Our Corporate Leadership Team will analyse, learn from, and act on the findings.

As part of this focus on transparency and learning, we will review our data gathering systems/ reporting for complaints received, and the number of construction works requiring remedial action. This will allow us to more systematically review this data to focus on getting things 'right first time'. and we will regularly share the results with our Elected Members and Council colleagues.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Customer feedback survey results from Council ‘client’ services	New indicator	Measures to be developed		
No of complaints received, broken down by Division, and Council area	26 (2023/24)	Year on year reduction	Year on year reduction	Year on year reduction
Value / number of works needing remedial action (as a % of total turnover) and split by council area	12 out of 600 works 0.32% of turnover	Year on year reduction	Year on year reduction	Year on year reduction



ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -

- ✓ Improve the transparency and accessibility to our performance by developing shared online dashboards of Tayside Contracts key performance information, available to Elected Members and Council colleagues.
- ✓ Update our Communications Strategy, to strengthen our communications with Elected Members, council colleagues, and the media/public, on developments and successes in our activities.
- ✓ Establish a shared development programme with colleagues in constituent Councils, including workshop sessions on areas for further efficiencies/collaboration.
- ✓ Set up a regular feedback and evaluation of Tayside Contracts customer relationship performance for our main stakeholder and customer groups, and report on outcomes.

(see Action Plan section for more detail).





COMMERCIAL APPROACH

'Business Head, Community Heart'

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Expanding on our commercial business is an essential part of our vision for the growth of the organisation.

As the commercial trading arm of the three constituent Councils, we are in a positive position to be leaders in commercial activities - i.e. activities which generate a surplus (profit) from services we provide to customers outwith our constituent Councils. Also, as our Facilities Management and Construction services are statutorily defined as 'trading accounts', legally we are required to establish at least a breakeven position in our finances over a three-year rolling period.

Our Medium-Term Financial Plan demonstrates that there is a risk of a shortfall in our trading position in year three of this Business Plan, therefore the need for Tayside Contracts to extend our commercial approach, to generate additional income, is more vital than ever. We aim to increase our commercial income by £2m by 2026/27. Increased commercial income raises the level of surplus generated for our constituent Councils, and we pride ourselves that every pound we make through our commercial activities is reinvested in public services and local communities.

We recognise that increasing our commercial work also protects us from making savings in jobs and services. This safeguards our valuable services from the risk of declining local authority funding, and reduces costs to all, through sharing our overhead costs around a wider cohort of customers.

Our '**commercial approach**' is not just about attracting new customers and new business opportunities. We are focussed on delivering the best service to retaining existing customers, as well as ensuring we maximise efficiency and productivity, to offer both commercial customers and our constituent Councils, to ensure the best price and best quality.

By taking a commercial approach with a true public-sector ethos, we will also be a stimulus for community wellbeing, as well as sustainable, inclusive economic growth - by creating new jobs, more apprenticeships, and more investment in public services.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Our experience and expertise in sourcing and delivering services commercially has achieved the following benefits:

- Over 5 % of our income comes from commercial activities, representing over £5m per annum generated from external customers.
- In 2022/23 we increased our external commercial income by 26%
- in the last 10 years we have achieved a surplus of £15.6 million, with that surplus being distributed between our constituent Councils.

We have successfully won several tenders to undertake construction contract works for numerous local authorities and private bodies in recent years, - including Falkirk, Stirling, Fife, and Aberdeen City.

In 2023/34 our Construction Division turnover increased by £13 million.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

We will take forward our commercial approach through two themes: -

- Deliver on Priority Commercial Opportunities
- Develop our Commercial Creativity, Skills and Culture

DELIVER ON PRIORITY COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our priority is to expand our commercial business - focussing in on making best use of our expertise, experience and strengths in our core competency areas (Construction, Catering and Facilities Management). Our focus will be on penetration of existing markets, and developing markets for our existing services, rather than embarking on higher risk activities of expanding into new products and services and diversifying into unknown markets. This ensures our attention and finite capacity are devoted to areas with the lower risk, and higher chances of generating commercial income.

We appreciate our 'unique selling points' may need to vary for different markets (e.g. private or public sector customers) so our approach will be tailored accordingly for these different markets.

We will aim for business opportunities that offer longer term relationships, rather than chasing multiple short term 'hand to mouth' work. Longer term commercial activities also give us an opportunity to build our skills and gives us more financial future certainty.

We will prioritise developing opportunities for maximising our assets and using additional capacity commercially over longer periods, such as for evening shifts and weekend working, and extending the operational hours of our flagship Tay Cuisine Meals production centre, to provide high quality meals for large-scale, high-volume customer demand.

The wide range of further commercial opportunities available greatly exceeds our capacity to develop and deliver these successfully, without compromising our current high levels of excellent service and existing valued customers. Therefore, we will prioritise our commercial opportunities, to create a 'pipeline', where we target options with the highest value, margins and longevity of relationship, and with the most realistic prospect of success - based on analysis and objective criteria. We will share this scheduled prioritisation plan priorities with our constituent Councils and the Joint Committee.

As a key part of our commercial growth, we will assess our current approach to customer engagement, and develop a new customer relationship plan to analyse the market, and promote our brand, showcase the services we can provide, and attract more business, using expert commercial assistance from public and private sector advisors.

We recognise the need to be entrepreneurial by looking ahead at future opportunities. Our Joint Committee members have a key role in supporting this future in view of their closeness to national political leadership and thinking. An example of future opportunities is the rollout of Universal Free School Meals to Primary 6 and 7 pupils by September 2026. This could put pressure on other Councils to cope with the additional capacity needed, where our Tay Cuisine model offers a 'ready-made' solution.

DEVELOP OUR COMMERCIAL CREATIVITY, SKILLS AND CULTURE

Feedback from our wider leadership group highlights the value in reaffirming our commercial approach across the organisation and improving employee understanding of the importance of a commercial approach for the organisation’s future sustainability. This includes taking time to consider analytics around opportunities and margins and having awareness of costs at all levels. We will also carry out a commercial skills analysis to identify gaps in our activities what we need to invest in, to strengthen our commercial approach, and entrepreneurial culture across the organisation, and cascade that throughout the organisation.

To support an entrepreneurial approach in our activities, we will encourage all our people, from all parts of Tayside Contracts, to propose creative commercial ideas, for further development, or more effective working, to improve our commercial competitiveness.




HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

Performance indicators

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Income from commercial (non-constituent Council) sources	£5m	£0.5m increase	£1m increase	£2m increase

ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -

-  Review and report on pursuit our commercial prioritisation analysis, with an agreed pipeline of targeted commercial areas of existing Business opportunities reporting to Governance and Strategy Group and Joint Committee.
-  Develop a an updated customer engagement and marketing plan for Tayside Contracts.
-  Carry out a commercial skills analysis for the organisation, and develop an action plan, including cascading training through the organisation.

(see Action Plan section for more detail).



'Sharing the Gain'

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Scottish Government, the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy, and Audit Scotland, amongst others, tell us that greater collaboration, and standardisation of services, between organisations offers a route for Councils to reduce costs whilst maintaining service quality. If savings are not found through innovations such as sharing and standardisation of services, then Councils will face even more challenging funding decisions. Tayside Contracts has been recognised as an exemplar model of shared service provision by several public bodies, including the Scottish Government.

Collaboration also offers other benefits such as:

- improved innovation opportunities by pooling investment across partners.
- providing the scale to access best practice and expertise that a shared service can offer, which may have been lost from Councils, due to restructuring and turnover of employees
- ensuring a large, flexible workforce available to deploy to priorities across the area, such as extreme weather events, and
- having access to specialist staff that individual partners would struggle to supply, if operating independently

The uptake of shared services provided by Tayside Contracts is not consistent between the three Councils. Therefore, there is an incentive to drive consistency and standardisation, through collaborative working between Tayside Contracts and our constituent Councils, which will unlock efficiencies, share best practice, and allow us to offer services to our communities, to an extent that would otherwise be unachievable in the current financial climate.

With the financial pressures facing Councils there is an opportunity to consider other public facing services that could benefit from the Tayside wide standardisation and economies of scale, which the Tayside Contracts shared service model offers.



WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Our longstanding record in delivering shared services has been supplemented by recent activities, including:

- We have continued to expand the services we provide to our constituent Councils, generating additional income, and delivering more efficient services. Examples include School window cleaning service for all three Councils now delivered in house, rather than outsourced, and provision of Facilities Management services for Dundee City Council Community Centres, by transferring of 16 Resource Assistants to Tayside Contracts.
- We can demonstrate our collaborative success through the UK-wide awards and nominations we receive. In recent years our Dundee Roads Maintenance Partnership and Fleet Transport Services won UK -wide APSE awards; with the Street Lighting Partnership, Transport Services, and partnership working with Angus Council, also being shortlisted for APSE awards.
- Our innovative cook freeze unit at Tay Cuisine (also known as the Central Production Unit, or CPU), has been operating successfully for all three Councils for two years, and is delivering year on year cost reductions of nearly £1m to the Councils, as well as 'future proofing' the Councils from the pressures of an additional 1.5 million meals with the introduction of Universal Free School Meals for all primary pupils

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

We will enhance our collaboration activity through four main themes: -

- Targeted Extension of Key Shared Services
- Reaffirmation of roles and relationships with Council partners
- Develop our Capacity and Skills
- Develop a Shared Programme for the next phase of Collaborative Opportunities

TARGETED EXTENSION OF KEY SHARED SERVICES

Analysis has shown that there is a considerable variation between each of the constituent Councils over the services they use Tayside Contracts for.

With the risk identified in our Medium-Term Financial Plan, of a potential funding deficit position in later years, we will address this risk, by focussing on the opportunities for our constituent Councils to consistently take up the services provided by Tayside Contracts, as the agreed shared service of the three councils. Approximate estimates indicate that if all our constituent councils used Tayside Contracts services consistently, this could represent up to £10 million in increased turnover for Tayside Contracts.

If all three Councils engaged Tayside Contracts for the same services, they could benefit from the opportunity for standardisation across Tayside, economies of scale, sharing best practice, and potential cost savings. It also means that Tayside Contracts as an affiliate organisation of the three Councils is supported, and local employment is maintained, rather than outsourced to organisations outwith Tayside.

Therefore, our focus is to engage with officers and our constituent Councils, to make the business case for those Councils engaging Tayside contracts as the provider of these services, on a consistent basis. This will be tackled on a priority basis, with those areas of activity which represent the highest spend, being targeted initially.

REAFFIRMATION OF ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

The 2023 independent review of Tayside Contracts highlighted that - at certain levels - Council colleagues do not see Tayside Contracts as an 'affiliate organisation' of the three Councils. It may be that over time, colleagues who had previously a strong working relationship with Tayside Contracts have moved on, and with the significant turnover of employees, the perception of Tayside Contracts as being an affiliated part of the Council has diminished.

Therefore, we will re-connect with Council colleagues, to re-affirm the role of Tayside Contracts, with functions delegated to it by the three Councils, as well as evidencing the benefits offered by our shared services. It is also important to capture views of Council colleagues as to why certain activities are not awarded or offered to Tayside Contracts, especially if this reticence is due to a perception that Tayside Contracts is not delivering a quality service or best value. Where these concerns can be evidenced, these will be addressed by Tayside Contracts, to restore confidence in making Tayside Contracts the provider of choice.

Therefore, managing the customer relationship with Council colleagues will be a strong feature of our future work.

DEVELOP OUR CAPACITY AND SKILLS

We acknowledge that the establishment, and continued success of, shared services requires a particular set of skills. We will assess our skills and capabilities, and where necessary, train and develop our people to hold the skills and mindset needed to work successfully in partnership with our Councils; develop robust business cases; implement initiatives successfully and keep a strong customer relationship management.

DEVELOP A SHARED PROGRAMME OF NEW COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

The range of further collaborative opportunities are considerable, and we will work with our constituent Councils to develop a future 'pipeline' of shared opportunities into a programme, agreed by both Elected Members and senior officers across the three Councils, which fit with our business strengths, and will enhance Tayside Contracts' future financial viability. We have developed a draft shared criteria to assess and prioritise the different opportunities, and we will work with Councils to develop an agreed programme of collaborations, for the next 3 years and beyond.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

Performance indicators

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Tayside Contracts' additional income through increased shared services with constituent Councils	£85m*	£0.5m increase	£2m increase	£4m increase

*The income for 2022/23 is used as the baseline, as income levels in 2023/24 were skewed by the impact of excess storm-related works in Dundee and Angus during the year.

ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -

- Identify opportunities for further shared service delivery by Tayside Contracts using a criteria-based priority programme of collaborative opportunities, in partnership with constituent Councils.
- Develop a Plan for engaging with colleagues in constituent Councils, to emphasise the financial, operational and resilience benefits of maximising Tayside Contracts as the service provider of choice, and identify barriers to Council taking up the services provided by Tayside Contracts.
- Develop a new skills development/training programme to ensure we successfully deliver on collaborative opportunities, to provide Best Value to constituent Councils.
- Develop a new longer-term plan for further expansion of Tayside Contracts shared services into other suitable areas of activity

(see Action Plan section for more detail).

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE



'Think like a customer, act like a taxpayer'

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

With the Scottish Government's financial projections estimating a gap of £1.9 billion in public sector funding by 2027, the ongoing delivery and future sustainability of public services requires us all to be more efficient, innovative and open to change, in order to make the best use of the limited resources that we have and provide the best service to our customers and communities. From a commercial perspective, the more efficient and effective we are, the more competitive we will be.

As most of our services are publicly funded, we understand that we must gain maximum value from the money available and be accountable to the public for the spending decisions that we make and the services that we deliver, to ensure our statutory Best Value duty. Although we have a track record in making savings and efficiencies (£25m in last 12 years), we need a focus like never before on improving performance, through greater innovation, continuous improvement, maximising efficiencies, and rigorous performance management.

Through meaningful, regular engagement with our customers, we can identify and focus on what matters to them and deliver services in a way that better meets their needs and represents value for money for them. By doing this we retain our existing customers and attract new ones.

Using performance and benchmarking data will allow us to target areas for greatest improvement potential.

It is important that our constituent Councils, our Elected Members, and the public understands what we are doing and why, what we are doing well, and what we can be doing better. Therefore clear, timely and accurate performance reporting and communication is vital, to build and retain their trust in what we do.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

We have a track record of managing change. Recent examples include:

- We have in place a Change Plan, which rigorously reviews and sets out our key areas for transformation, efficiencies, increased income and service reductions. Progress is monitored by both the Tayside Contracts corporate leadership team and the governance and strategy group.
- As part of our change plan activities, we have realised financial savings efficiencies and increased income of £1.7m in 2023/24.
- Following a review, we reduced the number of funded posts on our Facilities Services Division (FSD) Establishment by 193 posts, reducing labour costs by £1.35m. We were able to achieve these reductions through robust vacancy management, thereby ensuring our existing employee's jobs were not at risk as we reduced the posts.

- We have carried out a review of our organisational structure, which, when implemented, will realise annual financial savings of £500,000 per annum.
- Our recent work in reducing our building footprint, and sharing accommodation and costs with partners, will offset our annual costs for direct property overhead recovery by £500k per annum.
- School meal uptake across all three areas has increased by over 10% in the last year.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Our focus on continuous improvement will centre on four main areas: -

- Making the Best Use of our Assets (property, vehicles, plant etc)
- Evidence based Performance Prioritisation
- Supporting Councils to increase school and community meal uptake
- Unlocking Innovation within the workforce

MAKE BEST USE OF OUR ASSETS

In our drive to protect jobs and public services, we will focus on the best use of our physical assets – properties, vehicles, equipment and technology. Through robust asset management approaches, we will ensure diminishing resources are targeted at priorities, and improving our efficiency.

Working with our Council colleagues we will build on our recent successes, and extend this approach to investigate

sharing other facilities such as depots and offices across Tayside. We will look to extend these discussions to other public services, where shared accommodation and facilities could deliver mutual savings.

Experience in other operational settings has shown that maximising the use of vehicle and equipment assets creates more capacity and opportunities for significant efficiencies. We will look at options for extending longer operating hours to maximise the usage of our equipment, and therefore increase capacity and reduce costs.

EVIDENCE BASED PERFORMANCE PRIORITISATION

Focussing on evidence gathering and review will inform us on what needs to improve. Evidence will drive our priorities, plans, actions and spending. As part of a positive leadership culture at all levels, we need to ensure data and evidence is challenged, and performance targets are adjusted or reviewed in light of what data and evidence actually tells us.

Measuring our performance and sharing this with partners means we will know whether we are driving continuous improvement in service delivery and achieving best value for public resources. Measuring what is important (not just what is easy to measure) is vital to informing what needs to improve.

We will ensure that self-evaluation is embedded into our partnership working and extend robust self-evaluation and self-awareness will help us to understand our strengths and areas for improvement which will give the highest value returns. Benchmarking will be a feature of our improvement approach as we use formal and informal networks to identify the best performance, which we can adapt to improve our own activities.

SUPPORTING COUNCILS TO INCREASE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY MEAL UPTAKE

The importance of providing school meals to ensure young people are sufficiently nourished focus on their educational development, is undisputed, and is the basis behind the Scottish Government commitment to free school meals for all Primary pupils. School meals fuel young people's learning.

We have a vital role, as the provider of over 5 million school meals per year, to support Councils in their statutory duties to promote school meals, and especially free school meals. Although school meal uptake is encouragingly increasing, we are still some way from maximising uptake levels. Improving School meal uptake requires a partnership approach, and we will work our Council colleagues to build on the joint School Meal Review and Action Plan.

UNLOCKING INNOVATION

The most creative ideas come from those closest to the work activities, as they best understand what improvements are possible, to streamline what we do, and cut out unnecessary steps. Even small innovations can make a difference, especially when we add them all together. We will encourage our people to act on their ideas, and opportunities to improve what we do; not to be scared of coming forward with ideas, and to be supported in taking action – whilst appreciating that not every idea will work out, and not to apportion blame to those trying hard to make changes for the better.

We will foster a culture and develop processes to support the inception and cultivation of initiatives that maximise our efficiency, effectiveness, and simplify, standardise and streamline everyday systems and processes across our business.



HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Change Plan Implementation	£1.7m in savings, efficiencies and income (2023/24)	Meet projected savings levels	Meet projected savings levels	Meet projected savings levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % Uptake of Meals (of School Roll), by Council area % Uptake of Free School Meals (of FSM Entitlement and UFSM), by Council area 	Angus 48% Dundee 51% PKC 55% Angus 59% Dundee 52% PKC 63%	Increase uptake	Increase uptake	Increase uptake
APSE Benchmarking Catering, Cleaning, Transport	% indicators in median/upper quartiles (New indicator)	increase no of indicators in median/upper quartiles	increase no of indicators in median/upper quartiles	increase no of indicators in median/upper quartiles

Secondary schools online ordering



ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -

- ✓ Complete the implementation of our organisation structure review
- ✓ Carry out the 'next phase' review of our property requirements, including sharing opportunities with partners
- ✓ Implement our Change Plan with annual reviews to identify new proposals
- ✓ Introduce performance dashboards, to improve our performance management, measuring and reporting processes, and identify priority areas for performance improvement
- ✓ Review our school meal action plan jointly with Councils, to increase pupil uptake of healthy, safe meals, to 'fuel learning'

(see Action Plan section for more detail).



COMMUNITIES, COUNCILS AND CUSTOMERS

'Creating Community Wellbeing'

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

As one of the largest employers in the area with a firm commitment to corporate social, ethical and environmental responsibility, we are in a good position to make a positive contribution to a stronger, healthier, economically viable and more equitable society. We all share the responsibility to accelerate the transition to zero carbon, to protect future generations from the catastrophic effects of climate change.

We have a responsibility to support the wider ambitions of our constituent Councils and play our part in delivering the Council's strategic aims around equality and fairness; economy and education; community empowerment; tackling climate change, helping people through the cost-of-living crisis, and supporting stronger, more resilient communities. We are also well placed to contribute to the wider ambitions for Tayside, expressed in the Tay Cities Deal, to drive inclusive, sustainable economic growth.

Embracing these wider responsibilities also makes commercial sense. As more public sector procurements include community benefit clauses in their tender assessments, we need to demonstrate we can meet these requirements, when we bid for public service contracts.

Supporting employability and skills initiatives also makes good business sense. We have an ageing workforce, and similar to many public services, we have a shortage of skills in key technical posts.

Therefore, connecting to the wider Tay Cities Deal agenda gives us an excellent opportunity to help people into employment, diversify and rebalance the age profile of our workforce, whilst 'growing our own' skilled staff, for the future sustainability of the organisation.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Some examples of the steps we have already undertaken to support these wider ambitions are: -

- Since its launch in January 2023, our Community Fund has helped over 100 local charities and community groups across Tayside, providing services to these groups such as signage, meals for community events, and small-scale construction works – all at no cost to these groups.
- Working with Tay Cities Deal and local Council employability colleagues, we have participated in a range of Job Academies, to encourage people back into employment. 70% of those who completed the job academies applied for jobs with us, and of those who did apply, 28% secured a job with Tayside Contracts.
- We have been recognised as an approved official Young Person's Guarantee Employer, by Developing the Young Workforce, working with Tay Cities Deal colleagues.

- We have worked closely with Councils with initiatives to tackle obesity, through positive healthy eating choices. For example, we supported the Dundee City Council/NHS Tayside Best Foot Forward initiative, which was nominated for a Dundee City Council Outstanding Service and Commitment Award in 2023.
- We have delivered on the actions in our Climate Change Plan, for example, 33% of our small vans fleet is now provided by electric vehicles, and 95% of construction materials which we excavate are recycled (around 70,000 tonnes per annum).

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Working with our Councils and other parties, we will help support the needs of our communities and the most vulnerable in our society:-

- Equality, Diversity and Community Empowerment
- Economy and Education
- Environmental sustainability and tackling climate change

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Many of our staff work with communities on a day-to-day basis. It is everyone's responsibility, regardless of their role, to help build more resilient communities, as traditional public service funding is under pressure. We will extend the promotion of our 'Tayside Contracts Community Fund' to support community empowerment, by offering local community groups our services (e.g. catering for events, small-scale construction maintenance jobs), at no cost to the community groups - with groups from all parts of Tayside given an equal opportunity to access this support. We will also continue to promote our Volunteering Policy to give colleagues a chance to contribute directly to supporting local communities.

We are fully committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging good community relations both in employment and in the delivery of our services. The communities we deliver services to are increasingly diverse and we believe that a diverse workforce reflective of our local communities will result in real business benefits. A diverse range of people from different backgrounds can bring a range of skills, knowledge and ideas.



ECONOMY AND EDUCATION

Building on previous work with local suppliers, we will engage local businesses further, to understand the barriers, and how we can support them becoming part of the supply chain to Tayside Contracts, thereby promoting local economic benefit and employment. We will review our community benefit clauses on our tender documentation, considering best practice from other organisations - to ensure that sufficient weight is given to fair work, community benefit and procurement equality duties.

The Tay Cities Deal sets out an ambitious agenda to increase employability and skills. We will continue our work with Council Employability teams and Skills Development Scotland to create pathways to give guidance, training and employment opportunities with Tayside Contracts.

We will continue our work with Councils' Education Services, as well as local schools and Universities to make connections with Tayside Contracts, so we add value to the education experience, support career paths and positive destinations, and attract a new generation of local talented people to work with us.

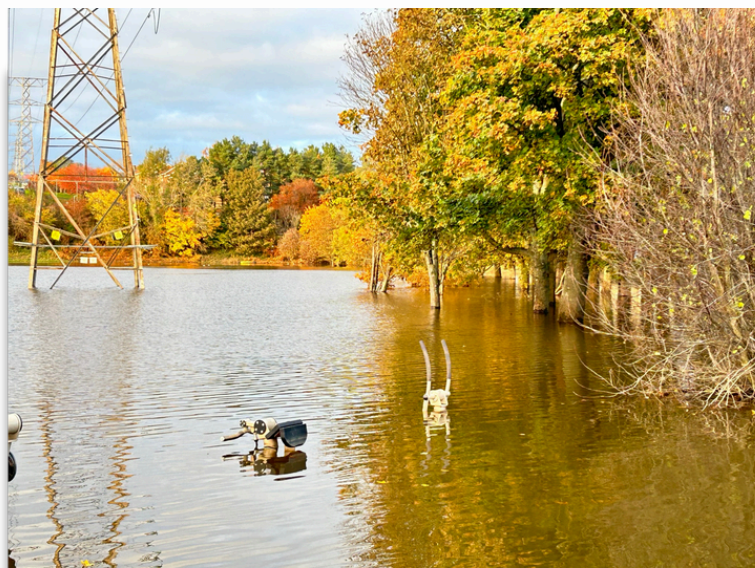
**Committed
to creating
opportunities
for young people
in Scotland**



ENVIRONMENT

We will continue our progress on the transition to zero carbon through our Climate Change Plan, to meet our constituent Councils' clear ambition to respond to the Climate Emergency. A key element in this transition will be to move our 200-vehicle fleet away from petrol/diesel dependency. We will continue our work with our constituent Councils and TACTRAN to explore electric and Hydrogen fuelled alternatives for our fleet, including ensuring the charging/ fuelling infrastructure to support the transition.

Climate change is already here, and we work with partners in the Tayside Local Resilience Partnership to respond to extreme weather such as flooding and winter weather conditions. Severe weather incidents are expected to be more prevalent, and we will review our preparedness to these challenges.



HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Level of local (Tayside and surrounding area) procurement spend %	42%	43%	44%	45%
No of local SMEs used by Tayside Contracts	241	+3%	+3%	+3%
Living wage employer accreditation	Accreditation achieved	Accreditation retained	Accreditation retained	Accreditation retained
Number of local Community activities supported via Community Fund and other support	51 in 2023/24	+2%	+5%	+7%
Number of people supported through placements and employment	32 people applied for jobs following Job Academies, or other employability initiatives	+3%	+5%	+8%
Carbon Emissions	New Indicator - baseline to be established	Year on year reduction	Year on year reduction	Year on year reduction

ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -

- ✓ Carry out a further set of engagements with local businesses to promote their role as local suppliers to Tayside Contracts and understand the barriers that exist to them joining our supply chain
- ✓ Extend the promotion of Tayside Contracts Community Fund to support more local community groups
- ✓ Work with Tay Cities Deal, and local Council Employability teams to support people into working with Tayside Contracts
- ✓ Work with Councils to promote healthy meals and healthy choices in schools
- ✓ Implement actions in our Climate Change Plan, to reduce our carbon footprint, towards net zero by 2045.

(see Action Plan section for more detail).



ENABLERS - LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP - WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

Our leadership has to evolve, for Tayside Contracts to survive the changing conditions, and thrive into the future. Our leaders are role models for the organisation's values, integrity, social responsibility, relationships and strategic direction. Our leaders need the ability, skills and capacity to continuously innovate, and to grow our organisation, in order to achieve our vision – working together as one team and not in organisational silos.

Leadership is a particular area of focus and potential risk at present, as the organisation has undertaken a rigorous review of our leadership structure, and is currently implementing the outcomes, which will result in several senior posts being occupied by new people. Therefore, managing this transition, and instilling a collective, positive leadership culture, is an important early action of this Business Plan.

We recognise that 'command and control' leadership will not deliver the organisation we need to be - leadership has to be shared throughout the organisation. To successfully evolve, our leaders need to reflect on, and change our own behaviours - to be willing to push power, responsibility, and development of new ideas throughout the organisation.

Strategic leadership is vital for our new leadership cohort to be a proactive organisation, rather than constantly reacting. Our leaders have to focus most of their attention on the strategic issues that require changes in organisational culture, structure, and resources, because of ever-changing external threats and opportunities. Distributing leadership throughout the organisation releases senior leaders' capacity to tackle these higher-level challenges.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW

Our leadership development journey has been in progress for years, examples include:

- Our recent review of our leadership structure will not only reduce costs, but also ensure that we are fit for purpose for the future, and that we have experienced, dynamic individuals in key posts, having benefitted from our succession planning preparatory work.
- We carried out a collective review of our leadership roles and responsibilities between the Executive, corporate and senior leadership teams, including devolving responsibility to those closest to the operational activity. These changes have worked well.



WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Our three priority areas are:

- Developing Leadership Behaviours
- Distributed Leadership Throughout the Organisation
- Succession Planning

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS

Through development sessions, involving leaders throughout the organisation, we will jointly map out how we share and show the leadership traits we wish to see in ourselves and each other. This will be supported by focussing on leadership attributes at 'one to one' sessions, and more formally at the annual Tay Review meetings.

As an organisation we must also accept that some mistakes may be made along the way and acknowledge that a 'blame culture' will stifle change and innovation, and therefore hinder or derail any progress. We recognise the importance of learning from our mistakes.

DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP THROUGHOUT THE ORGANISATION

To support innovation and resilience, we will foster a shared belief that "leadership" should rest with whoever is best positioned to exercise it, regardless of job title. We will look to all levels of the organisation to demonstrate a leadership approach to our activities, as we maximise the contributions from all our employees, to fulfil our ambitions.

Strong shared leadership is essential to support staff in new ways of working. We will develop an authorising environment

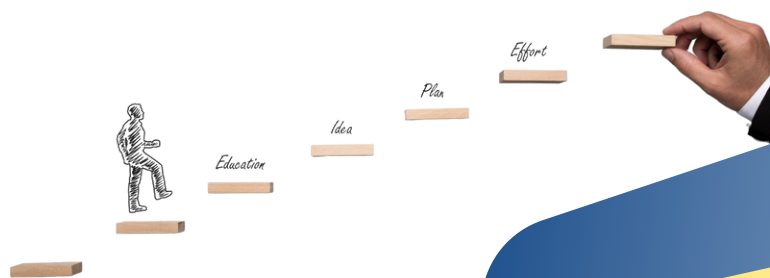
where staff can be innovative and use their professional judgement, confident of support from their leaders. We will continue to develop this approach through shared discussions across the organisation on what this means, how we can achieve this collective approach (including agile working, multidisciplinary teams and a spirit of experimentation), and what are the barriers we need to tackle to get there.

Put simply, we want to have a 'think yes' and 'can do' culture where everyone is engaged and empowered to do the best for Tayside Contracts and our communities.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Developing a framework for talent management and succession planning which will be critical to our future success. We have excellent people in Tayside Contracts. We also acknowledge there is a confidence, skills and capacity gap for our people to take the leap from an operational or supervisory role, into management, and then onto senior leadership roles.

We will continue to proactively identify and develop potential future leaders, so they will be ideally placed to fill key roles, when these become available. This will include formal and informal development processes, broadening peoples experience, offering lead roles on important projects, and assessment of competencies.



HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Number of employees who are rated in terms of management performance as competent or excelling in current role.	85%	>85%	>86%	>87%
Positive leadership results from either Investors in People or employee survey.	80%	>80%	>80%	>80%

ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -

-  Successfully implement our leadership restructure
-  Review and update our Leadership Development Programme
-  Establish a formal succession planning framework which identifies business critical roles across the organisation and drives a consistent approach to the development of talent to fill these roles

(see Action Plan section for more detail).

ENABLERS – PEOPLE

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

All we are, and all that we can be in Tayside Contracts, is reliant on our people. We know we have a talented and skilled workforce who demonstrate their passion and commitment to public service, through their resourcefulness and professionalism each and every day.

It is more important than ever that every employee has the opportunity to fully contribute to our evolving programme of improvement. It is the discussions, engagement and two-way communication that we hold with each other that will capture hearts and minds and improve our services.

Our culture is experienced differently by all of us although we all contribute to it. It is based upon the shared attitudes, beliefs, customs and rules (written and unwritten) that have been developed over time and are considered acceptable to us. We show our organisational culture to others in the way we conduct ourselves and communicate with others. Our culture and values need to underpin and support what we want to achieve for Tayside Contracts and our communities.

To be successful it is vital that we effectively recruit, retain, reward, motivate, train and develop all employees to realise their full potential and continuously enhance their contribution to the achievement of our shared vision, mission and strategic priorities. We know that, in common with other areas of public service, recruitment and retention is a particular challenge for Tayside Contracts, and a risk to our ongoing service delivery.

A safe working environment and good employee wellbeing produces positive attitudes, engagement, motivation and creative thinking and is an important factor in employee engagement, to show how much we value and want to look after our people.

Our ambitions can only be achieved by everyone in Tayside Contracts working as one team, whilst also operating as part of a larger team with our affiliated Trade Unions, our colleagues in our constituent Councils, in an environment where everyone is engaged, empowered and know they have something important to offer.



WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW

- We have a clearly set out approach to workforce planning and development, to encourage learning and development for the skills and roles we will require in future, and to support our people's health and wellbeing.
- We continually prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees through our Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan and our robust Safety Management System.
- We introduced an Employee Benefits Platform in March 2023 which helps improve employees' physical, financial and mental wellbeing, by giving employees access to lifestyle savings, an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Cycle to Work Scheme, discounted Home and Electronics and confidential external support via the 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme and Your Care (a dynamic wellbeing platform offering a range of personal, emotional, and financial wellbeing tools).
- We value positive working relationships with our affiliated Trade Unions and hold regular meetings and engagements to ensure we support our people. This valued relationship has been strengthened more recently by joint training and engagement sessions on the roles of Trade Union Officials.
- We retained our Investors in People independent accreditation, following a rigorous evaluation by third party assessors.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Our priorities are centred around four themes:

- Organisational Development
- Engaging our People
- Supporting our employees
- Recruitment and retention

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We will develop an updated Organisational Development Framework which will outline our approach to achieving the aims of our Business Plan, focussing on the priority themes of:

- High Performing Teams
- Happy and Engaged Workforce
- Ready for Change
- Developing our People

We will continue our work on organisation design, ensuring that job roles are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the organisation and our people. This will provide opportunities for personal and professional development, builds leadership at all levels, encourages learning and development for the skills and roles we will require in future, and helps ensure that we remain to be an employer of choice.



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

ENGAGING OUR PEOPLE

Many elements of this Business Plan emphasise the importance of developing a shared understanding of the changing world in which we are operating; the need for change and the need to work together to tackle challenges; increasing the pace of improvement and achieving the best for our communities.

Engagement will take place across the organisation on the key points of the Business Plan to support the development of our shared understanding, with a specific focus on promoting the Values of the organisation. The change we look for will only become a reality if everyone engages and understands their own contribution.

SUPPORTING OUR EMPLOYEES

We will continue to extend the benefits offered by our Employee Benefits platform, as well as supporting our workforce through advice on Benefits and other opportunities. We are committed to Investors in People and taking action on the feedback on our employee surveys. Training and development is also vital to support our staff and we will continue to invest in this, to ensure our people are safe and competent in their jobs, and have the opportunity to develop skills for their current, and future promoted, posts.

The implementation of the new HR system, Resourcelink HR, will be implemented during 2024/25. This will allow our revised Sickness Absence Management Strategy to be implemented, providing a more time efficient method of managing sickness absence and freeing up precious manager time.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The recruitment and retention challenges represent a significant risk to the delivery of our services. We have continued to work through our Recruitment and Retention Strategy Action Plan which was initially introduced in November 2021 to address emerging recruitment challenges. The Joint Committee has given approval to carry out a pay and conditions review that better enables the organisation to recruit and retain employees, to ensure that we have sufficient numbers of employees to deliver our essential public services.

We will also carry out a review of the whole recruitment process including a review of the candidate experience.



HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Number of days lost due to sickness absence	6.2%	<6.3%	<6.2%	<6.1%
Employee turnover	14.9%	<14.9%	<14.5%	<14%
RIDDOR accident numbers	16	<16	<15	<14
Positive results from Investors in People employee survey results	80%	>80%	>80%	>80%
Investors in People accreditation	Accreditation Retained	Accreditation Retained	Accreditation Retained	Accreditation Retained

ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -

- ✓ Develop an Organisational Development Plan for Tayside Contracts
- ✓ Establish a staff engagement programme around the shared objectives in the Business Plan
- ✓ Carry out a pay and conditions review to minimise the risk of service failure due to inability to recruit and retain essential posts
- ✓ Implement the actions in our Investors in People Action Plan, and achieve reaccreditation
- ✓ Review our recruitment process including a review of the candidate experience

(see Action Plan section for more detail).



ENABLERS

Our financial management underpins everything we do. To make appropriate business decisions, we rely on clear, accurate, timely and robust financial information. Presenting this information in a clear and concise manner, is essential to meeting legal requirements, good governance practice and to ensure the trust of our constituent Councils.

Achieving high surplus levels will become more and more challenging in the future, particularly due to budget constraints on our Constituent Councils. Councils have already indicated to us that they prefer to have lower charges as customers, rather than higher surplus returns, and our financial modelling in the future will meet that request.

Public sector bodies have traditionally had a culture of avoiding risk. The scale of the challenges facing us are such that taking a risk adverse approach is no longer credible. Instead, we need to be intelligent about risk if we are to continue to be successful. We must recognise that risk taking in a managed way, is not only inevitable, but necessary.



WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW

- We have been successful in maintaining continued financial sustainability - delivering efficiency savings, and returning higher than budgeted surpluses year on year, with the support of our constituent Councils, despite the pressures of COVID and record levels of inflation.
- Our revised Procurement Strategy ensures that we obtain the right goods and services at the right price and quality, which helps control costs and minimise financial risks.
- We have sound governance arrangements, evidenced by successive positive internal and external audit reports, and a score of 93% full compliance for Annual Governance Statement requirements.
- We work closely with our internal and external auditors, to ensure key areas of our activities are included in their audit plans, and have a programme of future audit, taking into account key organisational risks, and priorities identified by Joint Committee Members, and our Corporate Leadership Team.
- We have a Risk Strategy and Risk register which have been robustly tested and are monitored frequently by our Leadership Team and also the by our Councils through the Governance and Strategy Group.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Our main priority areas are:

- Financial Planning
- Financial Systems Development
- Procurement Team Customer Engagement
- Governance
- Risk Culture and Systems

FINANCIAL PLANNING

Our financial planning has to reflect the reality of the current financial climate. We have developed a Medium-Term Financial Plan and will review and adapt the plan as new and emerging financial challenges occur. We are developing savings/income options based on potential future financial scenarios facing our constituent Councils. This will rely on the specialist knowledge of our finance team to work with frontline and support services to highlight savings, income and efficiency opportunities

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

We will focus on our Finance systems development work during the course of the Business Plan period. This will automate processes, releasing staff time to invest in higher level development activities. Systems also enable quicker, clearer richer and more accurate management data, for more informed decision making.

PROCUREMENT TEAM CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

We acknowledge the value that the Procurement Team members bring to their colleagues and the vital support they provide in obtaining cost efficiencies. We will focus on areas that this support can be enhanced to colleagues in Tayside Councils and our constituent Councils.

GOVERNANCE

We will ensure that governance arrangements are reviewed in parallel with the changes set out in this Business Plan. As part of that review, we will ensure our internal controls are robust, to give confidence that the planning and management of our finances, assets, workforce, performance, and risk is effective, and aligned to the delivery of our Business Plan objectives, and the achievement of best value.

RISK CULTURE AND SYSTEMS

We will promote proactive risk management throughout the whole organisation. As part of the empowering environment, we want to create, our staff will understand the value of risk management; are supported to make appropriate risk-based decisions; and to take personal responsibility for the management of risk at every level. Our aim is to be a risk intelligent organisation where risk management is fully integrated into our decision making and business processes.



HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Achieve required budgeted surplus for the Constituent Councils		Meet budgeted surplus, agreed by Joint Committee	Meet budgeted surplus, agreed by Joint Committee	Meet budgeted surplus, agreed by Joint Committee
Compliance with CIPFA/Solace delivering good governance in Local Government framework	>80%	>88% compliance	>89% compliance	>90% compliance



ACTIONS

To achieve this strategic objective, we will: -



Review and adapt our medium-term financial plan annually



Implement our programme of financial systems development



Work collaboratively with the areas in the organisation that require further procurement support



Examine our governance and risk processes to ensure compatibility with the objectives of this Business Plan

(see Action Plan section for more detail).



ENABLERS TECHNOLOGY

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

We are reliant on technology. We recognise that 'digital' is not just confined to IT specialists, and that it has to be engrained in our culture and an essential enabler for solving problems and improving productivity and efficiency. Technology in areas such as Artificial Intelligence and robotics are opening up opportunities which would not have been imaginable, even just a few years ago, and we have to keep pace with these developments.

Our focus on technology has great potential to drive efficiencies, with digital transformation in areas such as mobile working, working from home, vehicle tracking, and analysis of data – all of which have already been key to delivering real improvements in productivity.

By embracing new opportunities and leveraging existing tools to improve business processes, we use technology and innovation to create a more efficient organisation and improve alignment between IT initiatives and our Business Plan objectives.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW

- Our Digital Strategy ensures that server, desktop, cloud and voice technology meet current and future needs, whilst providing a high level of availability and reliability for end users.
- We are committed to Microsoft 365 technologies and staff are equipped appropriately to suit their workstyle, including Teams and SharePoint, integrated telephony, and video conferencing.
- We have adopted and implemented a modern, secure remote desktop solution for school-based Facilities users using Microsoft Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD), which has improved efficiencies.
- We take the cyber security risk very seriously and adopt leading-edge email and web security measures, allowing us to safeguard the organisation from malicious cyber threat and loss of data.



WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

To maximise the technological benefits, and counter potential threats our priorities can be summarised as:

- Infrastructure
- Agility and Mobility
- Security

INFRASTRUCTURE

We continue to grow from sound digital foundations and will build on our core infrastructure to deliver the robust secure platform we need for digital change and innovation. We choose 'cloud first' wherever appropriate, removing reliance on on-premise hardware and maintenance and leveraging opportunities for more efficient data storage and sharing.

AGILITY/MOBILITY

We will meet customer demands for better, faster, more accessible services by offering improved digital offerings which our users (both within Tayside Contracts, and our partners and customers) can 'self-serve' to access anytime of the day.

We will embrace the principle of agile working, bringing people, processes, connectivity and technology, time and place together to find the most appropriate and effective way of working to carry out tasks.

We will make further investment in tablet devices for use by front-line employees, increasing efficiency, and maximising data sharing possibilities across the front-line estate.

We will leverage our investment in Microsoft 365 to further develop productivity, including opportunities for partnership collaboration with our Council colleagues.

SECURITY

We will continue to combine best of breed solutions to further enhance our security status whilst further protecting our staff and data.

We will ensure security is a key consideration in the acquisition of any new digital technologies, applications or hosted solutions.

We will regain Cyber Essentials certification - maintaining a current and active certification provides reassurance to our customers and partner organisations that we are proactive in securing our IT systems against attack and demonstrates our commitment to cyber security.



HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL

KPI	Baseline	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Cyber Essentials Accreditation	Working towards accreditation	Accreditation Gained	Accreditation Retained	Accreditation Retained
Security Incidents (annually)	1	0	0	0

ACTIONS

To support our strategic objectives, we will:

-  Choose cloud first before on-premise wherever appropriate
-  Develop and maximise our investment in Microsoft 365
-  Regain our Cyber Essentials Accreditation

(see Action Plan section for more detail).

BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING, REVIEW AND RISK MANAGEMENT

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

It is an essential part of maintaining the trust and confidence of our constituent Councils that we have a clear process in place to monitor and measure the performance of the organisation against the objectives and priorities which have been detailed in this Business Plan.

To ensure openness and transparency in this process, the Governance and Strategy Group of senior officers from our three constituent Councils will monitor and review progress. This will ensure that there is continued engagement with senior representatives of the constituent Councils throughout the life of the Business Plan.

Also, to ensure that Elected Members can fulfil their responsibilities in terms of corporate governance, an update report will be provided annually to the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee, over the life of the Business Plan.

REVIEW

Although this Business Plan covers three years, the dynamic environment and constantly changing operating conditions make it imperative that we keep the Plan under review. Therefore, the Plan will be reviewed and refreshed at the start of each calendar year, or more frequently if necessary.

RISK

The main risks associated with the successful delivery of the Business Plan, are captured within the Corporate Risk Register, which is monitored quarterly by the Corporate Leadership Team, and reported annually to the Tayside Contracts Joint Committee. This will highlight any areas of concern, and any reviews that may be needed.



ACTION PLAN 2024 - 27

No.	Action	Theme	Lead Person	Target Completion Date		
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
1	Develop shared online dashboards of Tayside Contracts key performance information, available to Elected Members and Council colleagues	Confidence Trust and Relationships	Managing Director	January 2025	Annual Review	Annual Review
2	Update our Communications Strategy, to strengthen our communications with Elected Members, council colleagues, and the media/public.	Confidence Trust and Relationships	Managing Director	New strategy February 2025		
3	Establish a shared development programme with colleagues in constituent Councils.	Confidence Trust and Relationships	Managing Director	Programme agreed with GSG March 2025		
4	Set up a regular feedback and evaluation of Tayside Contracts customer relationship performance for our main stakeholder and customer groups.	Confidence Trust and Relationships	Head of Operations	Formal feedback mechanisms in place March 2025	Annual report to Joint Committee	Annual Report to Joint Committee
5	Review and report on pursuit our commercial prioritisation analysis, with an agreed pipeline of targeted commercial areas of existing Business opportunities reporting to GSG and Joint Committee.	Commercial Approach	Head of Operations	Report to Joint Committee in March 2025	Annual report to Joint Committee	Annual report to Joint Committee
6	Develop an updated customer management and marketing plan for Tayside Contracts.	Commercial Approach	Managing Director	Plan completed by January 2025		
7	Carry out a commercial skills analysis for the organisation, and develop an action plan.	Commercial Approach	Head of Operations	Action Plan in place by March 2025		
8	Identify opportunities for further shared service delivery by Tayside Contracts using a criteria-based priority programme of collaborative opportunities, in partnership with constituent Councils.	Collaboration and Sharing	Head of Operations	Programme established and agreed with GSG by February 2025		
9	Develop a Plan for engaging with colleagues in constituent Councils, to emphasise the benefits of maximising Tayside Contracts as the service provider of choice, and identify barriers to Council taking up the services provided by Tayside Contracts.	Collaboration and Sharing	Head of Operations	Plan in place by January 2025		

ACTION PLAN 2024 - 27

No	Action	Theme	Lead Person	Target Completion Date		
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
10	Develop a new skills development/training programme to ensure we successfully deliver on collaborative opportunities, to provide Best Value to constituent Councils.	Collaboration and Sharing	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support		Programme in place by April 2025	
11	Develop a new longer term plan for further expansion of Tayside Contracts shared services into other suitable areas of activity.	Collaboration and Sharing	Head of Operations		Plan agreed with Chief Executives and GSG by June 2025	
12	Complete the implementation our organisation structure review.	Continuous Improvement and Performance	Managing Director	Complete by end of December 2024		
13	Carry out the 'next phase' review our property requirements, including sharing with partners.	Continuous Improvement and Performance	Strategic Lead - Finance & Governance		Review completed by May 2025	
14	Implement our Change Plan with annual reviews to identify new proposals.	Continuous Improvement and Performance	Managing Director	Plan reported to Joint Committee November 2024		Annual update to Joint Committee
15	Introduce performance dashboards, to improve our performance management, measuring and reporting processes, and identify priority areas for performance improvement.	Continuous Improvement and Performance	Head of Operations	Programme of Dashboard development set out by December 2024	Dashboards implemented by January 2025	
16	Review our school meal action plan jointly with Councils, to increase pupil uptake of healthy, safe meals, to 'fuel learning'.	Continuous Improvement and Performance	Strategic Lead - Facilities	New Action Plan by January 2025		
17	Carry out a further set of engagements with local businesses to promote their role as local suppliers to Tayside Contracts and understand the barriers that exist to them joining our supply chain.	Communities, Councils and Customers	Strategic Lead - Finance & Governance		Engagements complete by August 2025	
18	Extend the promotion of Tayside Contracts Community Fund to support more local community groups.	Communities, Councils and Customers	Managing Director		Promotion campaign	

No.	Action	Theme	Lead Person	Target Completion Date		
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
19	Work with Tay Cities Deal, and local Council Employability teams to support people into working with Tayside Contracts.	Communities, Councils and Customers	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support			
20	Work with Councils to promote healthy meals and healthy choices in schools.	Communities, Councils and Customers	Strategic Lead - Facilities	Engagement with Councils by March 2025		
21	Implement actions in our Climate Change Plan, to reduce our carbon footprint, towards net zero by 2045.	Communities, Councils and Customers	Head of Operations		Annual report on progress	Annual report on progress
ENABLERS						
22	Successfully implement our leadership restructure.	Leadership	Managing Director	Complete by November 2024		
23	Review and update our Leadership Development Programme.	Leadership	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	New programme by December 2024		
24	Establish a formal succession planning framework which identifies business critical roles across the organisation and drives a consistent approach to the development of talent to fill these roles.	Leadership	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	Framework in place by January 2025		
25	Develop an Organisational Development Framework for Tayside Contracts.	People	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	Framework in place by January 2025		
26	Establish a staff engagement programme around the shared objectives in the Business Plan.	People	Managing Director	Programme established by September 2024		
27	Carry out a pay and conditions review to minimise the risk of service failure due to inability to recruit and retain essential posts.	People	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support		Review complete by May 2025	
28	Implement the actions in our Investors in People Action Plan, and achieve reaccreditation.	People	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	Actions complete by December 2024		

ACTION PLAN 2024 - 27

No	Action	Theme	Lead Person	Target Completion Date		
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
29	Review our recruitment process including a review of the candidate experience.	People	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	Review concluded by January 2025		
30	Review and adapt our medium-term financial plan annually.	Financial Management, Governance and Risk	Strategic Lead - Finance & Governance		Annual update to Joint Committee	Annual update to Joint Committee
31	Implement our programme of financial systems development.	Financial Management, Governance and Risk	Strategic Lead - Finance & Governance	New system in place by March 2025		
32	Work collaboratively with the areas in the organisation that require further procurement support.	Financial Management, Governance and Risk	Strategic Lead - Finance & Governance	Action Plan in place by December 2024		
33	Examine our governance and risk processes to ensure compatibility with the objectives of this Business Plan.	Financial Management, Governance and Risk	Strategic Lead - Finance & Governance	Review concluded January 2025		
34	Choose cloud first before on-premise wherever appropriate.	Technology	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	Complete server replacement programme by March 2025		
25	Develop and maximise our investment in Microsoft 365.	Technology	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	Plan set out by February 2025		
36	Regain our Cyber Essentials Accreditation.	Technology	Strategic Lead - HR, IT and Business Support	Accreditation achieved by March 2025	Accreditation retained	Accreditation retained



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